

**Leeway Overlee (LO) Civic Association
Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Tues., October 7, 2014, at Westover Library (Conference Room)**

1. Civic Association (CA) President Greg Rusk opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and presented the draft Agenda, which was duly approved, as follows:

Time	Topic	Presenter
7:30-7:40	General Business (introduction, approval of minutes)	Greg Rusk, LO-CA President
7:40-7:50	Neighborhood Safety	Mona Hazera, LO-CA Member
7:50-8:00	Lee Highway Revitalization	Lala Matties, LO-CA Vice President
8:00-8:40	Arlington's Community Energy Plan (Presentation and Q&A)	Richard Dooley, Community Energy Coordinator
8:40-9:00	Reed Property Modification Update	Chips Johnson, LO-CA Reed Property Representative

2. Turning to announcements and reports, Mr. Rusk noted that the Highland Park – Overlee Knolls CA would be hosting “Halloween on the Green.” He then asked Rob Swennes, acting Secretary at the June 23 meeting, to read or summarize the minutes from that meeting, which included the annual election of CA officers and a presentation on Arlington Public School options for the HB Woodlawn program and additional middle school seats, including Reed School. Mr. Swennes did so and the minutes were approved unanimously. Mr. Rusk then asked Ms. Michener for the Treasurer’s report; she reported a net decrease in the CA account of \$374, and a balance of \$1300, but noted that expected Leeway Leader advertising receipts would help restore the balance.

Neighborhood Safety

3. Mr. Rusk introduced LO-CA Member Mona Hazera, who reported on neighborhood safety issues. She noted there had been a rash of entering of unlocked vehicles, and things being stolen. Police are aware of increased thefts in N. Arlington, and she had spoken with Lt. Beth Lennon, who offered several safety tips. Thefts are going unreported because many are not break-ins; residents have left their doors unlocked. Police recommend that residents lock their house and car doors, keep side & back yards lit, and have lights on timers when out of town. Mr. Rusk noted that reporting essential is for the police to identify the pattern of thefts.

Lee Highway Revitalization

4. Next, LO-CA Vice President Lala Matties reported on Lee Hwy re-development. She explained that CAs along Lee Highway have Lee Highway [CA] Presidents’ breakfasts as a discussion forum. Discussions cover land use and urban design for the corridor from the Potomac bridges to the Falls Church border, i.e. where Lee Hwy. crosses I-66. They are now working as the Lee Highway Alliance. To focus their work, they have divided all participating CAs into districts; Leeway Overlee is grouped with Tara-Leeway and Highland Park-Overlee

Knolls. They invite community members to join in the charrette/design process, so our input can be taken into account. A charrette, it was explained, is an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and multiple disciplines collaborate on a vision for development. It provides a forum for ideas, in this case with a mandate to come up with goals for the re-development and to provide the basis for a report to the County, including possible sketches. This group would include urban planners and landscape architects/designers. The next meeting date for that was set for Nov. 5, possibly at Langston Brown (to be confirmed). All were encouraged to participate. While Lee Highway doesn't have big parcels of land, Ms. Matties noted, there is scope to suggest features we want, e.g. walkable streets. Mr. Swennes asked if there would be a discussion of the overall process; Ms. Matties said yes, while clarifying that this work is addressing only the commercial sections.

Richard Dooley, Community Energy Coordinator

5. Mr. Rusk then introduced the evening's featured speaker: Richard Dooley, Community Energy Coordinator, in Arlington's Dept. of Environmental Services. Mr. Dooley explained that up until 2010, Arlington had no plan for energy. Planning started in June 2010. The current plan looks ahead to 2050. It has been developed by the [Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy \(AIRE\)](#) team and addresses sustainability issues in multiple ways, such as:

- 1) [Green games](#)- promotes energy-saving competition among businesses;
- 2) [Green home choice](#)- is an assistance program to reduce home energy use; participants' houses can be certified "green," free of charge;
- 3) [Green building program](#)- for large residential or commercial properties, owners can get bonus density if building is built or fitted to be more sustainable. Density is used as currency since it is a key determinant of the revenue a property can yield.

The goals of the program are several:

- 1) [Economic competitiveness](#): Given long-term energy price increases and price fluctuations, reduced energy use means reduced risk and reduced costs for energy and insulates Arlingtonians from energy price spikes.
- 2) [Energy security](#): the program looks for opportunities for more reliable energy, to keep the lights on in event of severe weather.
- 3) [Environmental commitment](#): the program helps address climate change and other issues since energy waste strains our environment, our economy, and our way of life. A key metric is per capita greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Arlington's baseline is 1300 metric tons per capita. This takes into account energy use by buildings, transportation, and other uses. This compares to 300 MT/capita in Copenhagen.

6. Mr. Dooley outlined the six areas through which the program is working to address these goals:

- 1) [Energy efficient buildings](#): to increase energy/operational efficiency of all buildings. The goal is to maintain our standard of living while saving energy. To achieve this, the County has: the green building density incentive; commercial lighting retrofits; and support for

energy efficiency in existing buildings (conducting audits, suggesting change-outs). This work is in conjunction with Dominion Va. Power.

- 2) Piping of District energy system: since pipes underwater carry hot & cold water, a Combined Heat & Power (CHP) system is used to improve efficiency from 35% to 80 via integrated energy master plans.
- 3) Use of photovoltaic cells: solar photovoltaic cells provide renewable energy (RE). AIRE's solar co-ops can reduce costs for builders/homeowners by 30%.
- 4) Transportation: AIRE supports/contributes to Arlington's master transportation plan, including creation of opportunities to walk, ride bikes, and reduce use of cars.
- 5) County Gov't. activities: This includes the County operations energy plan, electric vehicle charging, and safety
- 6) Communications: AIRE promotes behavior change, advocating & supporting personal action to reduce energy use and GHG intensity. See the County website: www.arlingtonenergy.us.

Looking ahead, Mr. Dooley noted activities include an "energy journey" game, planned for Sat. January 31, at Wakefield High School.

7. Mr. Dooley then answered questions from the audience. First was about the relation of Arlington County's efforts to the Governor's energy plan, such as development of wind energy. He noted the County's focus is greater energy and operational efficiency, rather than production *per se*. Concerning a residential equivalent to commercial building certification, he noted that the density benefit was only for commercial or multi-family zoned property, tied to a planned project. For single family, the County has green home choice (energy) certification. Regarding elimination of (above-ground utility) power poles, utilities have an undergrounding fee. Rob Swennes noted that when requested for N. 22nd St., the cost for undergrounding would have been \$100,000/house. He then asked about the County providing alternative (renewable) energy as back-up source, since generators are noisy and expensive to run. Mr. Dooley replied that homeowners can buy back-up generators for as low as \$1,000. With photovoltaic systems, homeowners can power some things, but for more, one needs a battery system to store power, and batteries need to be replaced over time. Still, the County is looking for ways to get more alternative sources. Another resident commented that Virginia Tech had developed a technology for neighborhood level [back-up power](#).

8. Another questioner asked about Arlington's tree cover, since trees are essential to the environment, but new houses often mean fewer trees; how was the County addressing that? Mr. Dooley noted that in terms of efficiency, "trees trump solar," since providing shade is better than generating solar or other power for air conditioning. The County is aware of the heat island effect, i.e. that buildings and asphalt hold heat, and tries to ensure trees are replaced. That said, Virginia is property rights state, and this limits the rules that can be applied to management of plants on private property. CA member Ed Robinson, a former lighting engineer, noted that using sodium vapor lights for street lights, and getting rid of obsolete mercury lights, would be a step forward in energy efficiency. Ms. Michener noted that her family was considering installing solar panels before federal tax credits expire, and asked if the County had any programs to help residents benefit from tax credits. Mr. Dooley stated that this would have to be budgeted in the

County's annual budget [but has not been to date]. He advised that the 1st thing for residents to take care of is weatherizing their homes. Asked about the number of solar units installed in Arlington, Mr. Dooley stated that the County doesn't have a record, because solar units are not separately permitted. Concerning home energy audits, he said the County provided some in 2007, and might consider it for the future, but the primary support of this type for homeowners is the [local energy alliance program \(LEAP\)](#). Homeowners can get a LEAP Home Energy Check-Up, which costs \$45, and provides valuable products and professional advice.

Reed School Property Issue

9. Mr. Rusk thanked Mr. Dooley, then turned to the Reed School property issue. Chips Johnson reported that the Arlington's School Board has directed staff develop a plan to deal with overcrowding of middle schools. Sites under consideration are Wilson, Stratford (HB Woodlawn), and Reed School. CA responses or comments on the options were due October 15. The School Board would decide on December 18. Mr. Johnson said that it was realistic that something could happen at Reed. Transportation/parking issues would not determine the new middle school site; a traffic study will only follow the placement decision. The new school would have a capacity of about 800 seats [see www.apsva.us/moreseats].

10. Mr. Rusk reported that four neighboring CA's got together and prepared an online survey. It had 602 respondents altogether. The results included: 411 (68%) strongly disagreed with moving the HB program to Reed. A majority (351 – 58%) agreed with making renovations & additions to the Stratford site [for the new middle school] and relocation of the HB Woodlawn program to a location other than Reed. Three-quarters (455) strongly agreed that since the Reed/Westover area already has a middle school (Swanson), adding 600+ students was not desirable/feasible; similarly, 427 agreed that Reed should be an elementary school with green space as intended when built. Top concerns respondents expressed were to: maintain a community library; maintain green space; minimize personal vehicular traffic during the workweek; have an available neighborhood school; maintain/improve pedestrian safety [around Reed/Westover]; and be fiscally responsible (given the investment in Reed).

11. Mr. Rusk then took questions. A resident asked whether if the school was built here, would ours become the only neighborhood with two schools so close? Mr. Rusk noted that the County has Kenmore Middle and Carlin Springs Elementary clustered, and Williamsburg Middle School was having an elementary school built on its site. Asked about the proportion of residents responding to the survey, Mr. Rusk said 602 responses was actually a strong sampling. Turning to next steps, Mr. Rusk noted that Arlington Public Schools had asked CAs to respond to six questions. He said LO-CA's response would refer to the data. The next APS-sponsored community meeting would be October 16, in the evening at one of the schools. The process being followed was similar to a charrette, getting input from multi-expert, multi-community groups. The School Board's Dec. 18 deadline was firm. Those interested should see APS's [website](#) for more information, including relevant statistics.

12. The agenda items having been addressed, the meeting was closed at 8:57 p.m.

Submitted by: Ladd Connell, Secretary