

**Leeway Overlee (LO) Civic Association (CA)
Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Tues., September 22, 2015, 7:30pm at Westover Library (community room)**

1. Leeway Overlee CA President Chips Johnson opened the meeting at 7:30pm and reviewed the proposed agenda which was duly accepted.

Time	Topic	Presenter
7:30-7: 50	Officers' reports: Minutes, Treasurer's report, Neighborhood Conservation	Chips Johnson, Ladd Connell, Jennifer Michener, Rob Swennes
7:50-8:50	I-66 inside the Beltway	Amanda Baxter, VDOT Project Manager

CA Business: Neighborhood Conservation Process, Reed School

2. CA Secretary Ladd Connell summarized the minutes of the prior CA meeting, held Wed., June 23, at which the principal topic was the re-visioning of the Lee Highway Corridor, presented by Scott Matties, followed by election of CA Officers. CA Treasurer Jenni Michener reported on the CA's finances, with an account balance of \$763.14, down from \$1,157.58, reflecting expenses of \$394.44, primarily for printing of the newsletter, but no income.

3 The CA's Leeway Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Advisory Committee Representative Rob Swennes then briefed on proposed changes to the NC Process for identifying local neighborhood projects for County funding. For infrastructure improvements within a street right of way (such as addition of a sidewalk), current rules require that the project receive approval from at least 60% of the owners on the block. Some proposed projects fail this test and do not move forward. To increase the rate of neighborhood sidewalk creation within the County, some within the NCAC have proposed that local approval for these projects should lie with the local civic association rather than the property owners on the block. The County's NC staff would largely be removed as independent parties ensuring that the project decision process is not biased. Critics of the new proposal argue that few of Arlington's civic associations are organizationally strong enough to take on this responsibility. Charges of failure to adhere to due process would put almost any proposed project at risk if there was a vocal minority of local residents opposed to it. And the NC program's decades-long history of neighborhood infrastructure improvements would be left in tatters, with many local civic associations fractured as collateral casualties of these procedural changes. Only the strongest civic associations might be able to overcome due process challenges and get NC projects funded by the County. This would leave adrift many Arlington neighborhoods which have the greatest need for street infrastructure improvements like curb & gutter and sidewalks. Thus the proposed process changes could ironically result over time in fewer neighborhood improvement projects rather than more. Mr. Swennes answered questions and invited comment and input on this issue.

4. Turning to other CA business, Mr. Johnson noted the CA had received a proposal for a use permit for a dance studio on Lee Highway, which required no objection; none was raised. Mr. Johnson also noted that Arlington Public Schools had been considering an idea for the Reed School property, to be an early child education center, as the teachers' children's school is

leaving. The early childhood program is not yet defined. One resident voiced concern about traffic in front of Reed when school buses pull in. Mr. Johnson acknowledged that all four CAs are aware of the issue, as it's a shared concern that would need to be addressed.

Amanda Baxter, VDOT Project Manager: “Transform 66 Inside the Beltway”

5. I-66 Background & Need: Mr. Johnson then invited Amanda Baxter, Manager for the Virginia Dept. of Transportation (VDOT) project “Transform 66 Inside the Beltway” to make her presentation. Ms. Baxter explained that overall, VDOT is looking to understand impacts of implementing tolls for I-66 inside the Beltway. As background, she noted that I-66 was built 1977-82 and opened in 1982 as an HOV-4 facility. This changed to HOV-3 in late 1983, and to HOV-2 March 1995. It is the only Interstate that has this kind of restriction, and it is only in the peak direction, inbound [to DC] 6:30-9:00 a.m. and outbound from 4:00-6:30 p.m. It is also different from most interstates in that it ends with a stoplight at the end of eastbound I-66 in DC. She also noted there is no chance of expanding I-66 going to the bridge; it has high retaining walls on both sides, and is restricted also by the capacity of the [Theodore Roosevelt Memorial] bridge. At the same time, changes are coming to I-66, since to meet EPA air quality standards, the Metro Washington Council of Gov'ts. has to increase air quality and meeting this “attainment requirement” means I-66 going from HOV-2 to 3 by 2020.

6. Hybrid & Bus Privileges: Ms. Baxter explained further that to date, VDOT has allowed hybrid vehicles to ride solo, but I-66 has been “degrading,” defined as traffic running at less than 45 MPH for more than 10% of the time. VDOT has limited issuance of clean fuel plates so that new hybrid vehicles will lose any special status, although old ones will continue to enjoy it. Other steps that VDOT has taken include making WMATA buses eligible to run on I-66's shoulder (breakdown) lanes and spot improvements in westbound direction (e.g. the third lane between Ballston and Sycamore St.).

7. Scope & Solutions: To plan next steps, Ms. Baxter said, VDOT undertook a multi-modal study for the I-66 corridor, looking to address “hotspots” of congestion. The principal solution being examined is a dynamically priced toll lane system operated by VDOT, with proceeds to be reinvested in transit in the region. Counties that would be included in this are Prince William, Loudoun, and Fairfax, as well as Arlington. Other solutions that VDOT will work on are transport demand management (support for telework), bike /pedestrian infrastructure/facilities, and roadway improvements. The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC, www.novatransit.org/) will be the beneficiary, and responsible for moving projects forward. The goals of this effort are to move more people (planners anticipate an additional 40,000 people/day) and enhance connectivity by providing more travel choices, enhancing transit options and reliability.

8. Tolls & Goals: Ms. Baxter noted that of I-66 users inside the Beltway, 65% are coming from Fairfax and 22% Loudoun, with 47% coming to Arlington as their destination, more than to DC. VDOT is analyzing tolls and revenues, with the goal being for vehicles to be able cover the 9.1 miles of I-66 inside the Beltway in 10 minutes. VDOT plans to put the toll system in effect in 2017. Buses and motorcycles would continue to travel I-66 for free. VDOT projects a toll of \$9, on average, for eastbound traffic during peak (rush) hours if HOV-2, less if HOV-3. The toll

price would be locked in on entry for each destination. Tolls will help to balance traffic during shoulder periods. Noting that 70% of regional job growth is in Tysons, Ms. Baxter said that tolls will apply in both directions, but will vary. For this part of I-66, there will be only 4 toll zones, all will be posted at each entry point. VDOT's criteria are that the solutions applied must offer benefits to toll payers (i.e. faster trips), create opportunities for new or enhanced free travel options, and increase person through-put for the I-66 corridor. It is a multi-faceted approach to get people to employment centers.

9. Next Steps & Outreach: Concerning next steps, Ms. Baxter said that VDOT will continue to review and update its multi-modal project list, develop & finalize the project selection process, and initiate a call for project proposals to develop its capital improvement program. VDOT will continue its outreach, which includes 35 meetings to date, covering both elected officials and stakeholder groups. Others meetings, e.g. for more specialized groups, will be more detailed, as she considered this presentation a high-level overview. More detailed meetings were planned to be held at Washington-Lee High School October 7 and November 12. The project working group includes representatives from VDOT, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, and NVTC.

10. Q&A (transit, right of way, ride-sharing): Questions and answers followed. Asked about bus services on Lee Hwy., Ms. Baxter turned to Todd Horsley, DRPT Director of Northern Virginia Transit Programs (804-929-4893), who said that DRPT was working in parallel on optimizing those services. The Silver Line to Dulles is also an integral part of regional transport planning, he noted. Asked about taxicabs, Ms. Baxter said that tolls will apply to them as well. Another resident expressed concern about noise if I-66 were expanded. Ms. Baxter said that for I-66 to be expanded would require a design exception, e.g. not to have a full shoulder, and require a full analysis. In any case, VDOT will not seek or require any additional right of way. The project is committed to re-invest in other modes. Asked about planning models and telework, Ms. Baxter said the project does take into account different values of time that people have at different times of day. Arlington County has an online telework portal, and commuters can use the GroupMe app for ride-sharing. VDOT is in favor of increasing use of slug lines.

10. Q&A (traffic diversion, enforcement): Another resident expressed concern about tolls causing traffic diversion, e.g. to Washington Blvd. Ms. Baxter acknowledged that traffic diversion may occur. VDOT has models to show what roads may pick up or lose traffic, and uses them to identify other changes, based on the principle of speed harmonization. Other projects will have to meet criteria parallel to those for I-66. VDOT will retain the restriction on trucks on I-66 inside the Beltway. Concerning enforcement of HOV-3, Ms. Baxter said that I-66 will not have gates, but that each gantry [sign holder] will have an enforcement bay, with police parked downstream; enforcement is manual but supported by technology, e.g. cameras, that will add accountability to the corridor. There are budget constraints as Virginia has not added state police since 1985, and a single officer can only give about 15/tickets/day. So enforcement will still consist mostly of a single police officer, plus camera & monitors.

11. Summing up, Ms. Baxter said the goal was to change the way people move to and from work, hence the emphasis on investing in multi-modal solutions. Mr. Johnson thanked Ms. Baxter and adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Submitted by:
Ladd Connell, Secretary