



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

www.drca.org

March 2005

Off and Rolling in 2005

Ned W. Rhodes

The Donaldson Run Civic Association had a lively January meeting where we heard from two local realtors about the trends in the real estate market in our neighborhood. The second half of the meeting was devoted to a discussion on the County Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC) lot coverage proposals and many people were interested and participated in that discussion as well.

The Donaldson Run Civic Association Executive Committee decided that the social half-hour that we tried out at the January meeting was a success and so we are going to repeat it at the March (and probably the May) meeting. We invite you to come a half hour early--7pm--to socialize with your neighbors. I met a number of new neighbors and had some good discussions with existing members. So please plan on coming a little early for the March meeting.

As former DRCA Treasurer, I ask that you support your Civic Association by either becoming a member or renewing your membership. Membership information is available on the web site www.drca.org as well as in this issue of the newsletter. More information concerning our March 30 meeting with the Department of Environmental Services can be found in this newsletter as well as information on our May meeting, which will deal with Parks. See you at the next meeting.

County Services and 25th Street Sidewalk are Topics for next DRCA Meeting

Anne Wilson

The Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) has another full agenda for its meeting on March 30 at Taylor Elementary School. We will start again with a social half hour from 7-7:30 to give neighbors time to meet and enjoy light refreshments. The formal meeting will begin at 7:30. Our featured speaker is Randy Bartlett, Director of Arlington's Department of Environmental Services (DES). Mr. Bartlett will give an overview of the wide ranging responsibilities of DES, which offers services as diverse as providing mapping services to collecting trash. Two topics of particular interest to some in Donaldson Run, traffic and sidewalks, also fall within the purview of DES.

After Mr. Bartlett's presentation, Charlie Denney, a member of the DES staff, will discuss the County's interest in and plans for a sidewalk on 25th Street between Vacation Lane and Stuart Street. If you are interested in this sidewalk issue, you won't want to miss this presentation.

Following up on January's meeting, there will be a brief discussion and vote about the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC) recommendations. There also will be a short discussion and vote on DRCA's proposal for the
(continued on p. 2)

**The Next DRCA Membership Meeting is Wednesday, March 30
at 7:30 p.m. at Taylor Elementary School .**

COUNTY BOARD TO CONSIDER IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT LIMITS AT ITS MAY MEETING

Bill Richardson

At its February 12 meeting, the County Board voted to advertise for further study and final consideration at its May 7 meeting the lot coverage restrictions recommended by the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC). In doing so, the Board made clear that it may decide to adopt a less restrictive alternative, in light of further information about the effects of the ZORC proposals.

DRCA will have a further discussion of these proposals at its March 30 meeting, in order to provide the County Board with our views on them. We plan to focus on three issues: (1) whether it is appropriate to seek to restrict homeowners' rights to build larger homes in Arlington in order to preserve more open space in our neighborhoods, (2) whether the specific ZORC proposals to do so make sense, and (3) what, if any, additional flexibility there should be in building additions (as opposed to new homes).

As noted in DRCA's last newsletter, ZORC's proposals would change the current zoning ordinance, which, since 1964, has permitted new construction on residential lots of up to 56 percent of the size of the lot. In response to concerns about the impact of "McMansions" on the character of the surrounding neighborhood, ZORC has proposed more restrictive limits. Its proposals vary depending upon the size of the lot. Houses in Arlington are zoned either R-5, R-6, R-8, R-10, or R-20; the number in each designation refers to the minimum number of square feet required for the lot, measured in thousands.

There are three aspects to the new proposed limits (which are not intended to apply to reconstruction to the existing footprint following a fire or other natural disaster):

- First, ZORC proposes to reduce the current 56 percent maximum lot coverage limit to one that

(see ZORC article on p. 9)

The Current is published several times a year and is distributed free of charge to all households in the Donaldson Run Civic Association area. DRCA, like all civic associations in Arlington, is a neighborhood organization, administered by elected volunteers. The DRCA promotes information sharing and discussion on neighborhood, local, and regional issues. DRCA is not affiliated with any political or religious group or with the Donaldson Run Recreation Association that operates the swimming pool on Marcey Road. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at Taylor Elementary School (2600 North Stuart Street) from September through May. Follow this newsletter for meeting dates. Only dues paying DRCA residents are eligible to vote. DRCA boundaries are: Military Road on the east (including Marcey Road, North 26th Street, North 25th Place, and North Ridgeview Road); 26th/31st Street on the north; Lorcom Lane on the south (including North Randolph and 27th Streets, south of Lorcom Lane); and Vernon Street on the west.

DRCA Board

President	Ned Rhodes	741-0861
1st VP	Anne Wilson	525-0344
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Director	Maxine Nagel	524-5093
Director	Bill Richardson	525-5270
Editor	Mary Heston Cooper	469-2242

County Services and 25th Street Sidewalk are Topics of Next DRCA Meeting (continued from p. 1)

stream restoration project on Tributary B of Donaldson Run. (Tributary B extends from the fork in the stream near Military Road to the mulch pile on 26th Street) This should be an informative and interesting meeting. We look forward to seeing you there.

DRCA Meeting on Parks

Larry Finch

If you are interested in our neighborhood parks, please join us on May 25 for the annual Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) meeting devoted to parks issues. Speakers will address the following subjects:

- park maintenance issues and how to contact County officials with questions or suggestions
- problems with English ivy and other invasive plants in the parks
- the status of the Donaldson Run stream restoration project
- plants and animals found in our neighborhood parks
- the backyard habitat program, with tips for those who would like to attract wildlife to their yards -- and tips on how not to attract some less desirable animals

Unlike most DRCA meetings, this one will not be held at Taylor School. Instead, it will be at Gulf Branch Nature Center at 3608 Military Road. Those who can easily walk a block or so are asked to use street parking to save the few parking spaces at the nature center for those who really need to park nearby.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 on Wednesday, May 25, with a social half hour starting at 7 p.m. If you have questions, please contact Larry Finch at 703-528-6349 or lefinch@verizon.net.

Volunteers Needed to Help with Neighborhood Day

Neighborhood Day will be celebrated throughout Arlington County on May 14, 2005. The theme this year is "Neighborhoods Connect People", and one good way to connect with your neighbors is to get involved in planning Donaldson Run's Neighborhood Day Activities. This does not require a major time commitment.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Anne Wilson by email at anne@drca.org or by phone at (703) 525-0344.

2005 Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, March 30

Agenda: Department of Environmental Services

Presentation,

Zoning Ordinance Review

Committee Update,

and

Sidewalks on N. 25th Street-A

Discussion

please note: There will be a social half hour beginning at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 25

Agenda: Our Parks

Note location: Gulf Branch Nature Center,
3608 Military Road

The times and topics of DRCA meetings are subject to change. Updated agendas are sent via email to our list subscribers approximately one week prior to meetings. To join our list, please add your email address to the DRCA membership application. All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. in the first grade pod of Taylor Elementary School unless otherwise noted.

Schools Update

Greg Gromada

Taylor Elementary School boundary issues have been resolved, with only slight modifications made, according to principal Rob Hindman. The Donaldson Run community will not be directly affected.

Boundary changes will impact students off Military Road, north of Donaldson Run, who have been re-districted to Jamestown Elementary and current students from the Ballston area who have been re-districted out of the Taylor School district. The plan, effective with the 2005-2006 school year, has been published and may be viewed on the Arlington Public Schools web site: www.arlington.k12.va.us/facilities/northboundary.html

Sidewalk for 25th Street

Charlie Denny

In 2001, Arlington County initiated a Safe Routes to School project to construct a sidewalk on North 25th Street between North Stuart Street and Vacation Lane. In addition to helping to achieve the goal of improving pedestrian conditions and safety around schools, constructing a sidewalk on 25th Street will help to implement one of the policy goals included in the Arlington Pedestrian Transportation Plan of having a sidewalk on at least one side of every neighborhood street. The county board reiterated its support for this goal at two separate work sessions regarding pedestrian issues held in 1999 and 2002. Currently no sidewalks exist on the majority of 25th Street. Installing a sidewalk on 25th Street was also one of three sidewalks, curbs and gutters recommendations included in the Donaldson Run Neighborhood Conservation Plan, adopted in October 2000.

County staff has developed a design for a sidewalk on 25th Street that can be constructed completely within the county owned right-of-way on the street. While the sidewalk can be built on county property, some temporary easements are required from some adjacent property owners to complete the construction. The design for the sidewalk has been presented to the residents of the street, and some modifications have been made to address concerns raised by the residents.

Residents on the street have expressed their opposition to the project at a number of meetings with county staff and in correspondence with the county manager and members of the county board. The residents have requested that the county look into the possibility of closing 25th Street to traffic before and after school to allow children to walk in the street. County staff do not feel that this is a good idea because of concerns about how the closure would be enforced and concerns about the confusing message being given to children that sometimes it is acceptable to walk in the street. The neighbors also have asked why a new sidewalk is needed on 25th Street when there is an existing sidewalk on Vacation Lane and Stuart Street that provides access to Taylor School. The existing sidewalk is narrow (less than the three feet required by the Americans with Disabilities Act in places where there are poles in the walk); is located directly

next to the curb, and is generally not well traveled. Observations show that many people choose to walk on 25th Street now, even without a sidewalk.

County staff feels that construction of a sidewalk on 25th Street will improve pedestrian safety in the Donaldson Run neighborhood, particularly children walking to Taylor School. A sidewalk also will help to meet an important goal of the Arlington Pedestrian Transportation Plan, and will implement a recommendation of the Donaldson Run Neighborhood Conservation Plan. The county staff is committed to working with residents adjacent to the project to minimize the impact on residents' properties and plans to continue working to implement the project.

Dear Donald,

I was walking along Donaldson Run between Military Road and the Potomac River. I came across the ruins of what appeared to be a concrete room of some sort. Do you know what this structure is?

Curious on 26th Street

Dear Curious,

Getting the answer to your question took some research. Years ago, circa 1940-50, a concrete dam was built on the stream by David Krupsaw so that there would be a swimming hole near a cabin he had built on a hill overlooking Donaldson Run. The concrete room you saw was a changing room, and I am told that there is a wooden board inside with nails for hanging clothes. Over time, erosion undermined the structure, and after a hurricane, perhaps Agnes in 1972, the dam was totally washed away. The concrete room is all that remains. By the way, Mr. Krupsaw served on the County Board from 1956-1960, and became Chairman of the Board in 1959.

Thanks to Martin Ogle at Potomac Overlook Park and Thomas Richards, former County Board member, for helping me with the research on this question. If anyone else remembers this swimming hole, I'd be interested in hearing more about it.

Donald

(Dear Donald is a new, regular feature in The Current. If you have a question relating to DRCA or the neighborhood that you think would be of interest to others, send it to our newsletter editor, Mary Cooper (mary@drca.org).

Why Our Street Seeks Traffic Calming Over Sidewalks

Elaine M. Grossman

Like many of my neighbors in the Donaldson Run area, I feel lucky to live on what I think is one of Arlington's most beautiful streets. Our 4200 block of 25th Street North, just off Vacation Lane, is quiet -- very quiet. I can hear whenever a car drives up the street. On a normal day, that probably averages two or three cars an hour.

Our one-way street is carved into a big hill, looping around with a hairpin turn to the right. The six houses on the left have tiny front yards with no sidewalk. They feature a sharp cliff out back with soaring views. The steep hill resumes climbing at the right-hand curb, with Cape Cod houses and slate patios tucked between 50-year-old, 10-foot-high brick retaining walls. Perhaps most striking are the mature oak trees towering over neatly landscaped and well maintained yards...

Our street is just around the corner from Taylor Elementary School, and we estimate one to two dozen children walk daily along the grassy left side to and from school. Throughout the day and on weekends, joggers and young parents with strollers favor this scenic block, enjoying the general absence of car traffic.

So it surprised our block's 13 homeowners when, in 2001, Arlington County proposed to install a sidewalk as part of its "Safe Routes to Schools" program. Thankfully, no pedestrians have been hit by cars in the entire 45 years that some of our residents have lived here.

We have repeatedly asked County representatives how and why our street was selected for sidewalk construction. Only last year were we shown two lines in a May 2001, three-paragraph County staff report stating that an unnamed delegation had visited our block and decided -- without consulting Taylor School or homeowners -- that a sidewalk should be built. No explanation was provided.

Longtime Taylor School Principal Rob Hindman tells us he and the PTA have never regarded our

block as a problem for kids walking to school and have never heard a complaint about the street from parents. No doubt there are some neighborhood parents who, if asked, would just as soon see sidewalks installed for their kids to walk on. But many such parents have been content to simply send their kids to school up Stuart Street, just around the block from us, which already has a sidewalk.

For three years, we have requested the County perform a credible study of the car traffic and pedestrian use of the block, but it has never been done. We also have suggested that if the morning "rush" of parents driving their kids to school poses a threat to walking children, let's address the problem at its root. We have proposed better traffic signs on the street -- marking the hairpin turn, mandating a slower speed limit, and indicating the presence of young pedestrians. If that is not enough to safeguard this pedestrian route, we have proposed limiting car traffic to local access during walk-to-school hours, as has been done on a number of other Arlington streets. The County has rebuffed all these safety-enhancing proposals.

Instead, Arlington officials have returned year after year with essentially the same sidewalk blueprints. We finally realized that "Safe Routes to Schools" is funded solely to build sidewalks, and that this single approach apparently leaves no room for other remedies to safety concerns -- no matter how loosely based those concerns may be.

Why does our block unanimously oppose sidewalks? County officials have told us their sidewalk plan could include some or all of the following:

- Cutting down mature trees and other expensive landscaping lining the street, further narrowing tiny yards and substituting pavement for greenery and natural beauty.
 - Eliminating the only available level off-street parking for some homeowners.
 - Narrowing the street in certain areas, making passage up the hill and around the sharp curve more dangerous -- particularly if pedestrians or stopped trucks are in the street. (Decreased maneuverability is of particular concern in fall and
- (continued on p. 9)**

The County's Update on 25th Road's NCAC Project

Jennifer Fioretti

A successful 50 percent design review block meeting was held Tuesday, February 22 for the 25th Road North Neighborhood Conservation Street Improvement Project. The project, qualified through a two-step neighborhood petition process and then funded by the County Board in Spring 2003, is now in Stage 3: design of the active project development process. County staff will revise the 50 percent plans to include the comments and concerns vetted by the residents at the meeting. The County will be scheduling a 90 percent design block meeting within the next two months to review the changes made to the plans and the impacts to individual property, landscaping and trees with the neighbors. If no further changes are requested, County staff will prepare the right-of-way easement agreements, 100 percent final plans and the cost estimate. Construction is scheduled to begin in Fall 2006. For additional information please contact Jennifer Fioretti, the NC Capital Projects Coordinator, at 703-228-7938.

A History of the 25th Road NCAC Project

Tim Arthurs

During a severe rainstorm in 2002, street captain Jean Arthurs noticed waves of water coming into her 25th Road yard over the deteriorating gutter built by Arlington County. After the storm, neighborhood children heading for school noticed that the sidewalk had sunk near a neighbor's house. When asked why they walk in the street, the children replied that the asphalt sidewalk all along the street had broken up and they frequently tripped on the chunks of sidewalk. It was just easier to walk in the street. It was then that the neighbors of 25th Road decided the time had come for action, and they requested a sidewalk, curb and gutter repair project. The request was submitted for consideration to the Donaldson Run Civic Association. Subsequently, the project has moved through the process to funding and 50 percent drawings at present.

The neighbors had a productive discussion at the recent 50 percent meeting and hope to be able to work out the issues of where streetlights will be placed, what large trees might be saved, and how to align the sidewalks and the street entrances.

Spring Financial Seminar Series

Learn about estate planning, how to be a savvy consumer, and more through this free seminar series at the Arlington Central Library. All seminars are taught by professionals in the respective fields. All presenters pledge not to sell their own services during their seminars.

The seminars will be held from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library auditorium, 1015 North Quincy Street. Call 703-228-6417 for more information or to register.

April 6 All the Math You Need to Know to Get Rich
April 12 Creative Ways to be a Savvy Consumer
April 21 Financial Management for Women Part I
April 27 Financial Management for Women Part II
May 5 Estate Planning
May 10 How to Evaluate Stocks

Also, join us for a Saturday seminar on May 21 from 1:00 to 3:00 on Seven Secrets to Financial Independence.

All seminars are sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

A Week of Art

The Arlington Artist Alliance is proud to present a week full of art at Fort C.F. Smith Park. In conjunction with a multi-media art show and sale in the historic Hendry House, there will be ongoing free events. There are also opportunities to sign up for a workshop with some of Arlington's most prominent artists and teachers. The art show will open with a gala reception on Friday, April 1 from 6 to 8 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. For more information call Beth Hudgins at 703-532-4450.

Professional Help Around the House

Email mary@drca.org with recommendations.

Concrete/Stone work

Universal Stone, (703) 644-7777, referred by Anne Wilson, 525-0344

General Contractor

Karl Knudson, (703) 538-5865, carpentry, tile work, small additions, decks, referred by Karen Hanneman, 276-0787

Housecleaning

Vivian Villarroel, (703) 256-0973, referred by Connie Sorrentino, 528-2551

Professional Housecleaning Services, managed by Alba Isabel, (703) 928-9089, referred by Rob Jones, 276-0545

Mercedes Roldan, (703) 243-2962, referred by Laura Jackson, 312-0541

Aida Sales, (703) 273-6140, referred by Nedji Ellsworth, 243-4329

Maryen or Raul, (703) 321-5335, referred by Julia Ward Ciatti, 527-8728.

Landscaping and Yardwork

Andrew Preziosi, (703) 525-6170, referred by Leslie Curley, 243-9459

TP Lawn Service, owned and operated by Tuan Phan, (703) 553-0678 or cell (571) 243-8737, referred by Connie Sorrentino, 528-2551

Jose Sales, (703) 273-6140, referred by Nedji Ellsworth, 243-4329

A Cut Above Lawn and Landscaping Service, Patrick Rankin, (703) 536-3183, referred by Kathryn Ricard and Greg Gromada, 465-8564.

Need a Job Done? Hire a Neighbor!

Email mary@drca.org if you or someone you know is interested in providing a service listed below.

Babysitting

- Daniel Bronstein, 527-5714
- Meagan Vargas, 819-0275

Housesitting

- Kirk Hanneman, 527-4604
- Mindy Hanneman, 527-4604
- Meagan Vargas, 819-0275

Petsitting/Dogwalking

- MC Petcare, contact Cara at 812-8894 or Megan at 524-4922
- Jennifer Carpenter, 525-9414
- Debbie Walker, 243-1024
- Corinne Wiesner, 527-5566

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Arlington Farmers' Market

Enjoy fresh produce, freshly baked breads, meats, eggs, cheeses, mushrooms, honey, and more at the Arlington Farmers' Market, open every Saturday from 9 am until noon at the intersection of Courthouse Road and North 14th Street. On April 9 the market will begin its regular season hours from 8 am until noon.

**Do you have notice of a community event that you would like posted on one of Donaldson Run's kiosks?
Contact Maxine Nagel or Alan Kolick at (703) 524-5093 or by email at jkolick@aol.com**

Spring Lawn Care Class

Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia and Virginia Cooperative Extension will present a two-part course on the basics of spring lawn care designed to help Northern Virginia residents save time and money while protecting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

"Lawns: Clean and Green" will be held on Saturday, March 12, and Saturday, March 19, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Fairlington Community Center, 3308 South Stafford Street in Arlington.

The course will focus on caring for both new and established lawns. It will cover such issues as when and how to water and apply fertilizer, lime, and weed killer; how to choose the best turfgrass for specific conditions and performance; how to avoid mower damage to the turf; the use of overseeding, dethatching, and aeration to improve the health and appearance of the lawn; and how to ensure the safety of people, pets and wildlife when using lawn products.

The cost of the course is \$10 for both sessions. To register, send a check made payable to Arlington Extension Fund to the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, 3308 South Stafford Street, Arlington, Virginia 22206; or call, 703-228-6414.

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact the Arlington office of Virginia Cooperative Extension by calling (703) 228-6400/TDD/PC 1-800-1120 during the hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at least five business days prior to the event.

Southern Cooking

Come sample traditional southern recipes including turnip and collard greens, yams, black eyed peas, and oven fried chicken prepared by nutrition educator Monica Harsley. You'll learn tips, recipes, and techniques so you can prepare the dishes on your own. This class is on Saturday, April 9, 11:00-2:00 in room 15 at Fairlington Community Center, 3308 South Stafford Street. The cost is \$35. Call (703) 228-6417 to register. Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Dim Sum, Anyone?

Join chef Sherri Seymour for Asian cooking classes that will introduce you to new recipes, ingredients, and cooking techniques. All classes will be held in Room 15 at Fairlington Community Center, 3308 South Stafford Street in Arlington.

Asian Dim Sum Part I

On Saturday, April 2, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. learn the basics of Asian Dim Sum: fresh rolls and dumplings that feature both sweet and savory fillings. Dim sum translates to "heart's delight." Techniques and cooking methods will be demonstrated and practiced, along with a discussion of ingredients. THIS IS A HANDS-ON CLASS! Be prepared to help assemble various kinds of dim sum. The more we prepare, the more we eat! Bring an apron if you like to wear one. Cost: \$35.

Asian Dim Sum Part II

This class, on Saturday, April 16 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. will follow up on what was taught in dim sum part I and will introduce new recipes and techniques. If you took the dim sum class we offered in the fall, this would be a perfect addition to what you learned then. You do not have to take part I in order to take part II. Cost: \$35 (Take both dim sum classes and pay \$65.)

Thai Dinner

On Saturday, April 30 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. learn basic techniques and ingredients for a Thai dinner. Among the dishes to be prepared will be Pad Thai, the Thai national dish and a favorite on many Thai restaurant menus. This class will include demonstration and tasting. Cost: \$35

For more information or to register, call 703-228-6417. These programs are sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Barbershop Harmony

The Arlingtones Barbershop Chorus will present "Here's to the Ladies" at 2:15 and 8:15 on Saturday, March 19 at Thomas Jefferson Community Theater. Ticket prices are \$12/\$10 for the afternoon performance or \$15/\$12 for the evening performance. For tickets and information, call 703-521-9331 or email bsbass@aol.com.

Traffic Calming Over Sidewalks (continued from p. 5)

winter, when leaf piles or snowdrifts may further constrict the street.)

- Removing several feet of retaining walls bordering driveways and replanning and relandscaping front yards on the right, to compensate for reduced maneuver room on a narrowed street.

We feel the costs to homeowners -- arguably the street's most frequent car and pedestrian users -- are quite high, while less intrusive traffic-calming alternatives could better enhance safety.

With these concerns in mind, we invited County Commissioner Walter Tejada to attend a September 28 County presentation on the latest sidewalk engineering plan. After hearing our concerns and frustrations, he recommended a new tack. At his urging, County officials now say they will undertake the traffic studies and community consultation they should have done from the start. Our block enthusiastically supports the goal of DRCA's 2000 Neighborhood Conservation Plan: "To preserve the character of our neighborhood as a quiet, wooded neighborhood, to preserve and improve the parks and green spaces that we already have, and to improve the safety and beauty of our neighborhood by solving high-speed traffic problems."

We look forward to talking further with parents, school officials and our Donaldson Run neighbors to develop a traffic-calming-based initiative that reflects this objective. We hope sidewalks haven't become Arlington County's one-size-fits-all response, even in our more remote neighborhoods where there is so little traffic that the sound of falling leaves is about all you'll hear.

APS News Tips Publications

APS News Tips is a bi-weekly listing of information about Arlington Public Schools, compiled by APS Department of School & Community Relations. Go to www.arlington.k12.va.us/SCR/pubs/NewsTips.

ZORC (continued from p. 2)

varies from 45 percent in the smallest (R-5) lots down to 20 percent in the largest (R-20) lots. (The other proposals are 40 percent in R-6, 35 percent in R-8, and 32 percent in R-10.) The County Manager has proposed increasing from 20 percent to 25 percent the proposed limit for R-20 lots (which constitute only about one percent of all residential lots in Arlington). According to the County Manager, these proposals would be consistent with existing construction on about 94.5 percent of all residential lots today. The County Board has asked for confirmation of this assessment.

- The proposals would permit an additional five percent in lot coverage for homes with detached rear garages (in part to accommodate the need for longer driveways), and an additional three percent for homes with front porches.

- The proposals also include limits on lot coverage for the main building (the portion of construction that excludes accessory buildings and driveways), and for construction on "oversize" lots (e.g., a lot of 15,000 square feet in an R-10 district). For most districts, the County Manager has concluded that these proposals are more consistent with existing construction than the overall lot coverage proposals described above.

As noted in DRCA's last newsletter, the County Manager's principal recommended change to these limits would be to provide greater flexibility for construction of additions to existing homes, where such additions might otherwise put the footprint over the new limits. He would do this by maintaining the old 56 percent limit where additions would not either relocate more than 50 percent of the main building's outer walls or more than double the main building's existing footprint. The County Board has asked for further study on how restrictive the proposed new lot coverage limits would be on the construction of additions, e.g., by measuring how close to such limits existing homes would be. Note that in confined spaces construction may be limited by other provisions of the ordinance (such as setback requirements) even if not limited by the lot coverage rules.

Please attend DRCA's March 30 meeting so that we can provide input to the Board on the views of our members on these proposals.

Unified Residential Development Request Within DRCA

Maxine Nagel

Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) Executive Board members met with Donaldson Run neighbor Bill Johnston during the February 17 executive committee meeting to discuss Johnston's Unified Residential Development (URD) request to subdivide his lot and build a new house adjacent to his existing dwelling.

Johnston, who lives at 2244 North Upton Street, is seeking the URD in order to divide his lot along a line that would leave the street-side boundary approximately eight feet shorter than is required by county code. Without the URD, Johnston would have to remove the front porch on his existing home and create a jagged lot line in order to meet the existing county codes. Johnston, who has a "by right" ability to build on his adjacent lot, requested a "statement of no objection" from the civic association for his URD request.

Johnston provided DRCA executive committee members blueprints on his proposed home and the two property line options. Under Johnston's proposal, his current 25,000-square-foot lot would be subdivided into lots of approximately 15,000 square feet (existing residence) and 9,600 square feet (proposed residence). Executive committee members questioned Johnston about the size of the proposed new dwelling, drainage issues, tree removal on the building lot, and the reaction of and impact on the nearby neighbors. Johnston, who said that he has shared his plans with his immediate neighbors, indicated that the new house would be approximately the same size as his existing dwelling. Further, Johnston said that some tree removal would be necessary but that drainage issues have been addressed.

DRCA President Ned Rhodes has asked Johnston to provide additional information (exact lot size, total square footage of the new dwelling, percentage of lot coverage, and placement of the new house) before the civic association makes a final decision on filing a "statement of no objection."

Neighbors with questions or comments should contact Ned Rhodes at 703-741-0861 or ned@drca.org. Johnston will be available at the March 30 DRCA general membership meeting at Taylor School to discuss his URD request and to display his proposed blueprints.

Neighborhood Conservation News

Ned W. Rhodes

Donaldson Run has four projects in the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) hopper that are all in various stages of completion.

1. Donaldson Run Stream Restoration – Construction has been delayed while affected neighbors sign construction easements. Delays are also a result of a state-mandated rule that says no construction can be done in a stream from February to June.
2. 25th Road Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk – The County and neighbors recently had a 50 percent plan meeting. There were follow-up issues resulting from the meeting, but if all goes smoothly a 90 percent plan meeting should occur in approximately two months. Construction would likely begin next year (see p. 6 for more information).
3. Vermont Street Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk – The 50 percent meeting has been held and DRCA is in the process of scheduling a 90 percent plan meeting.
4. Vermont Street Streetlights – The Vermont Street project was divided into two projects to meet NCAC cost guidelines. Construction on both projects should occur at the same time.

Last fall DRCA voted as its priority NCAC project the restoration of Tributary B of Donaldson Run. Unfortunately, that project was not funded at the fall funding round by NCAC. DRCA has the opportunity once again to ask that it be funded at the spring NCAC funding round. This is the only Neighborhood Conservation project DRCA has in the works. I will ask that we vote this our number one priority project at the March 30 meeting so that it can be considered for funding.

Contact me at ned@drca.org with any questions or comments or check the web site www.drca.org for more information on how an idea becomes an NCAC project.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Please check your mailing label to see the latest year for which dues have been paid. Dues cover a calendar year. Contributions are not tax deductible.

Dues: \$15 per household per calendar year. Payment for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years (circle one)

Total dues: \$ _____ Newsletter contribution: \$ _____ Total enclosed: \$ _____

New resident: Yes _____ No _____

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____ email address: _____

Address: _____

Special Interests/Volunteer Areas/Comments: _____

Please make check payable to **Donaldson Run Civic Association.**

Mail to: Elizabeth Apple, Treasurer, 4207 North 31st Street, Arlington, VA 22207

Treasurer's Report

Elizabeth Apple

First, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has already sent in his/her dues for 2005.

Second, for everyone who has put this task aside, this is a gentle reminder to renew your membership today. Your dues help to cover the cost of the quarterly newsletter, which is mailed to all 951 households within the Donaldson Run Civic Association boundaries. The cost of printing and mailing the newsletter is now almost \$700 per issue. You can see why your dues and additional (non-tax deductible) contributions are so important.

If you are unsure whether you have already renewed for 2005, check the mailing label on the back page of this newsletter. If your label says "Resident", the members of the DRCA Board invite you to join your neighborhood civic association. Just fill out the form above and mail it or give it to Elizabeth Apple at the next membership meeting. We look forward to seeing you at the March 30 meeting!

The Bridge Over Troubled Waters

Ned W. Rhodes

Although the waters are not troubled, the Military Road "bridge" seems to be the longest construction project in history. This project has been going on for over a year now, but I am happy to report that the end may be in sight.

The bridge over Donaldson Run at Military Road needed to be replaced due to previous storm damage. It seemed like a simple process. Dig up the old, put in the new castings and then fix the road. The problem was that there were some major utilities that needed to be moved before the construction could actually begin. The utility companies did not give us priority due to hurricanes, snowstorms and flooding in the area.

I receive weekly updates from the County now and all the utility work has been done and the contractor has put in most, if not all, of the new pre-cast sections of the bridge. Things should move along nicely now and the project is scheduled for completion in May of this year. Please check the first page of our web site (www.drca.org) for the weekly bridge updates.

Donaldson Run Civic Association
c/o Elizabeth Apple, Treasurer
4207 North 31st Street, Arlington, VA 22207

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This is your neighborhood newsletter
See page 2 for Civic Association information.

DRCA Meeting

Wednesday, March 30 at 7:30 p.m.
Taylor Elementary School, First Grade Pod
2600 North Stuart Street

Agenda:

**Department of Environmental Services Presentation,
Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC) Update,
and
Sidewalks on North 25th Street-A Discussion**
please note: social "half hour" at 7 p.m.

Spring is Here!

Trout Fishing Season,

Saturday, March 19, 9 a.m. Rainbow trout will be stocked in Four Mile Run from Bon Air Park south to Barcroft Park. After opening day, fishing is allowed daily from sunrise to a half hour after sunset. Anglers over 15 must have a Virginia State Fishing License. "Kids Only" Fishing in Bon Air Park will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Kids 15 and under, on opening day only, can drop in at Bon Air Park at our specially designated "kids only" area. No registration is needed. For more information, call 703-525-0168.

Flowers and Folklore,

Saturday, March 19, 11 a.m. - noon, ages 8 and up. Spring wildflowers--their presence and identities-- will be revealed through a slide show and walk. \$1 fee. Registration is required. Call 703-228-3403. Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road.

Sudsy Soapmaking Fun

Friday, March 25, 10 a.m. - Noon, Adults and children ages 6 and older with a parent. Make colorful, fragrant soaps for adding to an Easter basket or for giving as a homemade gift. Materials will be supplied. \$2 fee per tray. Registration is required. Call 703-243-7329. Meet at the Tractor Barn at Fort C.F. Smith Park and Historical Site, 2411 North 24th Street.

17th Annual Potomac River Watershed Clean-Up

Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. - Noon, Adults. It's time to take pride in the Potomac and take out the trash! Remove trash from the challenging stretch of trail between Gulf Branch and Pimmit Run. Trash bags will be required. Free, no registration required. Meet at the trailhead at the intersection of North 36th Road and North Nelson Street in Arlington. Call Gulf Branch Nature Center for more information, 703-228-3403.