

FEDERATION

of Citizens Associations

Established 1940

January 2007

THE BULLETIN

Volume 56, Number 5

General Membership Meeting



Thursday, January 18, 2007

7:30 p.m.

**Packard Center Main Conference Room
4022 Hummer Road, Annandale**

**Guest Speakers: Dr. Richard Moniuszko,
Deputy Superintendent, and
Deidra McLaughlin, Chief Financial Officer
Fairfax County Public Schools**

Topic: Education in Fairfax County



Upcoming Membership Meetings

February 15, 2007 7:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker:

**The Honorable Catherine M. Hudgins
Supervisor, Hunter Mill District**

Topic: Growth

**Meeting Location to be announced in the next
newsletter.**

March 29, 2007 7:30 p.m.

(Please note this is the last Thursday of the month.)

**Guest Speaker: Tony Griffin
Fairfax County Executive**

**Topic: The County Executive's Advertised
Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Plan**



2007 Federation Board Meetings

All Board meetings at 7:30 p.m. at the Packard Center.

**January 25 February 22
March 8 (the second Thursday of the month)
April 26 May 24 June 28**



President's Message

The NEXT FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP MEETING is THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, at 7:30 p.m. at The Packard Center. We will have a program on Fairfax County Public Schools presented by **Dr. Richard Moniuszko**, Deputy Superintendent, and **Deidra McLaughlin**, Chief Financial Officer. We are also expecting **Janet Oleszek**, At-Large School Board Member, to attend. As the county real estate market experiences a slowdown, the resultant level of tax receipts may pressure a budget tightening as the school system accounts for more than 50% of the county general fund expenditures. The upcoming school budget predictions, priorities and projections will be very interesting topics.

At its December 21 meeting, the Federation Board voted unanimously to recommend a **Resolution on Tyson's Tunnel** to the membership for consideration. The resolution is enclosed for review and will be on the January 18 agenda. I express gratitude to **Earl Flanagan** and **Roger Hoskins**, Transportation Committee Co-Chairs, for reviewing the resolution. Mr. Flanagan has accepted an appointment to the Fairfax County Planning Commission, and will be leaving the Federation Board. On behalf of the Federation, I thank him for his volunteerism and wish him well in his new endeavor; our loss is the Planning Commission's gain.

At our December 14 Membership Meeting, **Lee District Supervisor Dana Kauffman** gave an outstanding review of the METRO rail and bus system. The system's successes and challenges, presented by Supervisor Kauffman, are captured in the meeting minutes (see page two). The statistical rankings of our rail and bus system is remarkable and worth your time to review.

By the time you read this, I will have presented the Federation's 2007 **Legislative Program** to our Northern Virginia Delegation in the General Assembly on January 6. Our Legislative Program is posted on our website for access and downloading.

I am very pleased to announce that **Congressman Tom Davis** (11th District) has graciously accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker at the Federation **Citizen of the Year Awards Banquet** on **March 11** at the Fairview Marriott. This is one of the premier events in the county, so give some thought to a deserving individual and submit her or his nomination by the January 15 deadline. A nomination form is available on our website.

We are planning a **February 15** Membership program on **Growth** with **Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins** and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. We are still checking out venues, possibly a high school, for the proposed interactive program, so be ready to go on the road in February with The Federation! The February newsletter will announce the meeting location.

Our **March 29** Membership Meeting will feature **County Executive Tony**
(see President's Message - continued on page 5)

**Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of December 14, 2006**

DRAFT MINUTES

For approval at the January 18, 2007 membership meeting.

The meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) President John Jennison reviewed the calendar for the year. The minutes for the November 16 membership meeting were unanimously approved. President Jennison introduced Lee District Supervisor Dana Kauffman, who is also a member of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board (WMATA, commonly known as Metro) and who spoke on issues related to the Metro system.

Program

Supervisor Kauffman noted the recent tragedy involving the deaths of two Metro track walkers. Track walkers inspect the tracks for cracking and other dangers and are an essential part of rail maintenance.

Metro was established in 1967 by an interstate compact among Maryland, Virginia, and the District. It is a unique multijurisdictional body in which each of the three partners has a veto and is one of the few areas in which regionalism has really worked. The Metro Board consists of twelve members; there are four from each of the three member jurisdictions, of whom two are voting and two nonvoting. The Virginia members are Fairfax County Supervisors Kauffmann (voting) and Cathy Hudgins (nonvoting), Bill Euille of Alexandria, and Chris Zimmerman of Arlington.

Metro has about 10,000 employees and a billion dollar budget. Metro riders (on both buses and rail) account for 1.1 million daily trips on a typical week day, of which about 700,000 are by rail. Metro is the second largest rail transit in the country by ridership, larger than other systems like Chicago; New York is the first. It is the sixth largest bus transit system in the country. Unlike other transit systems, it has seen steady growth in ridership until this year, when the growth rate flattened to about 2 percent. Metro is one of the largest parking operators in the country (following Disney World) with 60,000 parking spots; there has been some discussion of contracting out the parking service. The system faces a severe limit because it is a two-track system. Other transit systems with more tracks can operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, because they can close tracks for maintenance and still operate trains normally on the others.

Metro saves the region 10 million tons of air pollutants a year and 80 million gallons of gas; the estimated reduction in car ridership on area roads is the equivalent of 1400 lane miles or 11.5 percent of current lane miles. Its operation cuts commuting time for all commuters in the area significantly by keeping cars off the road. Federal employees make up about 47 percent of the peak ridership; in Fairfax County, federal employee passengers are especially concentrated toward the southeast part of the county.

No US transit system can support itself from fares alone. Metro relies on contributions from local governments and the federal government. It has also pursued advertising revenues and there may be some more opportunity there. Metro is the only major US transit system for which there is no dedicated source of revenue. Most of the budget goes toward operating expenses. In Virginia, contributions come from the localities, not the state; in Maryland, contributions are from the state, so

the Maryland Board members are gubernatorial appointees. Fairfax County contributes about \$60 million annually for operating and capital costs. Federal support is received only for capital expenses; there is no federal subsidy for operating costs. There was an attempt by Congressman Davis in the last Congress to secure substantial federal funds provided the localities committed other funds first and certain other conditions were met. Although the bill passed in the House, it died in the Senate. It could be submitted again in the next Congress.

The original plan for the rail system has been completed, although rail to Dulles will be next and other expansions are possible; Supervisor Kauffman strongly supports the tunnel option for Dulles rail. For Metro, this is a fundamental change from the three decades during which new station construction was a constant. Maintenance issues have become a concern due to aging equipment and deferred maintenance. The mean time between failures has been going down for both bus and rail, which means increased service issues. In addition, about a third of Metro's mechanics will be eligible to retire in the next few years. Metro's land use policies have varied widely, but currently the system relies on local governments to set the bar, and generally follows their preferences. The Metro Board is currently in the process of adding an Inspector General.

The recently reported fare increases and other changes were staff proposals at the time they were reported. The Metro Board has just met on the proposals and there is some time before final decisions are made. One idea is to encourage off-peak ridership with fare differentials; the main unused capacity of the system is, of course, in the off-peak hours.

Supervisor Kauffman answered questions on best practices, restrooms in stations, musical performers in stations, paratransit (transit for the disabled), Smartrip cards, parking, adding more standing room or longer cars, Metro's emergency preparedness, signage, and the transit impact of the BRAC changes to staffing at Fort Belvoir, and the Tysons rail tunnel. He advocated use of the General Services Administration (GSA) warehouses near the Franconia-Springfield station for possible use for the base staff expansion, since they are so close to the Metro; an issue has been that these are on GSA, rather than Department of Defense, land, and whether the land would be made available for this expansion.

In responding to the question on emergency preparedness, Supervisor Kauffman made a special point of his pride in Metro's performance on September 11, 2001, which he described as one of the bright, shining moments in its history. He noted that the system continued to operate despite a request from DC police that it close down, and that Metro rail and bus operators returned to the city over and over without consideration of personal danger, providing a crucial means of evacuation for workers in the city.

Business Meeting

a. Scott Schlegel, the new Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report, which was received and filed. The previous Treasurer, Jeff Parnes, presented the proposed budget for the year, which included actual figures for the months to date. It was approved unanimously.

b. Bill Hanks presented the CO2 resolution on behalf of the

(see Draft Minutes - continued on page 3)

(Draft Minutes - continued from page 2)

Resolution Committee which, after extended discussion and inclusion of several friendly amendments, was unanimously recommended to the membership by the Federation Board. Flint Webb, Environmental Chair, thanked Sally Ormsby for carrying the resolution forward at the previous Board meeting in his absence and accepted a friendly amendment to add language asking the county to set an emissions reduction goal. The resolution, as amended, was adopted unanimously. Flint and Sally will draft language for a transmittal letter and forward that to President John Jennison.

c. Carol Hawn noted the next newsletter deadline is December 29.

d. Sally Ormsby presented a resolution to add a position on traffic red-light cameras to the current Federation legislative package. Localities had previously been permitted to use these cameras to detect cars that ran red lights, but the provision was allowed to lapse by the 2005 General Assembly. The resolution was defeated with 5 in favor and 14 against.

e. President John Jennison noted that Transportation Committee co-chair Earl Flanagan has resigned from that position effective December 31 because of his new appointment as a Planning Commissioner for the Mount Vernon District. He thanked him for his service to the Federation and presented him with a Federation mug.

f. Steve DelBianco reported that, at President John Jennison's request, he had brought with him the McLean Civic Association's recently passed resolution in support of the Tysons tunnel. With the permission of Transportation Committee co-chairs Earl Flanagan and Roger Hoskins, he read the resolution, with the idea of adopting a similar Federation resolution. After questions arose about some details, the resolution was sent to the Transportation Committee for immediate consideration.

g. Charles Dane, Education Committee chairman, noted that the next Federation membership meeting will be on education. The Education Committee will review the superintendent's budget once it is available.

h. Jeff Parnes reported that he has made some enhancements to the membership database. He will work with John, Carol, and Scott to gather all new data that comes in, to keep the database current.

i. Environmental Committee co-chair Flint Webb thanked the membership again for passing the CO2 resolution and noted some air quality issues. A recent Department of Energy analysis of the Mirant coal plant predicts that the excess deaths caused by the operation of the plant is estimated to be 3.8 per year.

j. Jeff Parnes noted that he is making changes to the website to reduce or eliminate spam e-mails, a process which has been time-consuming because of the number of web pages involved. He also noted that only he, as the webmaster, can send e-mails to the protected list of all Federation members.

k. Steve DelBianco, chair of the Land Use Committee, presented a resolution on minimum lot widths, the fifth in a series of resolutions on zoning changes. It was unanimously approved as amended.

l. Jeff Parnes reported the next Sully District Council meeting will

be a report by legislators on transportation funding. Roger Hoskins reported the Mason council has changed to quarterly meetings.

m. Sally Ormsby reported that the Citizen of the Year banquet will be March 11 at the Fairview Marriott.

Next Membership Meeting: January 18, "Education in Fairfax County" with Fairfax County Public Schools deputy superintendent Dr. Richard Moniuszko and CFO Diedra McLaughlin.

Next Board Meeting: December 21, 2006.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Goals of TysonsTunnel.org

For adoption at the January 18, 2007 membership meeting.

WHEREAS, the McLean Chamber of Commerce has created Tysons Tunnel, Inc., doing business as *TysonsTunnel.org* to promote a large-bore tunnel option under Tysons Corner for the Metrorail extension to Dulles International Airport, and

WHEREAS, the Board of the McLean Citizens Association on November 1, 2006 adopted a resolution supporting the goals of *TysonsTunnel.org*, and

WHEREAS, *TysonsTunnel.org* seeks to achieve:

- 1) public competitive bidding of the Final Design of the Construction of the Project; and
- (2) simultaneous consideration of a 3.5 mile tunnel beneath the entire length of Tysons Corner; and
- (3) side-by-side competitive bidding of the Tunnel Option and the Aerial Option.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (the Federation) that the Governor of Virginia and Northern Virginia congressional and state delegations continue to explore the viability of a tunnel option with the Federal Transportation Administration; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Federation expresses its support for the goals of *TysonsTunnel.org* if amended to achieve:

- (1) public competitive bidding of the Final Design of the Construction of the Project; and
- (2) simultaneous consideration of a 3.5 mile tunnel beneath the entire length of Tysons Corner with the Aerial Design; and
- (3) side-by-side competitive bidding of the Tunnel Option and the Aerial Option; and
- (4) total life cycle costs are included in any side-by-side competitive bidding.

Steve DelBianco, Land Use Committee Chair

Roger Hoskins, Transportation Committee Chair

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Adopted Resolution on
Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) Regarding
Waiver of Minimum Lot Widths

(Due of the timing of the Planning Commission public hearing on this ZOA before our next meeting, it was discussed and unanimously approved by the Federation membership at its December 14, 2006 meeting.)

Background

Current law allows property owners to seek variances to minimum lot width, yard setbacks, and maximum fence height, subject to review by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). In 2004, the Supreme Court of Virginia re-affirmed that current law allows variances only if strict adherence to the Zoning Ordinance would restrict all reasonable use of the property.

The Board of Supervisors subsequently determined that the County should have more flexibility in granting variances, or "modifications", to zoning requirements. In late 2005, Planning & Zoning Staff published a table of potential modifications and conducted several work sessions to gather public comments.

In January 2006, the Board of Supervisors asked Staff for a series of ZOAs, and four amendments were approved in 2006:

1. Process changes related to fence and yard setbacks in conjunction with other development applications, plus a change to the method for measuring the height of accessory structures. These changes were adopted in May, 2006.
2. Fifty percent Reduction in Minimum Required Yards. These changes were adopted in July, 2006.
3. Changes related to carport enclosures and to minimum required yards for pop-up additions to existing structures. These changes were adopted in November, 2006.
4. Increase maximum fence/wall height. These changes were adopted in October, 2006.

The subject of this resolution is a proposed ZOA to allow waivers of minimum lot width. This ZOA was advertised on December 4, 2006 with a Planning Commission Public Hearing scheduled for January 11, 2007 and the Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on February 26, 2007.

Excerpts from Staff Report, published December 4, 2006
 (the full text available at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoningordinance/proposed/lotwidthwaiver.pdf (13 pages))

Because waivers of the minimum lot width requirements are land use decisions that may impact the lot yield that can be achieved on the property, it is staff's opinion that such requests should be determined by the Board of Supervisors, rather than by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). As such, it is staff's recommendation that Sect. 9-610 be revised to permit the Board to approve, either in conjunction with the approval of a rezoning or as a special exception, the waiver of minimum lot width requirements in all residential districts, except for all cluster subdivisions. (page 2)

Staff also proposes to include a new standard in Sect. 9-610 that requires that such waiver must result in a development that preserves existing vegetation, topography, historic resources and/or other environmental features to the greatest extent practical. This standard was added in recognition that there may be some circumstances in which it is more appropriate to allow pipestem driveways in order to preserve trees and other environmental features on the property rather than necessitate the construction of a public street. It is staff's intent to establish the special exception for a waiver of minimum lot width for potential use in those situations where the subdivision of property into two or

more lots would otherwise require the construction of additional public street frontage in order to meet the lot width requirements and/or where the installation of multiple driveways to a public street would have detrimental impacts on the environment, historic resources and/or the transportation network in the vicinity of the proposed subdivision. (page 3)

From the zoning perspective, this amendment does not impact density, since density is determined by the Zoning Ordinance for each separate zoning district or by the Board in conjunction with a rezoning. Neither the Board nor the BZA can increase density above the maximum specified in the Zoning Ordinance. What a waiver of lot width could permit, however, is an increase in the lot yield that is attainable on the property. While seemingly a matter of semantics to many, there is a distinct difference between density and lot yield and the terms are not interchangeable from a zoning perspective. It was suggested at several of the public input sessions that the lot width waiver should only be granted where there would be no increase in lot yield. Under this suggestion, a lot width waiver could only be granted if the application property already has sufficient lot width to support each of the proposed lots, but because of an environmental concern, for example, the Board may find that creating lots with a reduced lot width will address that concern. While staff supports this intent, we do not believe the lot width waiver should be so severely limited. Staff believes there may be appropriate situations where sufficient lot width does not exist, but a lot width waiver may be a better alternative than the construction of a public street, which may be the only alternative to subdivision, absent approval of a reduction of lot width. Staff believes the Board should have the opportunity to evaluate these requests on a case-by-case basis and to take action on each application based on its individual merits. (page 3)

Adopted Resolution

WHEREAS, County Staff has proposed an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that will establish a special exception to waive minimum lot width in all residential districts other than cluster developments; and

WHEREAS, the character and quality of an existing neighborhood might be unalterably compromised when new, subdivided lots are substantially narrower than surrounding lots; and

WHEREAS, the character and quality of an existing neighborhood might be unalterably compromised when a pipestem subdivision is permitted; and

WHEREAS, the proposed waiver would allow subdivision of lots without having to satisfy the current standard, whereby a lot width variance may be granted only when strict application of the zoning ordinance would "interfere with all reasonable beneficial uses of the property, taken as a whole." (Cochran, 267 Va. At 766,594).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations strongly recommends that the subject ZOA be deferred until more rigorous standards for relief are established, including the following:

1. Lot width waivers in applications involving subdivision of lots should not be granted if the result will increase the yield of allowable dwelling units on the subject property.
2. For any given applicant, the grant of a lot width waiver should preclude the granting of relief for minimum required side yards.
3. Waivers should result in lot widths that are no less than 75% of the minimum lot width requirements.
4. For residential properties, waivers should be granted only after the applicant affirms that the relief sought is consistent with any applicable homeowner and/or citizens association covenants.

Steve DelBianco, Land Use Committee Chair

www.fairfaxfederation.org

(President's Message - continued from page 1)

Griffin, who will discuss the upcoming advertised fiscal year 2008 **County Budget**. Our **April 19** Membership Meeting will feature "Tourism in Fairfax County - FX Marks the Spot," and **Jamestown 2007**. On **May 17**, we will have a "Report From Richmond", and hear of the challenges of the upcoming General Assembly session. We will wrap up the year on **June 21** with a Picnic and **Chairman Gerry Connolly** giving his "State of the County" presentation. Our Human Services Committee Co-chairs **Tania Hossain** and **Bettina Lawton** continue to work on the **Emergency Preparedness Forum** in the Spring with time and place to be determined.

Please visit our website, www.fairfaxfederation.org, and sign up to receive notification when the Bulletin is available online or whether there is a Federation meeting schedule change due to inclement weather. As always, if you would like to become more involved with, or have questions about the Federation, please feel free to contact me or any other board member.

John Jennison, President

FedPres2006@FairfaxFederation.org

(703) 591-5586

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

and

The Washington Post

request the pleasure of your company at the
Fifty-seventh Annual Awards Banquet

honoring the

2006 Fairfax County Citizen of the Year

Guest Speaker

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis

U. S. Representative, Eleventh District

Sunday, the Eleventh of March

at the

Fairview Park Marriott Hotel

**3111 Fairview Park Drive
Falls Church, Virginia**

Reception 6:30 p.m.

Dinner 7:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact Sally Ormsby, Banquet Chair, at (703) 273-2048.

Green Breakfast Rescheduled

The 24th Green Breakfast has been rescheduled to Saturday, January 20, 2007 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at the Old Country Buffet in the Fair City Mall. The mall is located at the intersection of Route 236 (Main Street) and Pickett Road in Fairfax City. Please note the Old Country Buffet is moving "down the hall" and will now be located next to the Cinema Arts Theater in the same mall.

The program will be "*I'm a nest!*" aka **IMA + NEST**
(Translation: Invasive Management Area and Neighborhood Ecological Stewardship Training)

Speakers: Meghan Fellows, Natural Resource Specialist, Fairfax County Park Authority and Joanna Cornell, Watershed Specialist, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District

Cost: About \$7.50 - pay the cashier as you arrive. If you are a senior, ask for the discount. No reservations are necessary. You may bring fliers on your organization's events and activities. There will also be time for announcements. For more information, contact Sally Ormsby at (703) 273-2048.

It's Still the Season, Fairfax Style

Through President's Day, February 19th, you can take advantage of offers from over 40 Fairfax County hotels and use a free interactive planner allowing you to discover the region's winter festivities. Anyone who books a hotel room can instantly receive a free booklet of offers at more than 25 area attractions, restaurants, and retailers. To take advantage of this, visit www.fxva.com.

Virginia's 400th Commemoration Events Underway

The Fairfax County Virginia 2007 Community Citizen Planning Committee encourages residents to participate in upcoming 400th Commemoration events. You can receive schedules and other information via periodic email updates. To subscribe, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/email/lists. Look under "General News and Information", and subscribe to "Virginia 2007 - 400th Anniversary Celebration Information." For more information, you can also contact the Office of Public Affairs at (703) 324-3187.

Meeting Cancellation Policy

If either Fairfax County Government or Schools are closed after 12:00 noon the day of a Federation membership meeting, or if it is announced that Fairfax County Government or Schools will be closed the day after a scheduled Federation membership meeting due to inclement weather or other emergency, the Federation will not hold that event. This does not pertain to regularly scheduled closures. Membership meetings will not be rescheduled. We will attempt to post the cancellation on www.fairfaxfederation.org or you can call (703) 266-6872 for more information.

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
4022 Hummer Road, Annandale VA 22003

www.fairfaxfederation.org

2006-07 President: John Jennison
Newsletter Editor: Carol Hawn

The Bulletin is the newsletter of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations. It is published monthly, with the exception of July and August. The purpose is to provide information to member communities, federal, state, and local officials, and other interested persons in Fairfax County. Articles reflect the view of their author and may be reprinted with the use of the following citation: *The Bulletin* of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations.

Please contact Carol Hawn at (703) 266-6872 or cahawn@att.net with name and address changes, comments, or suggestions.

Fairfax County
FEDERATION
of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003

**Membership
Meeting**

Thursday,
January 18, 2007

7:30 p.m.

The Packard Center
4022 Hummer Road
Annandale

**Topic: Education in
Fairfax County**

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**Directions to the
Packard Center, located in Annandale Community Park**

Take I-495 (Capital Beltway) to Little River Turnpike (Route 236 - Exit 52B);
go east toward Annandale.

Turn left at the first stop light onto Hummer Road.

Go 200 yards to the entrance of Annandale Community Park on the left.

Keep right to the large parking lot.

Please use the left entrance into the Packard Center Building.

We wish you a safe and prosperous 2007!

www.fairfaxfederation.org