

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of September 18, 2008
MINUTES

The September 18 membership meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) President Jeff Parnes spoke in praise of Sally Ormsby, who passed away earlier in the week. Among other roles at the Federation, she was the Chair of the Legislative and Budget Committees, and a past President and past Citizen of the Year. Those present observed a moment of silence.

Program

President Jeff Parnes then introduced the first of two speakers for the evening, Elizabeth Murray, executive director of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. This year, the orchestra is offering an unusual concert series as it selects its next musical director, who will succeed long-time music director William Hudson. The search has been narrowed from 249 applicants to six finalists. As part of the selection process, each finalist will conduct a different concert program in this year's series.

President Jeff Parnes then introduced the evening's main speaker, William Lecos, president of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Lecos noted the long history of joint activities between the Chamber and the Federation, including co-sponsoring activities such as debates and issuing joint statements. He also noted that the Chamber had sponsored the senatorial debate that morning (September 18) between Mark Warner and Jim Gilmore.

He shared his personal reflections on Sally Ormsby, with whom he worked on several task forces and other bodies, beginning with the 1993 C-REX (Commission on Revenues and Expenses). He praised her involvement and knowledge of the process, including editing task force reports. He also noted that she helped name the Chamber's annual programs, Issues Fairfax, which bring together activists, businesses, non-profits, and others on big picture policy subjects such as land use planning. Issues Fairfax, which he said has been one of the Chamber's most successful programs, is now in its fifth year.

Shifting to the evening's planned topic, he noted that the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce speaks for a robust business community throughout the county. Its focus is often more policy-oriented, because there are also community Chambers of Commerce within the county for specific areas such as Herndon, Vienna, Springfield, and others. The Chamber advocates for the need to sustain excellence in Fairfax County as a key part of the business agenda; this includes schools, the environment, delivery of quality services, and the engagement of the business community in the life of the county. It argues for investing in schools, fire, police, and other services.

The next big set of issues in the county, he said, will involve continuing to manage our growth—to sustain excellence but through different tactics. The county is no longer a "green fields" setting with 100-acre lots available for development. The Laurel Hill (Lorton) redevelopment was the last chapter of that history. The next chapter will begin, he said, with the presentation of the Tysons Corner Task Force report to the Board of Supervisors on September 22. The report was produced through a 3 1/2 year process involving 37 task force members, including him. [Note: John Jennison has been the Federation representative to the task force.] The plan, he said, is transformational and aspirational. It envisions redeveloping Tysons Corner so that it becomes the first "edge city" to become a real city, one that will feel like Clarendon, Ballston, or Rosslyn. The plan covers an area of 1800 acres that would stretch from the Capitol to Georgetown if superimposed on a map. The changes would occur as Tysons continues to

serve as the economic center of the county, a logistical challenge that he compared to heart surgery while the patient is on a treadmill.

At present, there are 17,000 residents of the Tysons Corner area, but 167,000 parking spaces and 40 million square feet of parking. The current ratio of jobs to homes is more than 10 to 1. (He later stated it is 11 to 1, and that the plan seeks to reduce the ratio to 6 to 1.) This ratio needs to change through encouragement of additional residential options. Overall, the plan aims to absorb much of the projected residential growth in the county over 30 years, which is project to be equal to the growth that occurred in the last 30 years. The plan is absolutely hinged on the addition of four Metrorail stations in Tysons, but its major emphasis is to make changes that encourage pedestrian travel and circulator buses within the area. If successful, the plan could also be a model for other places within the county and around the country.

As planned, there was then a more general question and answer session on a variety of subjects. In response to questions, Mr. Lecos noted that BRAC, if done right, could be the catalyst to revive the southern part of the county. The remaining piece is the placement of 6700 workers in the Washington Administrative Support Group, who will not be based at Fort Belvoir or the Engineering Proving Grounds but at a third location, in order to reduce congestion. Originally, the county hoped they would be located at the old GSA warehouses near the Springfield Metro, providing an economic boost for Springfield and minimizing the traffic impact. Unfortunately, he said, it looked likely that they would instead be located at one of two sites within Alexandria, neither of which has as strong a Metrorail connection.

He also answered questions about the future of residential neighborhoods just outside the Tysons Corner plan area, about several major planned projects along the Route One corridor which are raising local concerns about traffic volume, about the community development authority process in Merrifield, about the likely impact of the economic and real-estate downturn on the county budget and the school system budget, about the HOT lanes project, and about the greater use of rail in local transit options.

Business Meeting —

- a. The minutes for the June 19 membership meeting were unanimously approved.
- b. The proposed Federation budget for 2008-09, which was prepared by Treasurer Scott Schlegel and reviewed by the Board over the summer, was presented to the membership. A motion to approve the budget was made and seconded and the budget was unanimously approved.
- c. President Jeff Parnes noted that the Board positions of Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary are vacant. If you would like more information about either position or know of someone who might be interested, please contact him directly through the Federation website.
- d. President Jeff Parnes also noted new, key vacancies due to Sally Ormsby's death. For many years, Sally served as the Legislative Chair and Budget Chair. In these roles, she drafted the Federation's annual legislative package and chaired the membership meeting at which the package was reviewed, amended, and approved. The Federation's positions were then presented to the joint northern Virginia delegation in January. She also, each year, drafted the Federation's resolution on the proposed county budget, which was similarly discussed, amended, and approved by the membership and became the basis of Federation testimony before the Board of Supervisors. The Federation Board is actively searching for a volunteer or volunteers to complete these tasks for this year, when decreased local and state revenues will force difficult budget choices. The Board is also seeking to fill two other committee chairmanships, for Human Services and Public Safety. Again, please contact Jeff Parnes directly through the Federation website if you would like to learn more about any of these positions.
- e. Jeff Parnes reported that the new electronic distribution of the Federation's newsletter, The Bulletin, has now been implemented. With a few exceptions, including the archival copy for the county library system, the newsletter will now be distributed by e-mail. He also noted that Carol

Hawn would be providing the Board with the 2008-09 deadlines to submit copy for the newsletter and that he has been creating a new membership database. He encourages associations which are renewing their membership to do so online via the Federation website to avoid questions about hand-written e-mail addresses that may arise from hand-written forms.

f. Under new business, Charles Dane, chair of the Education Committee, reported that the School Board was voting on the same night regarding the proposed consolidation of FCPS administrative facilities. He also reported that the county is soliciting input on broad budget priorities through community dialogue sessions, for which registration is required; the last of these is in November.

g. Also under new business, Gail Parker briefly addressed the meeting on the peak oil issue.

h. Jeff Parnes reported that the Innisfree Community Association is seeking advice on filing a lien. Two members of the audience agreed to provide information on the topic.

i. Jeff Parnes reviewed the year's calendar. October: Greater Washington 2050; November: Cool Communities; December: Legislative package; January: School budget; February: TBD; March: County budget; April: Report from Federation Representatives; May: Report from Richmond on General Assembly session; June: picnic and Board of Supervisors Chair.

j. Merrilee Pierce reminded the group that the November 4 election will include a park bond referendum and suggested that the Federation may wish to put forward a resolution of support. She noted and praised Sally Ormsby's work in past years (outside of the Federation) in organizing support for past bond referenda, including producing yard signs and other publicity.

k. John Jennison noted that the Citizen of the Year Committee, which he chairs as past president, will be advertising soon for nominations for this honor.

l. Charles Dane reported that the Education Committee just had its first meeting, which included a presentation on gifted and talented programs in the county, now being called Advanced Achievement.

m. Flint Webb, chair of the Environment Committee, reported that the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) has been vacated by the courts (the rule addresses air pollution in our region that was emitted elsewhere, typically in the Ohio River valley). In the absence of this rule, it will be difficult for our region to attain its particulate or PM standards. However, the ruling does not void certain other limits and caps, such as on NOx, which are now allocated differently, but still addressed. The region's state implementation plans (SIPs) are now not approvable because they relied upon CAIR, and the same applies to the modeling done to date. Resolution of this issue remains uncertain. Meanwhile, a regional climate change report has been produced. Flint is also serving on a panel for the Northern Virginia tree forum, which will address ways to encourage residents and local associations to plant trees to meet tree canopy and climate change goals.

o. Charles Dane, as First Vice President, reported that 22 associations have paid their 2008-09 membership dues. A reminder will be sent to those associations from whom dues have not yet been received.

p. Jeff Parnes reported, in Roger Hoskins's absence, on a recent Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. The schedule for HOT lanes envisions addition of new outer lanes to the Beltway by 2010, permitting creation and opening of the HOT lanes by 2012. About 50 bridges crossing the Beltway will also be affected and all will have pedestrian and bicycle links, although in some cases there are not yet paths or trails connecting to them. This is a design-build project, meaning that building will commence while some aspects of the design are still being completed.

q. Art Wells reported from Braddock that the September district council meeting included speakers on the county transit plan and on the county's assistance on the television transition to high definition. The October 24 meeting will deal with issues of land use, the environment, and development. Supervisor Sharon Bulova is planning a town meeting on October 21 on the county fiscal situation.

r. Jim Davis reported from Mount Vernon on concerns about several high-density projects at Engleside and Woodlawn, Hybla Valley, and Penn Daw, among other locations. These raise transportation issues all the way from the Beltway to Fort Belvoir.

s. Flint Wood reported from Providence that the year's first meeting included an excellent presentation on identity theft by Officer Wolf.

t. Don Hinman reported on progress on the booklet text he has worked on with the county p on how a community releases a developer's bond, but wishes to get more feedback. Jim Colby and he will work together offline on the document. Jeff Parnes noted that the Federation at one time had an Association Committee and that Don may wish to consider reviving this position.

u. Esther Ferington noted that is seeking a new representative for the Airports Advisory Committee. The current representative is willing to continue to serve in the meantime, but often encounters schedule conflicts. Please contact Esther, the Second Vice President, through the Federation website if you are interested in learning more about this position.

v. Merrilee Pierce reported that, before her death, Sally Ormsby stored her Federation-related records in the Virginia Room of the Fairfax County library system, where the Federation will have total access to those records. Sally Ormsby also gave the Virginia Room the 1953-1968 records which were recently returned to the Federation. These will be formally cataloged.

w. At the suggestion of President Jeff Parnes, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed that the Federation donate \$100 in Sally Ormsby's memory to the fund or organization her family designates for memorial contributions.

Next Membership Meeting: October 16, Greater Washington 2050.

Next Board Meeting: October 23.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm