

Membership Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19, 2009

Approved March 19, 2009

The February 19 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 greeted those present and introduced the evening's speaker, Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director, Coalition for Smarter Growth.

Program

Stewart Schwartz presented the "Blueprint for a Better Region," an approach to development created by the Coalition for Smarter Growth and the Piedmont Environmental Council. Stewart used a slide presentation that he did not leave with us; he reported that his presentation at the meeting was similar to (although updated and abbreviated) the Blueprint for a Better Region presentation on the Internet at <http://www.betterregion.org/>. The coalition's home page is <http://www.smartergrowth.net/> and its telephone number is 202.244.4408.

The mission of the Coalition for Smarter Growth is to ensure that transportation and development decisions accommodate growth while revitalizing communities, providing more housing and travel choices, and conserving our natural and historic areas. The coalition's effort centers on the DC region but extends to the Chesapeake Bay and the Blue Ridge because developments in one area affect neighboring areas. The blueprint offers a vision of where and how we can grow in a way that creates great places to live, work, and play. In addition to the plan, the coalition is concerned that the planning process features genuine cooperation between government, business, and residents.

Some of the major points provided in the presentation included:

- Traffic growth has been caused by mismatch between housing and job locations; more mixed use development is needed
- The area is lucky to have existing rail systems.
- Some areas near rail stations have been smartly developed (Metro Place, Arlington), while others are sorely lacking in development that offers livability.
- We should rethink livable corridors, for example based along trolley tracks.
- Communities ought to be planned so that people can park their cars once and walk to all daily activities from there. It would be even better if people could walk from their homes to their activities.
- Communities need open spaces such as pocket parks and town centers where people can mingle.
- Design charrettes should include visual preference surveys, education on New Urbanism, and traffic modeling.
- Planning should consider changing demographics; that is, to recognize and respond to changing needs and desires as the population ages.

- The solution is not more road capacity; the solution is demand reduction by providing options.
- Questions and discussion included:
 - On HOT lanes: VDOT did not consider all options; the decision process was not open; the government gave the contractor a rewarding deal—toll proceeds for 75 years.
 - VDOT considers Route 1 a thoroughfare; the residents want it to be a main street.
 - The decision to build a surface level subway through Tysons Corner was in part due to the fact that the primary objective of the responsible agency—the airports authority—is to get the subway operational to Dulles Airport as soon as possible.
 - Stewart is technology neutral on mass transit. His position is to select the best technology match for each situation.

Jeff encouraged the meeting participants to carry the Blueprint vision into other fora and to the general public.

Business Meeting—Old Business

- a. The January membership minutes were amended to add one missing word and approved unanimously as amended. Ed Wyse will send the approved minutes to the Federation webmaster.
- b. Treasurer's Report: Scott Schlegel presented the current financial status. He handed out and reviewed a balance sheet, budget overview, and list of transactions. In addition, Scott noted he will soon be issuing checks to cover approximately \$400 of pending bills.
- c. Jeff announced board vacancies:
 - Elected positions: Recording & Corresponding secretaries
 - Committee Chairs: Human Services and Public Safety – we may have volunteers for Land Use and Legislation
 - Federation Board representative to the Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB)

Regarding this last position, the CAAB website is at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/caab/defaultd.htm>. The CAAB advises the Board of Supervisors on the needs, concerns and aspirations of low-income persons and recommends policies that promote meaningful change and has oversight responsibility for federal and state Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds (about ½ million dollars annually) which are awarded to nonprofit organizations for services to low-income Fairfax County residents. Anyone who is interested in volunteering for this position or who knows of someone else who might be a suitable candidate should inform Esther Ferington, or Jeff Parnes. Carol Hawn, who has served on the Board, or Lou D'Alessandro, our departing representative, can answer any questions a prospective board member might have.

d. Update on FCPS Administrative Consolidation proposal – Charles Dane reported the history of the proposal to purchase the former Red Cross building for the FCPS. The federation board had supported this action. The Board of Supervisors refused to authorize and issue of bonds due to insufficient projected savings and asked the school system to find more savings. The school system did and now forecasts a 62 million dollar savings in current dollars. There would be an initial period before bond servicing expense begins; then for several years bond servicing expense would exceed savings; thereafter savings would exceed bond servicing expense. The board of supervisors is expected to defer action again at its February 23 meeting. Charles will meet with county staff to determine whether this procurement and bond issue would impact school construction and renovation.

e. The Federation canceled the debate between the candidates for Chair of the Board of Supervisors due to inclement weather, following its policy of abiding by the closing decisions of the public schools.

f. Citizen of the Year (COY) selection and banquet. Jeff announced that John Jennison, the COY chair, was not be able to make this meeting due to conflicting scheduling (he had to ferry his kids to various sport events). In John Jennison’s absence, Jeff briefed members on the status. The event will be held March 15 at the Fairview Park Marriott located at 3111 Fairview Park Dr, Falls Church, VA 22042. The price is \$65 per person.

The guest speaker will be The Honorable Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

The Federation's award committee selected Anne Andrews for the 2008 Citizen of the Year and Linda Byrne and Christine Morin for Citation of Merit awards. (The Federation thanks Sherry Zachry, Wade Smith, Marlene Blum, Bill Lecos and Charlie Dane for their excellent work on the committee.) The Federation will also award a special gratitude award to former Congressman Tom Davis for his service to the county.

The Washington Post, which in prior years has donated \$1500 to sponsor this event, is unable to do so in 2009. We have asked The Post to consider a \$500 donation.

Invitations have not yet been sent. It is urgent they be printed and mailed as soon as possible. The board will have an envelope stuffing party; volunteers would be appreciated.

g. The agenda contained an item to address the Fairfax County staff draft plan for Tyson’s Corner that contains changes to recommendations in the Tyson’s Corner Land Use Task Force report. Because the primarily responsible person—John Jennison—was not present, action was deferred.

Business Meeting—New Business

a. A motion was made and seconded to award a ”Special President's Education Advocacy Award” with an intended recipient in mind. Discussion covered several topics. Is another award category necessary? What are the criteria? Should the Federation skip the process of soliciting nominations and selecting from among multiple candidates? The motion was rejected.

b. The agenda contained an item to address a proposed "Hall of Chairmen" (photographs) to be hung at the government center. Because the proposer—John Jennison—was not present, action was deferred.

c. Another representative position for which the Federation seeks a volunteer is on the Fairfax Cares board. The objective of Fairfax Cares (www.fairfaxcares.org) is to increase the capacity of our local nonprofits so that they can provide short term emergency help for more people requiring basic needs assistance (food, housing, utility assistance, and short-term financial aid). Fairfax Cares employs the collective efforts of leaders across non-profit, business, faith, school, and government organizations to raise awareness of and community engagement to meet our neighbors' needs.

d. The nominating committee seeks candidates for:

- President
- 1st Vice President (Membership)
- 2nd Vice President (Board and Committee Participation)
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Corresponding Secretary

Please contact John Jennison.

e. Scott reported that has ordered 144 mugs bearing the Federation logo. Delivery is expected about February 26. He will bring some to the next meeting. Mugs may be purchased for \$5 each.

f. Charlie Dane proposed a draft letter (with two options) for the Federation to send to each member of the Board of Supervisors on the real estate tax rate. A motion was made and seconded to send the letter. Discussion compared the content of the letter to a previous resolution on the topic that the Federation had made and sent to the County Executive; the two have some differences. Because of the differences a suggestion to enclose the resolution was not accepted. These differences could be acceptable because the past letter and the proposed letter are to different parties at different stages of the legislative process. The motion passed to send the second version of letter (the bulleted version).

Business Meeting—Miscellaneous

Flint Webb received a certificate of recognition for his service on the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee, Technical Advisory Committee from 2005-2008. For a photograph, follow the link:

www.fcfa.org/committees/Environmental/MWAQCFlintWebbAward090128.JPG

Committee Reports:

Association Services | Donald Hinman related a question he had been asked regarding reviving a civic association, specifically could the membership be exclusionary—in this case limited to resident owners? This is a legal question for which the Federation does not provide the answer. Donald also related that he had discovered an answer to the question what to do

if a privately-owned storm water management facility appears to need maintenance. The responsible agency is the county's Maintenance & Stormwater Management Division. Upon request, that office will perform inspections and identify the responsible parties.

Budget | Kosmo Tatalias noted that the County Executive releases his proposed budget to the Board of Supervisors (and the Federation will get a copy) on February 23. The Federation has ten days to deliver its recommendations to the board. Charlie will review the Education portion; Carey and Kosmo will review the rest. They would welcome volunteers to help.

Education & Youth | Charles Dane reported that the school board accepted the school superintendent's proposed budget without change (including ignoring Federation recommendations). Given the uncertainty of State and Federal funding, perhaps this was the only realistic option for the board.

Environment | Flint Webb reported that:

- The new representative for the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee, Technical Advisory Committee is Ana Prados.
- The Soil and Water Conservation District is seeking to replace Sally. The next board meeting will be February 24th in room 941 of the Herry Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway at 9:30 am.
- Sites scheduled for near term invasive species removal are: Brentwood Park (3/7, 4/25), Laurel Hill (3/14), Hunter Meadows (3/21, 4/18), Paul Springs (3/21), Pohick Stream (3/28, 4/25) and Woodglen Lake Tuesday 4/21.
- The Northern Soil and Water Conservation District is doing its annual native plant seedling sale. This year the plants featured are designed to be bird friendly and include Washington Hawthorn, Elderberry, Willow Oak, Silky Dogwood, American Hazelnut, and Persimmon. The cost for 12-bare root seedlings is \$17.95. See the District's website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsale.htm
- There will be invasive plant removal at Nottoway Park on Saturdays from 9 am to noon March 7, April 4, May 30, June 27, September 12, and October 24. For further information see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/ima.
- First trout stocking of Lake Accotink Park was February 6th. A fishing license is required for participants age 16 and over.
- The Fairfax County Park Authority is holding "Listening Forums" beginning in March. See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/press/html/pr008-09.htm>.
- [Reported post-meeting via these minutes] The Fairfax County Solid Waste Management will host "Electric Sunday" Recycling March 8. Fairfax County residents can recycle televisions, computers and peripheral electronics from 10 am to 3 pm at the I-66 Transfer Station at 4618 West Ox Road. See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/recycling or call 703-324-5250.

Human Services | Vacant—No report

Land Use | Donald Hinman (temp)—No report

Legislation | Vacant—No report

Membership | Charlie Dane reported that only one or two organizations in each district have not renewed. He is following up through the district representatives.

Public Safety | Vacant—No report

Resolutions | Bill Hanks—No report

Transportation | Roger Hoskins reported that overweight trucks are an issue that will be addressed next year. Also, the Sully District Council has a copy of a presentation made to the Transportation Planning Board on use of stimulus funds. This information is on the Sully District webpage <http://www.sullydistrict.org/presentations>.

Website | Kosmo Tatalias—No report

District Council Reports:

Braddock | Art Wells reported on the special election for Braddock District Supervisor. A candidates' debate is scheduled for February 25 and the election will be on March 10. Candidates are: Moon (D), Cook (R), and Campbell (I).

Dranesville | N/A

Hunter Mill | N/A

Lee | Donald Hinman reports that the Lee District Council is revising its bylaws. A current concern is possible service reductions on the subway's Yellow Line.

Mason | Roger Hoskins—No report

Mt. Vernon | Karen Pohorylo. Karen reported that the Mount Vernon council is addressing the issue of hunting near Dyke Marsh. The district's gala will be held May 2.

Providence | Charlie Hall—Not present/No report

Sully | Jeff Parnes reports the Sully District Council's next meeting is February 25.

Springfield | Mike Thompson— Not present/No report

Next Membership Meeting: March 19, 2009.

Next Board Meeting: March 5, 2009 [NOTE: No February Board Meeting], on county budget

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm

Minutes prepared by Ed Wyse, Co-Recording Secretary