

all FAIRLINGTON BULLETIN



www.fca-fairlington.org

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Volume 40, Number 2

Alexandria staff to discuss traffic and development on February 12

Senior staff from the City of Alexandria will discuss proposed traffic improvements and real estate development projects that could potentially affect Fairlington at the Fairlington Citizens Association (FCA) Board meeting on February 12. This marks the first time in a number of years that FCA has hosted a wide-ranging conversation between Fairlington residents and key Alexandria staff.

Bob Garbacz, Transportation Division Chief, and Lisa Jaatinen, Project Manager, in the Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, will discuss transportation projects along King Street. Rob Kearns, Planning Division Chief in the Department of Planning and Zoning, will address pending development projects in Alexandria's West End.

King and Quaker Intersection

Alexandria is considering possible intersection improvements at the King Street/North Quaker Lane/Braddock Road intersection. A couple of years ago the City examined several alternatives for improving traffic flow and facilitating pedestrian safety, narrowing the choice down to one preferred alternative that essentially uses the existing intersection space to create additional turn lanes.

"It boils down to right of way," says Garbacz, noting the difficulty and expense of acquiring additional land to do a more comprehensive set of improvements at the intersection, such as a traffic roundabout or a "complete street" (which accommodates pedestrians and bicycles as well as motorists).

Key elements of the current plan include construction of four additional left-turn lanes at that intersection, partial closure of the service road at

Quaker Lane, the installation of a traffic signal on the service road at Taylor Lane, and the installation of enhanced bus shelters. In a later stage the City would separately consider the installation of a traffic signal for the service road at Dearing Street.

The City initially hoped to move forward with construc-

Alexandria is considering potential improvements to the intersection of King Street, Quaker Lane, and Braddock Road. Photo by Guy Land.



FCA monthly meeting

Wednesday, February 12, 7 pm
FCC
3308 S. Stafford St.

Fairlington Diners

Thursday, February 6, 6:30 pm
Ray's The Steaks, 2300 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington

MOMS Club

Wednesday, February 12, 7:30 pm
FCC

Presidents' Day

Monday, February 17
FCC closed

Fairlington Diners

Monday, February 17, 6:30 pm
Ramparts, 1700 Fern St.
Alexandria

See *Neighborhood news* on page 17 and related articles for details about calendar events.

Continued on page 9

Coming up ...

The FCA Board invites all Fairlington residents to attend its meetings, which occur on the second Wednesday of the month at the Fairlington Community Center (3308 S. Stafford St.) unless otherwise noted. If you would like to discuss a neighborhood issue at the meeting, please e-mail president@fca-fairlington.org or leave a voice-mail message at 571-403-1943 by the Sunday before the meeting.

February 12 preliminary agenda:

Special presentation: Discussion of traffic and development issues by City of Alexandria staff – Bob Garbacz, Transportation Division Chief, and Lisa Jaatinen, Project Manager, Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services; Rob Kearns, Planning Division Chief, Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning.

Regular Board business:

- Approval of January minutes
- Officer reports
- Unfinished business
 - 2014 budget
 - 2014 activities
- New business

Online resources:

Find more information on the FCA Web site, www.fca-fairlington.org. Sign up for updates delivered to your inbox.



Find us on Facebook at Fairlington Appreciation Society.

Find the latest *AFB* online at the FCA Web site the week before hard copies hit doorsteps.

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| www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/streetlights/index.htm | |
| Helicopter Noise Complaints | Bob Laser (FAA) bob.laser@faa.gov |

Fairlington Citizens Association

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571-403-1943 • president@fca-fairlington.org

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Aging in place: FCA's major initiative for 2014 is a community-wide conversation about aging in place and linking Fairlington's generations. FCA is tentatively planning a briefing on Arlington Neighborhood Villages for March. If you are interested in helping with this initiative, please contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

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Some images in this publication may be digitally enhanced.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the economy gathers steam, plans for real estate development in the larger Fairlington area take on new energy. Older properties inside the beltway have a new attractiveness as market forces yield increased returns on investments in these properties. From the Bradlee Safeway to Landmark Mall redevelopment to major proposals for Alexandria's West End, we're seeing the most development activity in over a decade.

Much of FCA's work this spring will focus on monitoring and assessing development proposals in Arlington and Alexandria that could have a significant effect on Fairlington. Our goal is to keep you informed on the status of those projects and to ensure that local officials consider Fairlington's concerns in the permit approval process.

The most immediate are plans for the redevelopment of the Park Shirlington apartments on 31st Street. At FCA's request, Home Properties, the owner of Park Shirlington, briefed a large crowd last month on the company's plans to demolish the existing structures and create 750 new apartments on the site.

The FCA Board has established an advisory committee representing a variety of perspectives to help us assess Home Properties' proposal and to make recommendations on the stance FCA should take as the application moves through the rezoning process.

In another development near Fairlington, Abramson Properties has submitted concept plans for the redevelopment of the old Jefferson Hospital site at 4600 King Street (next to the small shopping center at King and Beauregard). The concept calls for a mixed use development, with about 400 residential units, a hotel, and a grocery store.

FCA has already discussed those plans with Alexandria staff and the developer. We expect to invite the developer to brief the Fairlington community on the project later this year.

Alexandria planning and traffic staff will discuss this and other West End development projects, along with general traffic issues along King Street, at the February FCA meeting. This is a good time for residents to talk directly with the staff who are reviewing these project applications.

Later this spring we expect to hold a general real estate forum to brief Fairlington residents on the latest plans for these and other development projects that could potentially affect Fairlington. FCA will continue to keep you informed about what's on the drawing board for new development in our area. We welcome your comments.

Guy Land, FCA President
president@fca-fairlington.org



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Start getting in shape for the Fairlington 5K on April 5



On Saturday, April 5, FCA and Abingdon Elementary School will jointly host the 2014 Fairlington 5K Run/Walk to benefit the

Abingdon Elementary School P. E. program, the Abingdon School Library, and A Cure for Ellie, a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding a cure for mitochondrial disease.

This will be the first time Fairlington has hosted a neighborhood 5K race since April 2004. Previous races had been held to benefit local charities, including Aluminum Cans for Burned Children and several 9/11 charities.

The idea for partnering with Abingdon Elementary arose when FCA Director Joe Hartman, who had been investigating the possibility of hosting a 5K race this spring through the FCA, discovered that Joe Reed, Abingdon's P.E. teacher, had also been planning a similar race for Abingdon Elementary. FCA and Abingdon quickly joined forces and all involved are looking forward to a great neighborhood event. "We've been looking for ways to get the Fairlington community more involved with Abingdon Elementary, and I really can't think of a better way for us to work together for a couple of great causes," commented Joe Hartman.

Unsurprisingly, the Fairlington community has quickly

jumped on board. Since the announcement of the 5K in last month's *All Fairlington Bulletin* a number of local organizations and individuals have volunteered to help make this event a success, including members of the Abingdon Elementary faculty and administration, members of the FCA, the Fairlington Social Club, the Shirlington Running Group, several Fairlington-Shirlington area businesses, and at least one local church. Local girl scout troops have also offered to help.

This kind of volunteer response "could really be the key to making this a big success for the Fairlington community," FCA President Guy Land observed.

The 5K race is tentatively scheduled to begin at 8 am and will take participants from Abingdon Elementary on a loop through North Fairlington, across I-395 and through South Fairlington before returning to Abingdon Elementary. Participants may choose to run or walk, and families and children are encouraged to participate.

Entry fees are \$25 for individual adult runners and \$15 for runners under the age of 18. Children under the age of five participate free of charge. For complete race details and online registration please visit www.fairlington5k.com. Learn more about A Cure for Ellie at <http://acureforellie.org>.

—Joe Hartman

Fairlington Day set for May 17

Once again this year Fairlington will participate in Arlington County's Neighborhood Day by celebrating Fairlington Day on Saturday, May 17, on the grounds of the Fairlington Community Center.

Fairlington Day is held every other year in May (alternating with the Fairlington Historical Society's signature event, the biennial May home and garden tour). It is a great opportunity to get outside at the start of the warm weather season and chat with your neighbors. Fairlington Day hosts popular activities, such as 2012's favorite, the moon bounce.

This year we're exploring activities that would also appeal particularly to adults, including perhaps an opportunity to have your culinary skills compared with those of your neighbors. If you have suggestions for ways we can enhance this community-wide event, please let us know. We're also looking for volunteers to help us with some of the work. To volunteer or to offer suggestions, please contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

Ready for business



New FCA Board member Lisa Schwanger prepares for her first FCA meeting in January. Photo by Guy Land.



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“Neighborhood village” concept offers option for Fairlington seniors



As FCA launches its community-wide conversation about aging in place and linking Fairlington’s generations, it will look carefully at whether the “neighborhood village” concept would work in our community.

With the majority of services provided by local volunteers, the neighborhood village concept is designed to allow seniors to “age in place” and remain independent in their homes. The idea was launched by the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Boston in 2001, and at present, there are 36 villages in the DC metro region.

A review of what’s offered by a few of these local villages shows a common thread of services provided, many of which are applicable to a potential Fairlington neighborhood village.

- **Transportation.** Carpooling to the grocery store, running errands for members who are no longer able to be out of the home, and offering rides to medical appointments are common services of most neighborhood villages. It’s customary for volunteers to drive their own cars and carry their own insurance, while members would be responsible for costs such as parking and toll fees.
- **Technology.** Assisting members with computer set-up, establishing email, and even programming phones and thermostats are just a few of the tasks that are useful to seniors in our ever-changing technology-based society.

- **Social events.** These could range from card and game clubs to happy hours to local museum visits. The Lake Barcroft Village offers a monthly shuttle to area museums and galleries, while the Alexandria Village hosts monthly potlucks among its many scheduled activities.
- **Minor home maintenance.** Things like replacing light bulbs and tightening screws can often be done by volunteers, but referral to a reputable professional vendor would typically occur for services that could not be provided by a volunteer.
- **Companionship, home check-in visits, and other convenience services.** The Capitol Hill neighborhood offers a “rise and shine” service where volunteers are paired with members, one of whom calls the other at a designated time each day and engages in a brief conversation. Procedures are in place should the member not answer. Daily check-in visits, general companionship, and dog walking are also common services provided within this category.
- **Financial help, bill pay, and tax prep.** These activities could range from basic financial organizational help to assistance with annual tax preparation.

The neighborhood village model can adapt to the needs of the individual community.

Incorporating young children and teens will be a focus in creating Fairlington’s neighborhood village. Introducing seniors to the benefits of social media and email, or providing dog walking services are just two examples of ways in which the intergenerational divide could be bridged.

The benefit of the village model is that it can adapt to the needs of the individual community. FCA expects to have a member of Arlington Neighborhood Villages—an umbrella organization for local neighborhood villages set to launch in March—brief the Fairlington community this spring.

If you are interested in joining the committee of Fairlington residents exploring the aging in place concept, contact president@fca-fairlington.org.

—Carrie Street

For more information on the local neighborhood villages, check out the following:

Lake Barcroft Village: lakebarcroftvillage.org

Capitol Hill Village: capitolhillvillage.org

At Home in Alexandria: athomeinalexandria.org

Arlington Neighborhood Villages FAQs:
<http://arlnvil.org/faqs/>

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tion in 2015, but that timetable has slipped, due to tight finances and continued examination of affordable alternatives that might be more effective. Improvements at that intersection would be financed entirely by Alexandria.

In 2012 the City also considered prohibiting left turns from northbound Quaker Lane onto 36th Street, but shelved that idea, in part in response to objections from South Fairlington residents.

King and Beauregard

Plans are underway for improvements at the King and Beauregard intersection with Walter Reed Drive, including at-grade improvements that will add an additional left-turn lane in each direction on King Street, medians down King Street, and a 10-foot shared use path on portions of King Street and N. Beauregard Street.

The project was approved in 2010, and utility relocation work has already started. According to Lisa Jaatinen, the project manager for the work, the project is expected to go to bid in June, with construction perhaps starting in early 2015. The at-grade improvements replace a proposal that was developed decades ago for a large fly-over intersection. That option sparked substantial opposition from residents in the area.

Development projects

The major area of development activity is at 4600 King Street, site of the old Jefferson Hospital. The developer, Abramson Properties, has filed a redevelopment concept with the City for a mixed use development that includes a hotel, apartments, a grocery store, and office space (see page 15). The City expects a more detailed proposal later this spring. This is one of several developments proposed along the Beauregard corridor, including major redevelopment in the area of Southern Towers.

Pat Escher, Principal Planner for the City of Alexandria, notes that the development activity is being driven by market forces, as properties inside the beltway become attractive opportunities for new investment. "Older areas of the City are ripe for redevelopment," she says. "Now we're seeing more and more activity." Development activity occurred first in Potomac Yard and Carlyle, Escher noted, but now it is happening in the West End.

Escher also cites the construction of the new Safeway in Bradlee as an example of market-driven redevelopment. "The old store just wasn't working for them," she commented. Construction of the new store is on track for completion later this year.

Continued on page 27

Grocery Store opens in Bradlee Shopping Center

Opening at 8 am on January 29, The Fresh Market has replaced the Giant at Bradlee Shopping Center. The Giant store—long a fixture to Fairlington residents—closed June 6, 2013, after 59 years in business.

"We are excited to open our new store in Alexandria and to expand our reach in Virginia," said Craig Carlock, the company's president and chief executive officer, in a news release. "We look forward to introducing The Fresh Market's concept of quality perishables, excellent customer service and a unique atmosphere to an expanded customer base, and we look forward to offering neighboring communities a rewarding new food shopping experience."

The King Street location is The Fresh Market's 12th store in Virginia.

The Bradlee store features a bakery, a full-service meat counter, and a wide variety of produce among other specialty items and services that are unique to the store. Also unique to the store: A European market atmosphere featuring classical music, soft lighting and antique decor.

The new store will partner with the Capital Area Food Bank by providing regular donations of food. In addition, as part of the company's focus on providing the freshest, best quality products, the store will feature a growing number of local and regional products from area growers and producers.

The opening of the store fills a void for the Fairlington community. Last year, the area saw the closing of four grocery stores: the "Little Giant" and Safeway at Bradlee, the Magruder's on Van Dorn Street and another nearby Giant on Beauregard Street in Alexandria.

—Kate Barton



Workers put the finishing touches on the new Bradlee Fresh Market in mid-January. Photo by Kate Barton.



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Arlington Public Schools superintendent outlines budget challenges to civic federation members



FCA President Guy Land, left, visits with Arlington County Civic Federation President Mike McMenamin and Arlington Public Schools Superintendent Patrick Murphy at January's Civic Federation meeting. Photo by Deirdre McLaughlin.

Increased student enrollment and slower projected County revenue growth will create budget challenges for Arlington Public Schools (APS), Superintendent Dr. Patrick Murphy, told the Arlington County Civic Federation in a January presentation.

To maintain existing services while accommodating the needs of additional students, state retirement contribution mandates, and increased employee benefit costs will require an increase in the school system budget of 3.1 percent over the current year, but according to Murphy, available revenues are projected to grow only 1.4 percent. The County currently shares 45.6 percent of local tax revenues with APS.

Arlington has been experiencing a significant growth in students and this trend is projected to continue. Next year

the system is projected to have 837 more students than it had in 2008. "That's the size of elementary school," Murphy commented. He also noted that families are remaining in Arlington, which means that over time the enrollment increase will work its way across all grades.

Systemwide, schools are operating at 102.8 percent of capacity, with many schools using "relocatable" classrooms to handle the additional students. A new elementary school is being built adjacent to Williamsburg Middle School.

Murphy outlined three general options for dealing with the shortfall: reduce employee benefit costs, make changes in the way services are delivered, or increase class size. He indicated his strong opposition to increasing class size. "This is not a wise decision to support instruction," he said.

The Superintendent noted the challenge of remaining competitive with surrounding jurisdictions in attracting good teachers.

Murphy reported a graduation rate of 91.3 percent for all APS high schools and secondary programs, a 52 percent decline in the dropout rate from 2008. Upon leaving APS, 90 percent of APS students will attend a two- or four-year college. Last year's APS graduates received \$27 million in scholarships.

Murphy's presentation was part of the Civic Federation's effort to link Arlington government leaders with delegates from civic associations like FCA.

FCA and local civic federations

FCA is an active member of the Arlington County Civic Federation and the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations. Both organizations generally meet monthly and serve as a vehicle for linking elected officials and their staffs with the individual civic associations. They help ensure that community views are considered in official decisions. FCA representatives attend most meetings of the two groups.

For 2014 the FCA delegates to the Arlington County Civic Federation are Guy Land, Carol Dabbs, Kent Duffy, and Bill Russell. Andi Dies, an Alexandria resident and North Fairlington owner, is the FCA delegate to the Alexandria Federation.

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- Every \$1 million spent on the APS capital improvement program results in 10.5 Arlington jobs.

Source: Arlington Public Schools. www.apsava.us/budget.

Developer outlines plans for Park Shirlington

Representatives from Home Properties, Inc., owners of the Park Shirlington apartments, updated the Fairlington community on their plans at an informational briefing session held January 14. Home Properties presented its architectural and landscape drawings for the proposed redevelopment of the 16-acre site located on 31st Street, along with a traffic analysis report.

As reported in the January issue of the *All Fairlington Bulletin*, Home Properties filed a site plan with Arlington County in mid-November which calls for replacing the current 294 apartments with 750 new apartment units. The developer seeks to rezone the rental property to permit a higher density than is currently allowed.

Plans are to raze the 14 existing two- and three-story buildings and replace them with five larger buildings ranging from three to five stories each. In addition, the plan proposes 903 on-site parking spaces located in surface garages or underground. Currently there are 236 parking spaces available for Park Shirlington residents.

The design of the new development is intended to be sympathetic to the surrounding Fairlington designs. Architects plan for the brick façade buildings adjacent to Fairlington Villages to be three stories high, increasing to five stories along the slope of the hill along 31st Street.

The rental apartments will be a mix of studio and one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments with rents at market rate, comparable to those of the Delancey at Shirlington Village, said Cathy Moy, director of development at Home Properties.

A certain number of apartments will be set aside for affordable housing, but the actual number will be determined during the county's review process.

Architectural drawings provide for a variety of green spaces including courtyards, tree covered pedestrian paths, an upgraded pool facility, bocce ball court, outdoor movie screen, dog run, and tot lots. The goal, according to landscape archi-



Park Shirlington Apartments architectural illustration by KTG Group, Maurice Walters – Architect, provided by Home Properties, Inc.

tect Trini Rodriguez, is to produce a pedestrian friendly environment and create a fabric that is somewhat urban without being downtown. In addition, proposed amenities include a party room, exercise facilities, indoor bike storage, and bike repair shop.

The development is projected to be LEED Silver, with a variety of components designed to minimize the impact of storm water run-off.

Traffic impacts

The site plan application required the developer to submit a transportation management plan. Their plan encourages residents and staff to use public transportation, promotes the use of ride sharing, and fosters increased bike use. In an effort to further encourage alternative forms of transportation, the plan also includes charging residents extra for garage parking based on the county's request that the developer not bundle parking with rent.

Terry Miller of traffic engineering firm Wells and Associates reported on the traffic study conducted for Home Properties in the Fairlington and Park Shirlington neighborhoods. The study looked at current and projected traffic patterns along 31st Street and intersections in Fairlington that the county identified as being affected by increased vehicle traffic. According to Miller, the study found minor, but no significant, impact on the identified intersections for the next 10 years.

In spite of the study's results, many in attendance voiced concern about the impact that the additional traffic will have on 31st Street, especially during the two- to three-



Carol Bell and Patty Clark visit after the Park Shirlington briefing. Photos by Guy Land.



North Fairlington residents Terry Placek, Cindy Kunz, and Marty Ganderson compare notes on the briefing.

year construction period. Some in attendance questioned whether the county had selected the right streets to include in the traffic study, rather than simply “cherry picking” certain streets that did not provide a big enough picture. The study did not include the impact of traffic on the entrance to 395 North at the Shirlington Circle or the 28th and King Street intersection.

Residents also expressed concern about the impact on the already overcrowded Metro buses that run along this route. According to Miller, projections for increased bus usage have not yet been done.

The loss of affordable housing, changes in neighborhood diversity, the impact on enrollment at Abingdon Elementary and other local schools also were concerns that came up during the Q&A session. Some residents stated that currently Park Shirlington is mainly comprised of immigrants and families, not the higher income “millennials” likely to be attracted to the new rental units.



Eli Meltzer, left, discusses zoning issues with Evan Pritchard after the presentation.

Next steps

This was the third public briefing on the redevelopment plans by Home Properties since 2012. While Moy said that the project is still in the planning stages, the proposal is now more of a complete package. The plan must now go through a thorough review by the County’s Site Plan Review Committee and then the Arlington County Planning Commission, a process that can take up to



Michael Eastwood of Home Properties, Evan Pritchard of the Walsh Colucci law firm, and Cathy Moy of Home Properties prepare for their presentation to the community on January 14.

one year. Final approval must come from the Arlington County Board.

Once the approvals have been made, construction should expect to start sometime in 2016 beginning with phase one on the north side of 31st Street.

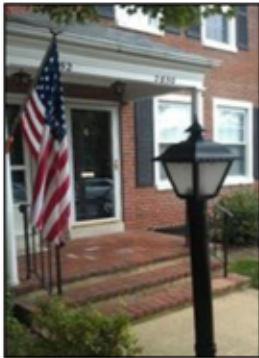
To further assess the implications of the redevelopment plan, FCA has established a special Park Shirlington Redevelopment Advisory Committee. The committee will look at the impact of the site plans on the neighborhood, make recommendations to the FCA, and update Fairlington condo and homeowner associations as the county review process moves forward. The group is chaired by North Fairlington resident Carol Bell.

The committee is charged with looking at things like the effect on property values, the traffic and parking impacts on Fairlington, architectural compatibility with Fairlington, affordable housing components, the impact on Abingdon school, visual and sound buffers, and the options available to the developer under the existing zoning.

—Janis Johnston

Pat Shannon & Kristin Usaitis

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New development proposed near King and Beauregard



Site of the proposed "Gateway at King and Beauregard" project. Photo by Guy Land.

In December Abramson Properties filed a revised concept plan for the redevelopment of the old Jefferson Hospital site at 4600 King Street. Key elements of the proposal include a 144-room hotel, roughly 400 residential units, a grocery store, retail shops, and neighborhood office space.

Like parts of Shirlington, much of the retail space in the project will be on the ground floor with apartments on the upper floors. There will be several levels of underground parking to accommodate residential and business tenants. The main entrance to the property will be off Beauregard (the traffic light that once was at the entrance to the hospital will not reappear).

"Our goal is to make this site a transit-oriented project," says Danny Abramson, who with his brother owns Abramson Properties. He expects frequent transit service to connect the development with the Shirlington transit station, Mark Center, the King Street Metro station, and the new bus rapid transit system that will run along Route 1 from Braddock Road to Pentagon City.

Abramson also expects the project to have a strong affordable housing component. He chairs Alexandria's non-profit affordable housing corporation.

Abramson is hoping that the project will move forward through the Alexandria review and approval process this spring. Pat Escher, Principal Planner for the City of Alexandria, likewise expects a more detailed proposal in the next couple of months, setting the stage for formal consideration later in the spring. Outreach to interested civic associations is part of that process.

The project is being coordinated with plans for the widening of King Street from Beauregard to Dawes Street.

The City has already acquired the necessary property to accommodate both the widening and the enhanced pedestrian and landscaping components. (See story on page 1.)

Calling it "The Gateway at King and Beauregard," Abramson sees the development as the gateway to Alexandria's West End, at the point where Arlington, Fairfax County, and the City of Alexandria come together.

The development does not include the small shopping center directly at the intersection (the former location of Five Guys), as that is a separate piece of property with different ownership.

Capital Bikeshare expands in Fairlington-Shirlington

The installation of a Capital Bikeshare (CaBi) station on 31st Street near Park Shirlington in December marks the continued growth of the popular bike service in the Fairlington-Shirlington area. Stations were installed at the Fairlington Community Center and the Abingdon Street bridge back in the summer.

Another station is scheduled for installation at the Shirlington Transit Center, and the county is working with the nearby residents to place a station near the intersection of Wakefield and 28th Streets, near the 7-Eleven store.

Paul DeMaio, the CaBi manager for the program in Arlington, notes in the winter the station usage in the Fairlington area is relatively low. "Polar vortexes don't help much," he notes. But he expects usage to pick up once more stations are installed in the area.



A worker for CaBi replaces bicycles at the Fairlington Community Center station. Photo by Guy Land.

DeMaio reports that in September the two stations in Fairlington registered roughly 150 trips. "This is good considering that they're new, they're peripheral, and the Shirlington Transit Center isn't operational yet," he says. He adds that Fairlingtonians have been making many trips to Old Town.

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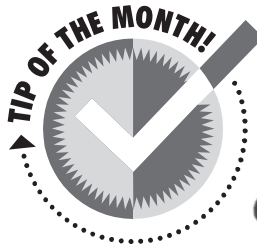
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neighborhood news

Fairlington Diners

The Fairlington Diners gather a couple of times a month for relaxed dinners nearby. We focus on having a good meal and an opportunity to chat with neighbors. In January, we enjoyed our return to Ramparts with a near-record turnout.

In February, we'll return to our usual practice of holding two events, as follows:

Thursday, February 6, 6:30 pm, Ray's The Steaks, in the Navy League Building, 2300 Wilson Blvd (at Clarendon Blvd. and N. Wayne St.), Arlington, 703-841-7297, www.raysthesteaks.com/. There is easy parking in the Arlington County garage just across the street from this award-winning restaurant, an Arlington original.

Monday, February 17, 6:30 pm, Ramparts Restaurant, 1700 Fern St., Alexandria, 703-998-6616, www.rampartstavern.com/. This local favorite offers half-price on burgers with the purchase of a beverage on Mondays, and the rest of the menu is also available.

Please call Carol at 703-379-6840 if you plan to attend, and leave a voicemail if you don't reach her – include your name and contact information for you the day of the event, in case plans change. If you want to receive a copy of these notices early in the previous month, send your email address to carol_dabbs@yahoo.com.

Fairlington Babysitting Co-op

If you are looking for a night out without the kids or an afternoon to yourself, look no further than the Fairlington Babysitting Co-op. For more than 30 years, the Babysitting Co-op has been a community of parents helping parents right here in our neighborhood.

The Co-op is a network of Fairlington families who exchange free babysitting services. It's perfect for parents who would like to know dependable adults to watch their children and meet other families in the community.

To request an application or for more information, email fairlington.babysitting@gmail.com.

MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington

Members (and their children) of the MOMS Club of Arlington-Fairlington VA© chapter of the International MOMS Club participate in fun activities, service projects, Parents' Night Out, meetings with interesting speakers, and groups such as our walking, dinner, and book clubs. Our weekly age-specific playgroups start as young as birth and go up to 3+ years old.

Parents and parents-to-be are welcome to join us for our next general meeting on Wednesday, February 12, at 7:30 pm in the Fairlington Community Center. Children are always welcome. For more information about the club, the meeting, or membership, contact our Membership VP at fairlingtonmomsclub@gmail.com or visit www.fairlingtonmomsclub.com. Annual dues of \$25 support our club activities and charitable projects.

TreeStewards volunteer training class

There's still time to sign up for this spring's volunteer training by the TreeStewards of Arlington and Alexandria. Improve your ability to identify trees, expand your knowledge of tree biology, and enhance your pruning skills. Classes start February 11, and will be held Tuesday evenings through April 29, plus three Saturday morning workdays to be determined. Classes will be held at the Fairlington Community Center.

The TreeStewards are volunteers dedicated to improving the health of our urban trees through education programs, tree planting, and tree maintenance throughout the community. For more information or to register, visit www.treestewards.org or call 703-527-2349. Each trainee must commit to 30 hours of volunteer service to improve and protect their community forest.

Card players welcome

Join your Fairlington neighbors for a friendly game of Canasta. No previous experience is necessary to enjoy this card game. We are happy to teach you. The group meets Tuesday mornings at a local church hall near Fairlington. Call Carol Ann at 703-931-8533.

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Spanish “wheel” added to kindergarten and first grade curriculum



Spanish Teacher Gretchen Schule welcomes kindergarten students to her classroom. Photo by Dana Andy.

New this school year, Abingdon kindergarten and first-grade students are learning Spanish as part of their “Wheel Classes” in the school’s exemplary program. In addition to art, music, and PE “specials,” students visit five “Wheel” classes – science, “living histories,” architecture, communications, and Spanish.

The addition of Spanish to the “Wheel” comes as Arlington Public Schools (APS) aims to introduce foreign language into all elementary schools. The APS curriculum framework includes students learning conversational topics like social skills (greetings and introductions), family, school and daily life (calendar), community (weather and seasons), and communities around the world (identifying flags and locating several Spanish-speaking countries on a map).

Spanish at Abingdon is taught through the “Reading Workshop”

model with a foundation in literacy, not a content model. The difference, Schule says, is the ability to be conversational and speak about everyday life, not to teach a set vocabulary about a specific topic or subject (science, for example).

“I could teach students the ‘Water Cycle’ in Spanish, but that wouldn’t be the same as teaching them how to talk about their feelings, their home life, or their families,” said Schule, who taught English as a Second Language (ESL) at the school for two years before starting the new Spanish program. Schule has a dual degree in elementary education and Spanish from the University of Tennessee and a master’s degree in ESL from George Mason University.

As part of her master’s degree, in which she also received an international teaching certification, she spent a year teaching in Mexico. “I was required to teach overseas for one year, but I stayed for five,” says Schule fondly about her experience teaching English in a second-grade classroom and teaching math bilingually. As a non-native Spanish



Spanish Teacher Gretchen Schule helps kindergarten students learn the names of body parts in Spanish by playing Bingo. Photo by Dana Andy.

speaker, she became fluent by living and working in Spanish-speaking countries. In addition to her time in Mexico, she also studied abroad in Seville, Spain.

Many parents are raving about their children’s positive responses to the class.

“My kindergartener loves the new Spanish wheel. She has learned numbers, colors, and the days of the week—and knows catchy songs to remember them!” said Fairlington resident Carrie Lewis.

Fairlington resident and first-grade parent Angela Hall added, “It’s great to see how much our daughter loves Ms. Schule’s Spanish class. She looks forward to it and is very proud to share with us what she’s learned. It appears to have increased her curiosity in other languages, as well.”

Schule is happy to hear the parents’ remarks and see the enthusiasm from students.

“I want students to love learning a language and see it as something exciting and fun, not drudgery,” said Schule, who teaches every kindergarten and first-grade class twice a week for 45 minutes. Next school year, the program will expand to include second graders (this year’s first grade students), who will begin reading and writing in Spanish.

Come visit Abingdon: kindergarten open house dates set

Prospective parents are invited to visit Abingdon on the following

Continued on page 20

School, continued from page 19

dates for the annual "Open House" to meet the principal, see the classrooms, talk with teachers, and take a tour of the school.

Thursday, February 20 – 9:15-10:45 am

Tuesday, March 11 – 12:45-2:15 pm

Thursday, April 10 – 9:15-10:45 am

Cardinal Kids mentoring program

This year teachers and other staff members have volunteered to spend time with students in grades 2 through 5 as part of an Abingdon mentoring program. School staff members provide children with a fun and constructive way of encouraging academic success, providing support, and encouraging a healthy child-adult working relationship with a familiar adult at schooling.

Mentoring serves as a support system and a resource for students, showing a positive role model in the school world. Mentees meet with their mentors at least twice each month. In addition, a whole group activity, "Survivor Island," was held in the fall. Other whole group activities are planned for February and May.

Cardinal Kids mentoring program could not have been possible without the support of the Abingdon School PTA. A very generous donation was given to get the program started. Each mentor and mentee received a T-shirt so that they can proudly show their membership in the group. Parents of mentees have also donated food items for a mentor event. In addition, local community businesses have shown their support of the program by donating monetary gifts, pumpkin kits, or gifts of food items for a recognition breakfast for mentors. These businesses include Harris Teeter in Shirlington, Best Buns Bread Company, and Alexandria Pastry Shop.

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Fairlington news clips

Farmers market update

The Fairlington Farmers Market permit application continues to await review from Arlington County staff. Upon completion of that review, the staff will refer it to the County Board for final consideration and vote. The market is anticipated to launch in April and continue weekly on Sundays through November.

In the meantime, the committee is starting to identify potential vendors for the market, and also begin work on a website. If you are interested in volunteering with either task, or if you would like to be included in the email distribution list, please email fairlingtonfarmers-market@gmail.com. Check the FCA website for periodic status updates on the application and the date of the County Board meeting once it has been confirmed.

—Melissa Beene

Vandalism investigation continues

Arlington Country Police continue their investigation into a recent rash of vandalism and property destruction in Fairlington. In mid-January there was a report of another of a brick being thrown through a window in South Fairlington.

At the December FCA meeting Captain Brett Butler addressed residents' concerns and reported that the police have a strong suspect who they believe may be responsible for the incidents. DNA has been sent to the state lab but the results have not come back yet.

"Unfortunately this is not like an episode of CSI that you see on TV that can be wrapped up in 60 minutes," Butler said. "We are hoping in the next few months we will get the results from the lab back and we can proceed as appropriate with the investigation. Until then we are keeping a vigilant eye on the area."

Butler encourages residents to report anything or anyone suspicious to the police right away.

—Amy Schardt

Real estate assessments

Arlington County mailed real estate assessments to homeowners in January. Assessments are determined annually and in Fairlington are generally determined by comparing your property to similar properties that were sold during the past year.

If you disagree with the value established by the Assessor, you can appeal to the Department of Real Estate Assessments and the Board of Equalization. Call 703-228-3920.

Fairlington resident celebrates birthday milestone



County Board member Libby Garvey helps Peggy Freiband celebrate her 105th birthday. Photo by Ken Sterner.

On November 24, 2013, long-time Fairlington resident Peggy Freiband celebrated her 105th birthday at the Fairlington Community Center with music, dancing, food, and celebratory champagne. An estimated 75 friends and family from as far as New York, Minnesota, and California were in attendance, including some family members she had never met! Ms. Freiband greeted every attendee at the party and danced the foxtrot and swing.

Arlington County Board member and fellow Fairlington resident Libby Garvey was also present for the event.

Ms. Freiband moved to Fairlington from her Texas home in 1984 to be close to her son and daughter. Not one to be inactive in her retirement from government work, Ms. Freiband volunteered for 14 years at Abingdon Elementary School as a tutor, where she was known as 'Miss Peggy.'

Ms. Freiband has a deep love for the friendly neighbors of the community, the beautiful grounds, and the convenient location. "I am a very positive person. I love people, live in a wonderful world, and am happy to be alive," she said when asked what she would like to share with those she has not met in the community. "We are all God's people; all brothers and sisters. We should enjoy everyone."

—Chris Weathers



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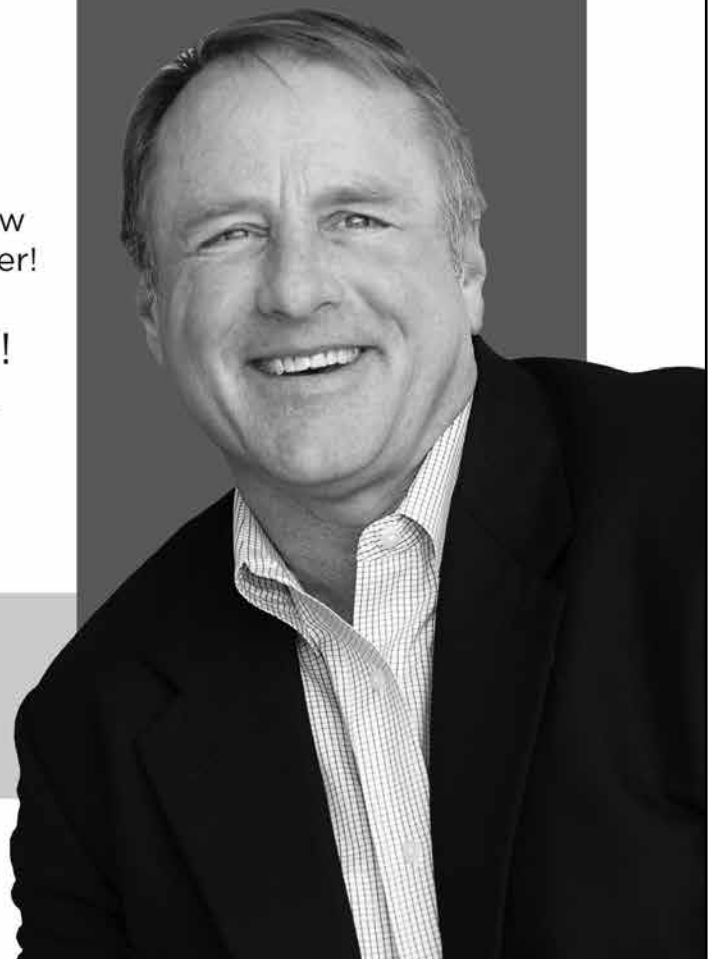
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DOWN TO EARTH patio gardening



Winter's snow and ice set the stage for spring growth

What happens with the garden in winter? When that three- to four-inch “blizzard” manifested in early January, it left a crust of snowy ice, followed by sub-zero wind-chill temperatures. But it didn’t harm the landscape.

Even though dormant, the landscape is alive. Squirrels scampered for acorns they might have buried under shrubs. Crows gathered in leafless trees. Pigeons lined up on overhead wires. And when the snow did melt, robins pecked away at the soft soil for earthworms.

While slowly melting, the snow provided drip irrigation for everything green (well, some things are brown in winter). Grass roots were dormant but the earth became mushy for days. Tree roots can extend for 20 yards out from a main trunk, and they absorb every molecule of water through shallow, fibrous roots. And shrubs drank the same way with smaller swallows.

As for planting, there were few landscape company trucks spotted. But when warmer temperatures sneak through, shrubs may be inserted into the soil. It just depends on what is being planted and what kind of soil exists.

Clay-like soil filled with rock is far from ideal no matter the season. That, to me, is trash and usually ends up in a dumpster. But if the “winter aggregate” is dark brown and somewhat soft, plant roots will be able to establish themselves,



Photo by Laurie Woodbury.

albeit slowly.

A few years ago, the owner of a local gas station approached me about “putting in” an entire new landscape. It was Christmas time. When I asked him when he’d like it done, he answered. “How about now?” Bundled up, I proceeded two days later. When I grabbed my six-foot-long, one-inch-thick iron bar to begin digging, I was greeted with a “clink,” which vibrated all the way up my near-frozen arms. The ground was *that* hard. “March sounds a whole lot better,” I thought but then discovered something. The more I dug, the softer was the soil. Once I “clinked” my way past the hard stuff (four to five inches down), I was ready to use a

spade fork and shovel. The juniper shrubs I was planting were woody enough (at the root) to live through winter weather.

There is a tree called “serviceberry” that is named for a reason. It blooms a faint pinkish-white flower in late February or early March and produces maroon fruit in fall that perching birds devour. The berries also are used for serviceberry pie. Oddly, this common name has stuck, no matter where it is sold or planted.

Oh, and about its name – funeral directors would proceed with burials when this tree bloomed, signifying the year’s first “thaw.” I shake my head whenever I relate this story since “burials” or plantings can be done 12 months a year. But when it comes to landscaping and digging, I never mind the labor.

As for plants in containers, they could use modest watering in winter. Like plant roots in the ground, their roots aren’t in “growth mode” but may “extend” themselves if the weather becomes warm (just like bulbs produce shoots out of the soil in the warmth). If container plants seem to be crowded inside a pot, they can be transplanted into the soil. But small perennials, annuals, and dwarf shrubs can remain in a pot, since their growth habits are limited by their genus.

—Bill Sullivan
www.sullivanlandscaping.net

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Animal Talk

Protect your pets from cold weather

This winter we have experienced some exceptionally cold weather—remember last month's Polar Vortex? Most Fairlington pets are indoor pets and not used to extreme temperatures. Here are some tips to keep them happy and healthy this winter:

- Never leave your pet unattended in a cold car. During the winter, the car acts as a refrigerator that holds in the cold, much as it acts like an oven and heats up exponentially in the summer.
- Let your dog's coat grow. Shaving a dog during the winter removes an important layer of protection.
- Wipe your dog's paws and belly when coming in from the snow

and ice to remove salt or other chemicals used to combat the weather. Dipping paws in warm water is particularly effective.

- Take extra care with puppies and older dogs, which are more sensitive to weather extremes. Never force your dog to spend more time outdoors than it seems willing to spend.
- Make smaller or short-haired dogs more comfortable outdoors with a sweater.
- Keep your cats indoors, particularly during the overnight hours. Cats have been known to seek a warm spot underneath the hood of a car.



- Keep cats and dogs away from antifreeze, which is lethal.

Keep in mind that if you are cold, your pet is likely cold as well, and take these precautionary measures to ensure that they are safe and warm.

—Christine M. Chirichella, Assistant Editor

Getting down to work



FCA Vice President Kent Duffy discusses FCA agenda items with Bill Russell and Mark Jones at January's monthly Board meeting. Photo by Guy Land.

Traffic, continued from page 9

Last summer Alexandria approved plans for the redevelopment of Landmark Mall. According to Escher, the new Landmark Mall would reflect the “community center” approach of “live, work, play” that has replaced the traditional mall approach that dominated the shopping landscape for three decades.

—Guy Land



January's cold weather didn't stop construction work on the new Safeway in Bradlee. Photo by Guy Land.

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Make checks payable to "Fairlington Citizens Association."

NEW E-Mail Address for All Ads: admanager@fca-fairlington.org

Mailing Address for All Ads and Checks: FCA-AFB, PO Box 6182, Arlington, VA 22206-0182

Drop-Off Location for Ads and Checks: Drop-Off Box in Fairlington Community Center,
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Open 8 am – 9 pm M – F, and 8 am – 5 pm Saturday.

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