

Arlington County Civic Federation

The civic voice of Arlington for 82 years

Newsletter

April, 1998

Volume 82, No. 8

April Meeting:

- **Nominating Committee**
- **Public Housing Plans**
- **Infill Housing Program**

7:30 pm, Tuesday, April 7th
John T. Hazel Conference Center
Columbia Arlington Hospital
1701 N. George Mason Drive

Our April meeting will open with election of the Nominating Committee for 1998-99 officers, for which we will hold the election in May. The Featured Programs will be a discussion of Arlington's Public Housing Policy and a slide program on infill housing issues and possible measures to control infill development. Public housing issues have been cited recently for their budgetary impact on many phases of County expenditures, while the construction of oversized new houses filling in open spaces in our neighborhoods is a concern for many civic associations. The article inside by Reid Goldstein provides background on the public housing issues to be addressed.

ACCF Banquet on April 25 Features William T. Newman

The Banquet Committee, headed by Ann Rudd, has a pleasant dinner and interesting program planned for you on April 25th. Our keynote speaker is Judge William T. Newman, an old Arlington hand who has insights to share from varied perspectives. The awards ceremony and the awarding of the Journal Cup will be another highlight. The cost is modest, the food will be great, and we urge you to return your invitation card with a check to Tommye Morton, or call Ann Rudd at 536-8270 if you need further information.

Public Housing Issues in Arlington

by Reid Goldstein, Housing Committee Chair

"Arlington County is a diverse community of dynamic, secure residential and commercial neighborhoods; a learning, caring, participating community in which each person is important." So states Arlington County's Vision.

The Consolidated Plan, required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides the framework for implementing the County's vision over the next five years. It views the community as a whole and addresses individual needs within that broad context (e.g., affordable housing, adequate infrastructure, fair housing, economic development and job training). The Plan takes a two-pronged approach to address the needs of low and moderate income persons: 1) providing assistance to households and individuals, such as down payments, rent subsidies, or in-home health services; and 2) facilitating the development of revitalization plans for neighborhoods to address needs such as public safety, economic development and neighborhood-based services.

The Plan is staff's blueprint for implementing policy and guidelines previously articulated by the County Board. County staff is looking for broad community input on the draft Consolidated Plan prior to its final submission to the County Board on April 18, 1998. The first item at the Federation's Housing Night on April 7 will be a question and answer session with staff responsible for drafting and implementing the strategies set forth in the Plan. The ACCF Housing Committee has been tracking the Plan from the Interactive Forum, held in November, 1997, to assess neighborhood-based strategies, through the release of the current draft in February. To facilitate the

discussion, the Housing Committee has studied the Plan and has posed 6 questions to staff that they feel best address the affordable housing topic, one of the chief policy areas for which the Plan describes implementation.

(1) The Consolidated Plan describes new procedures instituted in recent years in response to citizen concerns over school enrollment, citizen notification of proposed projects and neighborhood public infrastructure. Please describe how these procedures have worked in practice, the role played by civic associations and citizen advisory committees (including planning and housing), and whether there have been any problems, gaps or omissions in getting input in these areas.

(2) The largest affordable housing project undertaken with county assistance in recent years was Buckingham. Please give a description of gains and losses for the residents, the surrounding neighborhoods and the County as a whole stemming from this project, using supporting data wherever possible.

(3) To what extent is the limited availability of housing for service sector and other low to moderate income workers a constraint on the County's economic growth? Please quantify this impact wherever possible.

(4) What data would you like to see collected that will help you make a clearer path for policy, or help you evaluate a current practice for a possible change in direction?

(5) If the plan seeks to preserve older, multi-family rental complexes, rather than commit new construction units or direct the policy toward home ownership, what will the effect be of these complexes being all in the same few parts of town on the schools, the infrastructure and the neighborhoods?

(6) What are the recent and anticipated trends in the housing market and how will they in-

fluence the effects of programs over the next five years? What additional data should the county collect that will help evaluate those trends and effects or guide discussions for possible changes in policies and/or in implementation procedures?

Note: The data referred to in question six might permit evaluation of how well current programs are meeting specific program objectives as well as their effects on homelessness, schools, neighborhoods (infrastructure, crime, etc.), economic development, human services expenditures, and other factors. The ConPlan and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) propose new procedures for evaluating neighborhood and school effects, but a more complete linkage to future planning is needed.

The ConPlan does discuss plans for cooperation between departments through the Housing coordination committee. There are very thorough reporting requirements for the Community Development Block Grant programs. The Neighborhood Evaluation Toolbox from the Columbia Heights West plan provides a useful example of how data can be collected to measure program success. Such ongoing evaluative approaches need to be more highly emphasized.

The Housing Committee urges you to join us for for the April 7th meeting.

Reaching Out to Renters: Is Your Association Ready?

Furthering the effort we are making with Arlington's Tenant-Landlord Commission on a joint program to interest more renters in joining their neighborhood civic association, the Executive Committee is looking for a few good civic associations who would like to

volunteer as demonstration neighborhoods. The initial program would ask apartment building landlords to permit residents to request that dues to join the local civic association be deducted from their rent and passed on as a donation to the civic association. The rent is not increased. Some landlords have already indicated willingness to help. If you have apartments in your association's area that might be good candidates for this demonstration program, please call Randy Swart at 521-2080 or Bob Rackmales at 525-6586.

Fairfax Invites us to a Baseball Stadium Issues Program

The Fairfax County Federation of Civic Associations will hold a program titled "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" to discuss issues involved in the continuing efforts to place a stadium somewhere in Northern Virginia. The FCFCA has invited all ACCF members concerned with this issue to attend. This is a live issue that will concern Arlingtonians and all other Northern Virginia jurisdictions until a stadium is actually sited.

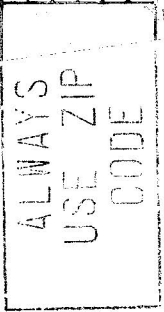
The discussion will include representatives of various stadium viewpoints. It will be held on Thursday, April 16th at 7:30 PM at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. If you need further info, please call Merrily Pierce, President of the FCFCA, at 848-1924.

Coming Up

Banquet! April 25th

**May Meeting: State Representatives'
Report on the 1998 Legislative Session**

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4611 Seventh Street South
Arlington, VA 22204-1419



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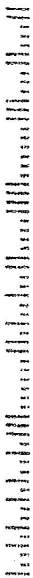
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Briefs

Infill Housing: After the Board of Zoning Appeals denied a new pip-estem on 23rd St. N., the developers are now seeking approval for a smaller infill house on the same lot.

Washout on I-66: The Department of Public Works is earning praise for its response to the washout of the retaining wall and bike trail along I-66. Questions remain about the cause of the water main failure and response time to shut down the flow, but bicycle riders report that the trail detours are being carefully handled.

Budget: Chairman Bill Nolden has presented the Federation's budget resolution to the County Board. The R&E committee is tracking our proposals through the budget process.

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