

Arlington County Civic Federation

The civic voice of Arlington for 83 years

Newsletter

June, 1999

Volume 83, No. 10

June Meeting:

Urban Design in Arlington and Annual Elections

7:30 pm, Tuesday, June 1st
John T. Hazel Conference Center
Arlington Hospital
1701 N. George Mason Drive

7:30 Call to order, adoption of agenda and announcements.

7:40 Annual Committee Reports

8:00 Election of ACCF 1999-2000 Officers

**8:15 Urban Design: Where Should
Arlington be Headed in the Next Century?**

A presentation with slides of Arlington examples of good or not-so-good approaches to urban design and how we can improve our commercial areas.

9:25 Announcement of Election Results

9:30 Adjournment

Please contact President Randy Swart if you have new business to raise.

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee elected at our April meeting has met and will be submitting the following slate of officers for the Federation's consideration at the June meeting:

President: Randy Swart *

Vice President: Jim Pebley *

Treasurer: Frances Finta *

Secretary: Tim Wise *

Executive Committee:

Robert Atkins *

Darnell Carpenter *

Rebecca Gray *

Ann Rudd *

Patrick Smaldore

There will also be an opportunity to make nominations from the floor for any or all of the offices.

* incumbent

What is SARPS?

A new acronym has appeared on the Arlington civic scene, short for The Study on Area Revitalization and Preservation Strategies. The study has been produced over the past year by a team of consultants led by a firm from Annapolis, and is an attempt get us all thinking about how to analyze the causes of disinvestment in stagnant or declining residential and commercial areas and how to promote improvement.

The study recommends use of a revitalization tracking index composed of three elements: commercial assessments, residential assessments and vandalism reports. The study compares Arlington's current mix of development incentives, concluding that in comparison to similar communities elsewhere we are at the top of the list in offering affordable housing incentives but rank among the least aggressive in offering business development incentives or subsidies.

Most of the SARPS analysis is market-oriented, attempting to determine what options may be open for encouraging desirable levels of new development or redevelopment.

The study examines two areas as examples: the west end of Columbia Pike from George Mason Drive to the County line and the Garden City shopping center on Lee Highway at George Mason. The options recommended for the Garden City center are limited to small grants for cosmetic improvements, more rigorous code enforcement of trash and other ordinances and possibly converting the Firestone Tire Store across the street into parking. But the study contains an enthusias-

tic recommendation for possible major changes in the examined area of Columbia Pike, with regional market potential for "an internationally-themed entertainment district serving a regional market--transforming Pike retail and service uses in a three- to five-block segment of the Pike into a food/beverage/entertainment district with an eclectic international flair." It also suggests a comprehensive redevelopment of the Columbia Heights West neighborhood's affordable housing areas, reducing the number of units but increasing County tax receipts based on the new assessments.

The study presents a menu of possible mechanisms the County could adopt to increase its control of the development process, ranging from establishment of a Development Authority to additional incentive programs for commercial development.

SARPS is part of a new County Board initiative in urban design and an attempt to shape the course of new development in Arlington to produce a more livable community. It marks the beginning of a process that will affect you and your neighborhood. It will be presented to the County Board in mid-June. Copies are available by calling Planning staffer Bill Thomas at 228-3525. The Federation's response to SARPS will be coordinated by the Land Use and Zoning Committee, chaired by Bill Gearhart. You can expect at least some discussion of the study at our June meeting.

Our County Fair Booth Needs You!

This year we are reviving the Civic Federation's participation in the Arlington County Fair. The Fair will help us explain the Federation to citizens and introduce neighborhood civic associations or other Federation member organizations who do not participate.

We are thinking about the design for the fair booth. This year's theme is "Preserving Our Past, Creating Our Future." Our booth should feature something lively to attract the attention of both kids and adults, and then enough content to keep them interested in learning more about their neighborhood, their civic association, and the other associations that make up the Federation. We need your Web page address if you have one, and copies of your newsletter or brochures to hand out.

So far, Rebecca Gray, Ann Rudd and Randy Swart are working on the booth. All of them have worked on other fair booths in the past, but they need some ideas for booth design. And we will be asking for help in staffing the booth for 2 hour shifts during the Fair. We promise that the work will be easy and fun, and you will see lots of your friends come by. We will have a sign-up sheet at the next meeting. The Fair runs from August 20 to 23. If that's too far ahead for you to plan, just put your name down at the bottom and we will call you in August.

Whether or not you can help, please drop by and visit the Federation's booth at the Fair. We are looking forward to participating again in this uniquely Arlington event!

Have you Planned Yet for Neighborhood Day?

Neighborhood Day will again be in October this year, and that means it comes up very soon after everyone returns from summer vacation. As a co-sponsor of the event, the Federation encourages you to begin planning for it now before the summer break. As before, we encourage our neighborhood associations to work with their neighborhood schools to schedule a joint event.

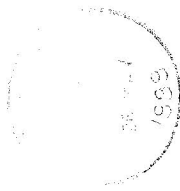
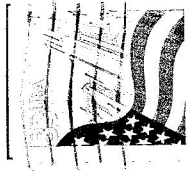
Culpepper Garden Seniors Have Mature Driving Course

Refresh your driving skills and learn new techniques with the 55 Alive Mature Driving Course. This course is conducted in two sessions and teaches preventive measures to use when driving, with emphasis on the effects of aging on driving. Participants will receive a certificate for which most insurance companies offer discounts. Classes are conducted by AARP, the cost is \$8, and registration is required. June 14-15, 10 am - 3 pm. Call 228-4403.

Coming Up!

**August 20-23 - Federation booth
at the Arlington County Fair**

October 23 - Neighborhood Day



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