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RCA: Reston's Independent Voice

Community News

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Greetings!

I am intensely proud of what RCA's Reston 2020 Committee has achieved this month. First, we delivered a fully-developed Planning Principles Paper to the Task Force, superior, in my opinion, to the Strawman Principles drafted by the town planning professionals on the County staff. During the prioritization exercise of the various planning principles documents, at the Community Meeting of the Task Force on January 26, RCA's paper was well received by the participants. You can see more about the RCA planning principles paper elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter. Two other groups delivered commendable papers to the Task Force and to the meeting. The second great achievement this month of RCA Reston 2020 Committee is Terry Maynard's blog, which he describes in a separate article. Well done, and thank you, to all involved in these herculean tasks. If only one of these tasks had been accomplished in single month that would have been outstanding. But to have produced both in the same month proves the dedication, commitment and expertise which this Committee has developed. You are superheroes!

Marion Stillson, RCA President

RCA's Reston 2020 Blog Launched in January

The Reston 2020 blog ([click here](http://reston2020.blogspot.com) http://reston2020.blogspot.com) gained momentum on several fronts in its first full month of operation. The launch of the blog generated a lengthy article in the Reston Observer and the Reston Connection noted its operation early on.

The blog's goal is to be Restonians one-stop shopping point for all information from all perspectives regarding Reston planning and the Task Force.

The blog piled up three dozen posts in January, including:

- News from the Reston newspapers, the Fairfax Times, and the Washington Post,
- Letters and commentaries from the local newspapers from such diverse contributors as Robert E. Simon, John Lovaas, and Dick Rogers,
- All the draft Reston Planning Principles prepared by Reston citizens groups well before their posting on the County website,
- Timely posting of task force documents posted by the County,
- Notes and commentary on the well-attended community meeting of the Reston task force on Reston's proposed Planning Principles,
- Announcements of all Reston planning-related meetings in a timely manner,
- A critique of delays in the County's support in providing a long-promised existing conditions report and materials used by the task force

Some improvements were made in the blog in formatting, policy, and the

addition of a visitor counter. Readers can now go straight to the latest news and information posted on the blog. A change in blog policy allows readers to post comments anonymously on a [moderated](#) basis. This means a slight delay until the blog administrator can make sure the comment is relevant, constructive, and decent, but saves the hassle of registering to use the blog. On January 30, we installed a visitor counter on the blog sidebar so everyone can see how much the blog is being used. In the first day, it chalked up more than 100 [hits](#). That's a great start it is nice to know that people are reading the blog.

The next several months will be busy ones for the blog as the task force effort gains speed, decisions are made on the Tysons development plan which some see as a model for Reston, and series of major Reston development plans move forward through the review process. We intend to cover news on the progress on all these areas as well as keep readers posted on upcoming events and their results.

As always, we welcome contributions by all people interested in the future of Reston. This may either be in the form of comment on an article posted on the blog or, better yet, an article addressing any facet of Reston planning and development.

Submitted by: Terry Maynard, RCA Secretary and Reston 2020 Committee Member

Fairfax Recognizes RCA's Accessibility Committee



At its January 26 meeting, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors honored the RCA Reston Accessibility Committee (RAC) with a presentation of a Certificate of Recognition "for its commitment to ensure barrier-free access for people with physical and mobility impairments within the Reston community by reaching out to retail and service establishments, as well as landlords, to discuss ways their premises can be modified to facilitate access by a wider range of customers."

Present to receive the Board's certificate were RAC members Ken Fredgren (Chairman), Dan McGuire, Marion Stillson, and Cynthia Willer. In thanking the Board members, Ken acknowledged Supervisor Cathy Hudgins and Legislative Assistant Goldie Harrison "for seizing the initiative

that brought us all together today." Ken stressed RAC's mission of "partnering throughout the Reston community to improve access for persons with mobility impairments," saying that RAC "... would much rather work with an owner as a community partner than against him or her as an adversary."

He thanked the Board members for instituting a new interagency work-group which they tasked "to review existing policies and determine if there are opportunities to improve the complaint process." Ken went on to describe "significant parking lot problems" with regard to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) violations of required design features, including "level and close-in parking spaces with the appropriate dimensions, safe access routes and signage for persons with disabilities." He also asked that the board consider a higher ratio of accessible parking spaces to total spaces where the parking is serving health care facilities and restaurants.

Members of the Board of Supervisors were receptive, made cogent observations and asked helpful questions. There was a definite feeling that the Board was going to expedite a serious examination of accessibility issues in the County.

Submitted by: Ken Fredgen, Chair of RCA's Reston Accessibility Committee

RCA Advocates for Increased Citizen Input



Fairfax County's Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force has now held two meetings. The January 12th meeting was a task force roundtable where Heidi Merkel of Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning (DPZ) presented the current comprehensive plan recommendations; the January 26th meeting was a Community Workshop on "Guiding Community Planning Principles" held at Langston Hughes Middle School. Information from these two sessions can be found on the County website at [this link](#)

At the January 12th meeting, RCA representative Mike Corrigan formally proposed that the Task Force support the

broadest possible resident participation in the Task Force deliberation process by adopting Citizen Advisory Groups. The proposal was not met with resounding approval; however, the task force asked Chairperson Patti Nicoson and the County lead staffer Heidi Merkle to review the proposal and return a recommendation to the task force. This recommendation has not yet been presented to the task force members.

The January 26th meeting consisted of a presentation by county staff of a strawman of "suggested" changes to the original Reston principles and presentation of work papers prepared by three citizen groups as unsolicited input to the Task Force - one of which was prepared by the RCA 2020 Committee. RCA's Board of Directors unanimously approved the RCA 2020 Committee submission. With presentation sized copies of each document placed around the room, the workshop concluded with participants placing colored dots on planning principles with which they agreed. County staff will next present a synthesis and conclusion drawn from this exercise to the Task Force.

The next Task Force meeting will be on February 9th at 7:00PM at a location yet to be determined (check the County Website for final determination). This meeting is scheduled to be an Overview of Transportation Current Plan Recommendations to include Transit-Oriented Development Overview Presentation(s) of 1) the Montgomery County, MD experience, 2) the Arlington County experience, and 3) the Reston Metro Access Group recommendations. The meeting is scheduled to conclude with a Task Force Discussion of Guiding Planning Principles.

The February 23 meeting will focus on "Understanding the Herndon-Monroe area" with 1) a review of current development, 2) information about current zoning and potential development under current zoning 3) a review of current Plan recommendations and potential development under current Plan, and 4) additional information related to the station area context.

A "Community Workshop for Herndon-Monroe Area" is scheduled for February 27, 2010, time and location TBD. Citizens may attend all meetings, and most Task Force members are accessible before and after the meetings and there is a public comment period at the start of each meeting (limit 2 minutes per individual, 5 minutes for a formal group). Citizens may also submit comments to the Supervisor's office at least one business day prior to the next Task Force meeting.

The Reston Master Plan Task Force Special Study web page is at the County Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) site at [link](#) For more information about RCA positions and participation on the Task Force, contact the RCA representatives to the Task Force - Mike Corrigan (mike.corrigan@comcast.net) and/or John Bowman (DrJEBowman@aol.com).

Submitted by: John Bowman, RCA Board Member and Task Force alternate

Colin Mills Appointed to County Task Force



Colin Mills, RCA's Vice President has been named by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins to be an alternate representative to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force. Colin was named as an alternate to Reston founder, Bob Simon. Supervisor Hudgins mentioned that she wanted a younger person's perspective on the issues facing the Task Force, and happily, Colin (still) qualifies in that category! Colin is greatly honored to be an alternate to Mr. Simon, and is excited about the opportunity to serve on the Task Force.



In his interview for this story, Colin offered these thoughts: "the goal of Reston's plan revision process should be finding a balance. No one group or interest should hold too much sway over the process; the only way that we will be able to make this work is if we all work together to devise a solution. We need to prepare for the changes coming in our future, including increased population and the need to redevelop our aging infrastructure, while still holding fast to the things that make Reston special, such as our open space and our strong sense of community. We also need to focus attention on strengthening the road network, particularly north-south connections over the Toll Road." Let's get to work!

Editor's note: Of the thirteen people serving on RCA's Board, three are members of the Task Force: Mike Corrigan (principal), John Bowman (alternate), and now Colin Mills (alternate)

Submitted by: Susanne Connors Bowman, newsletter editor

Photo Caption: Colin Mills

RCA January Board Actions

The Board appointed Board members to inquire into two issues:

1. what the County committee is doing to follow up on Chairman Bulova's query on whether the County should become a city; and
2. what questions the Board should ask candidates for the upcoming Reston Association election.

Ken Fredgren, chair of RCA's Reston Accessibility Committee (RAC) told the Board of his banner month. Not only did an article about the RAC appear in the Washington Post and the Fairfax Times, but the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors honored the RAC by publicly presenting us with a certificate (see photo of event, elsewhere in this newsletter). The Board experimented by presenting its Task Force and Reston 2020 reports in the form of interviews, rather than monologues. Finally, the Board thanked Terry Maynard for setting up the Citizens Shaping Reston's Future blog, which is a tool for the entire community to use.

The February Board meeting can be viewed on Comcast Channel 28 on February 22, 2010 at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by: Marion Stillson, RCA President

RCA Reston 2020 Submits Proposed Planning Principles

The Reston 2020 Committee worked diligently, drawing from an expanded participation from citizens and citizens groups across Reston to draft and submit to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force a Planning Principles document for Task Force consideration. Reston 2020 Committee Co-Chair Dick Stillson presented the principles at the Task Force Community Workshop at Langston Hughes Middle School on January 26th. The document addressed nine major issues areas; these are :

1. Comprehensive Planning - Planning for future residential and commercial growth must consider the Reston community as a whole, that is, as a comprehensive unit.
2. Excellence in Planning, Design, and Architecture - Reston must continue to be held to the highest standards of excellence and innovation in future development.
3. Infrastructure and Transportation - The required expansion and/or modification of all modes of transportation and infrastructure must be planned and funded in concert with approved development projects, and must be completed concurrently with that development.
4. Density - Higher densities for residential and commercial development than currently contained in the Comprehensive Plan should be confined to the Reston Center for Industry and Government (RCIG), Town Center, and the various Village Centers
5. Reston Urban Core - The Reston Urban Core (RUC) must be developed into an integrated, dynamic and vibrant urban center for northern Fairfax County.
6. Existing Residential Neighborhoods Outside the RUC - Residential neighborhoods of all types, serving all income levels, must be protected. Any re-development of existing residential neighborhoods must maintain the essential character of the neighborhood as defined by the current residents.
7. All Ages / All Families - Reston, including the RCIG, must continue to accommodate people of all ages, physical abilities, economic circumstances, and families of all sizes and at all stages of family life.
8. Open Space - Ample open space is an important determinant in creating Reston's high quality-of-life. To sustain and nurture this valued asset, at least 25% of all future developed and re-developed land must be reserved for open space

9. Natural Areas - The natural areas in Reston must not be developed, and should be extended to the extent possible.

Additionally, 5 members of Reston 2020 Committee will appear on Comcast's Reston Impact the first week of February - check it out!!

The 2020 Committee continues to reach out to other Reston organizations to establish a united citizen based resource to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force members. For more information, contact the RCA Reston 2020 Committee co-chairs - DickStillson (RTS@Point0.net). and John Bowman (DrJEBowman@aol.com) .

Submitted by: John Bowman, RCA Board Member and co-chair Reston 2020 Committee

Announcements

Rob Jackson, President of McLean Citizens Association, will address the RCA Board at its regular meeting on Monday, February 22 at 8.30 pm on Comcast Channel 28. He will discuss his organization's experience with the Tysons Task Force.

This is Census year! This year's form has only ten questions, making it easy to complete. The Census is safe and confidential, and no personal information is shared with any local, state or federal agency. Please fill in yours and mail it back by April 1, 2010. This activity benefits us all: the Census data are used to apportion seats in Congress and directly affect how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to state, local and tribal governments. Please encourage everyone to participate.

Reston Impact on Reston Comcast channel 28 will run a program on the Reston Master Plan in February. At press time the tentative schedule is Tues. Feb. 9 at 10 pm., Wed. Feb. 10 at 8.30 pm. and Sun. Feb. 14 at 8 pm.

Reston License Plate



Q. How do I apply for a Reston license plate?

A. Send your completed application with \$10 to Reston Citizens Association, PO Box 2851, Reston VA 20195. We must have 350 requests for the plate for it to be produced. RCA will send one check and all the applications to the DMV, once this requirement is met.

Editors Note: The Board of Directors of Clubhouse Court Cluster has requested that RCA print the following in the RCA newsletter. We are complying with the request while noting that Marion Stillson did make several unsuccessful attempts to contact Clubhouse Court Cluster:

In November, Marion Stillson, President of RCA, published an opinion piece in this newsletter suggesting that our cluster at Clubhouse Court was engaged in a 'Cluster Sell-out,' as it relates to JBG's planned redevelopment of Fairway Apartments. These remarks were made out of context, without reference to source, and absent any contact with members of our board prior to publication. RCA is NOT an authority on the intentions or motivations of our Cluster. It is especially offensive to our community that these remarks were presumed to summarize our pro-active efforts to address the concerns of our community related to the Fairways redevelopment. Our Cluster is actively pursuing all options available to us while redevelopment plans proceed through the Reston and Fairfax County authorities overseeing this project, with the two-fold purpose of protecting and enhancing (1) the quality of our lifestyles and environment and, (2) our property values. Ms. Stillson's remarks trivialized and mischaracterized the exhaustive efforts being made to protect our interests, and those of our community.

Submitted by: Clubhouse Court Cluster Board of Directors

NEXT ISSUE

- First actual decisions of the Reston Master Plan Special Task Force
- RCA election questions for Reston Association's Board candidates
- Latest Reston license plate activities

Editor
Reston Citizen's Association

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