



**FALLS CHURCH
VILLAGE PRESERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT
SOCIETY**

VPIS Spring Membership
APPROVED MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting
May 20, 2007
Art and Frame of Falls Church

Attendees who signed in:

Bill Corbett, Sally Cole, Hal Lippman, Craig Bury, Ross Netherton, Dana Shaw, Kathy Buschow, Virginia Long, George Long, Kathy Kleiman, Pam Doran, Elizabeth Meade, Gerald Pressman, Jerry Barrett, Ron Anzalone, Janice Greenberg, Barb Cram, Pete Behr, Marty Behr, Peter Marthen, Gail Wadsworth, Ed Strait, Karen Kiarbacc, Gary LaPorta, Bernadette Gancuberta, Nader Baroukh, Jeff DuBro, Cay Wiant, Ida Peterson, Hunter Peil, Jeff Peterson, Edie Smolinski, Tom Smolinski, Lou Olom, Jon Hundley, Carol Sly, Gina Caceci, Anne Camper, Nancy Brandon, Anne Marie Willis, Linda Laur, Terry Hooper, Midge Wang, Gordon Theisz.

Others noted in attendance not signed in:

Barry Buschow, Wyatt Shields, Stewart Schwartz, Marian Starr, Ellen Gross, Margaret Volpe, Keith Thurston

*An unofficial head count at mid-meeting showed 48 attendees.

Call to Order: 3:05

Welcome: President Barry Buschow welcomed everyone and expressed thanks to Tom Gittins and Gina Caceci for hosting the meeting.

VPIS Calendar

Barry noted the following recent activities:

1. Arbor Day celebration in future Arbor Day Commons at Frady Park held in April 2007, \$7500 given to MEHMS gardens.
2. Attic Treasures sale held in early May, 50 plus volunteers
3. 15th annual farmers market booth ongoing
4. Neighborhood Tree Program, next meeting June 2 with Kathy Allan
5. Picture of Harry Wells presented to the council at last Monday's meeting
6. 4th of July readings scheduled at noon in city council chambers
7. Received a postcard with thanks from Rosemary Ziskin regarding the tree planted at Mount Daniel in honor of Jerry Ziskin

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ida Peterson reported the following:

1. Donations from Lou Olom and the farmers market to the tree fund = \$16K
2. \$10K received so far for Arbor Day Commons (budget is \$40-70K).
3. Investing some of our \$ into a C.D.

Reports

Barry thanked Margaret Volpe for handling our newsletter.

Carol Sly reported on membership – there are 90 non-renewals to chase down.

Jeff Peterson reported for Karl Ensign regarding Affordable Dwelling Units. VPIS' statement regarding ADUs is on the website. VPIS is working with FCHC on this issue.

Gerald Pressman reported on the Sue Olom Garden. Planting is in progress now. New city sign to go in along the sidewalk across from the garden

Gordon Theisz reported on the upcoming Summer Concerts. Concerts start June 21 and run for 7 consecutive Thursdays at Cherry Hill Park. Exciting line up of new groups and old favorites.

Elizabeth Meade reported on the Farmer's Market. Needs volunteers

Midge Wang reported on the Victorian Society. They are selling a book about the history of Falls Church in pictures. Book to be available in July. Kickoff Sale is in September. There will be a tea and fashion show. VS is also to sell a map of historic sites and homes. A Halloween presentation is scheduled for October 26.

Marian Starr and Nancy Brandon reported on the 40th Attic Treasures Sale. \$6500 was earned. They thanked the volunteers, donators, and folks who supplied the trucks.

Ellen Gross reported on Arbor Day 2007. Over 40 people attended. The Victorian Society made a presentation relating to the first Arbor Day celebration held in Virginia here in Falls Church. Barbara Cram interviewed Edna Frady about how the city has changed in her lifetime. \$7500 donated to MEHMS. \$6250 received for Arbor Day Commons.

Barbara Cram and Keith Thurston reported on the Arbor Day Commons progress, on Virginia's 300th Birthday celebration and other activities.

1. Arbor Day Commons: Goal is up to \$70K. Will have a new Victorian gazebo, prettier than the present gazebo. Howard and an architect are reviewing the grading plans.
2. Historic Trail: 10 new signs are being made. This is phase 2 of 3. Fundraising is ongoing for phase 3. Renovation of the Daughter's of the American Revolution garden are ongoing; Sam's Farm donated plants and roses for the Veteran's memorial
3. Treats and Eats Guide: printing to be paid for by the EDA.
4. Watch Night: Improving this year with lessons from last year but will keep many of the elements from last year.

Jeff Peterson reported on the city center design and development team. The VPIS board created the team in February. Letters were sent to the developer and city staff. Barry was placed on the Major Design Team.

Barry reported that Cay Wiant and Nancy Brandon are restarting the home concert series and are in need of homes to host the concerts.

Peter Behr spoke about the preservation partners task force, recommending changes in the historical ordinance to go into the zoning code. Desire is to establish historic districts. Plans to renovate certain homes will require review by an architectural review board.

Cay Wiant presented an original ghost story.

Presentation:

Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director of the Coalition for Smarter Growth spoke about development in our region.

He spoke about the need to bring destinations closer together to reduce the number of driving trips. He noted that Gallery Place is a success story, centered on the MCI Center, the reuse of historic buildings and new construction. The challenge he said is in energy use. Green buildings can reduce 30% of energy consumption. Transportation improvements can reduce another 30-40%. However, the growth in driving anticipated is still expected to overwhelm fuel efficiency gains. Therefore, we need to reduce the number of trips taken.

Mr. Schwartz suggested that building plain mixed use projects is not the answer. What is needed is a walkable location like sites the Rosslyn area and Bethesda Row. Stated that the “creative class” craves walkability.

Described the following attributes in successful development:

1. Place Making. A place for people, not vehicles. Has connections. Has natural features. Has energy conservation at the forefront. Has a mix of uses. Is flexible for change. “Places begin with streets.” Streets for all users/public use. Is at a human scale with safe speeds, on street parking, interconnected street grids. Is multi-nodal (can bike, ride trolley, drive car, walk, take a bus). Suggested buildings with mixed use, pedestrian friendly setbacks, 5-8 stories, step downs of number of stories to public areas.
2. Public spaces. These are the focal points for the people. Have small and frequent parks. Pocket parks and larger parks. Have village greens.

Wyatt Shields, City Manager, reported on the City Center redevelopment efforts. Stated the purpose is “to develop a place for interesting people to do interesting things.” Stated the public development process should get good design. Said building in an area is an

expression of values. For residential neighborhoods, this is defined by quiet tree-lined streets with slow speeds. For commercial, efficiency is important.

Wyatt stated that values are tested in a development process. Politicians must blend these values.

He said that when he works with his staff, he describes three overlapping spheres of interest. Where the spheres overlap is where the workable ideas lie. The spheres are: 1) Design: (most important to the citizens), how the development looks, feels, is affordable, transportation, 2) Fiscal: (most important to the city) the impact on the schools, city and services, and 3) Market: (most important to the developer) what can be built, how much will it cost and how high a rent can be charged.

The fiscal impact is being handled using the Tischler-Bice model which generates net fiscal impact on the city. Residential impact is most costly. The Boran-Smart Firm consults the city on these issues and knows the impact of developer's proffers on their development.

The market is being handled by the EDA. A retail study was done looking at what we have commercially in the city and where the regional competition is located.

Design is a major confluence is occurring. The master developer contract expired. The master plan is now being used to determine what should go into the city center. The master plan calls for a great place, pedestrian friendly, mixed use, strong street retail, civically active public space, transit oriented but not auto-centric. "The great place will be on the streets and it is the city's responsibility for laying this out."

The city council votes next Monday on the proposal to contract with Clarion out of Chapel Hill, NC to rewrite our zoning code. The code will be "form based with text." It will take a year to complete the rewrite. Will need community involvement to complete.

Regarding the Atlantic Realty project, the fiscal impact for the project is positive. Council and planning commission are wrestling with the height and density issues. He presented the latest design from Atlantic Realty.

A question and answer period followed. Most of the questions were directed to Mr. Shields regarding the Atlantic Realty project. The questions focused on the density and walkability of the project. Mr. Schwartz was asked to comment and he said, on first look, he particularly liked how Shirley Street separates the project from the park, but living spaces in the development faced the park. He noted that there were three weaknesses in the project: 1) The Burke and Herbert Bank is still present/their property is not folded into the overall project, 2) the project priority seemed to be focused on saving the bowling alley, 3) the bowling alley has no physical connection to Broad St. Someone asked Wyatt if he felt the developer need all eleven stories to make the project passable and he responded that he did not think so.

The meeting concluded because the time allotted had been exceeded and the group moved to enjoy the refreshments.