

# *The Village Way*

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## **Saving Mass Transportation Capabilities in the City**

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) Board of Directors strongly supports maintaining and expanding mass transportation options within the City of Fall Church. Mass transportation is essential to the economic vitality of the City, reducing traffic and congestion, making the City more “walkable”, meeting air quality and other environmental goals, and reducing release of greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

We recognize that the City faces serious budget constraints and we agree that reducing costs of mass transportation in the City is a reasonable goal. Much of the debate to date, however, has focused on what programs to cut to meet revenue shortfalls. We believe that the City has the obligation to take the time to make a balanced assessment of both the costs and the benefits of mass transportation. The City’s goal should be to restructure the existing mass transportation services to significantly reduce costs, rather than simply eliminate the service. In the final analysis, mass transportation is the future for our region and we must embrace it and learn how to manage it so that it provides the services that our businesses and residential community need.

A key option that needs careful assessment is cooperation with Arlington mass transportation services to expand their service area to include the City of Falls Church, with special emphasis on access to Metro stations in Falls Church that could significantly reduce costs while providing more useful service to both Arlington and Falls Church citizens

Other options that need careful assessment include reducing the “platform hours”,



(i.e. starting and ending service earlier could reduce the platform hours by approximately 6 hours a day), raising the riders fee to \$1 instead of 50 cents, and eliminating one of the two existing routes.

It is important to remember that mass transportation has important benefits that are difficult to express in monetary terms and the environmental benefits that a mass transportation system can provide are considerable. In this era of reducing carbon dioxide to address global warming, maintaining mass transportation services can prevent 102,900 lbs. of carbon dioxide from going into the air.

The human impact of a loss of mass transportation is personal to each citizen and harder to judge. The bus system has allowed neighbors to get to know one another. It has allowed those who have difficulty walking the opportunity of riding instead of driving to the Falls Church Metro stations. The business community also benefits from riders using the GEORGE system and riders enjoy the safety of not having to walk on the streets, especially at night.

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society, founded in 1885, is an active non-profit citizen volunteer organization in the City of Falls Church, Virginia. The Society works to preserve our natural and built environment, historic structures and landmarks, and it promotes cultural activities. The members are primarily residents and former residents or neighbors of the City of Falls Church and are of all political persuasions. They are bonded by their interest in and commitment to improving the city. Send donations, comments, questions or letters to the editor to: Village Preservation and Improvement Society, P.O. Box 6824, Falls Church, VA 20040 or email to [villagesociety@yahoo.com](mailto:villagesociety@yahoo.com). For income tax purposes VPIS is an approved 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization. A financial statement is available upon written request from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

**Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society**  
P. O. Box 6824  
Falls Church, VA 22040  
[www.VPIS.org](http://www.VPIS.org)

**2009 OFFICERS**

**President: Jeff Peterson**

532-7635; pijpijp@hotmail.com

**Vice President: Karl Ensign**

532-6942; Karlensign@msn.com

**Treasurer: Ida Peterson**

532-7635; pijpijp@hotmail.com

**Recording Secretary: Melissa Teates**

538-6961; melanite@verizon.net

**Corresponding Secretary: Barry Buschow**

533-8610; bbuschow@verizon.net

**VPIS 2009 Board of Directors**

**Peter & Riva Adriance** 241-7015;

the.adriances@gmail.com

**Nancy Brandon** 536-8230;

nancbrand@aol.com

**Tom Clinton** 241-2092; tomclinton@aol.com

**Roger-Mark DeSouza** 532-6143;

r-mdesouza@hotmail.com

**Mark & Ellen Gross** 533-8197;

oaks303@aol.com

**Jon Hundley** 534-5492

**Elizabeth Meade** 536-2333;

harkinsmeade@earthlink.net

**Ruth Rodgers** 532-8144; rrodg@aol.com

**Mike Slonim** 536-0212;

Michael.slonim@verizon.net

**Carol Sly** 538-6272; carol.sly@verizon.net

**Mary Soule** 237-8543; mjsoule@jeredith.com

**Gordon Theisz** 538-6961; gtheisz@verizon.net

**Keith Thurston** 241-1672;

keiththurston@gsa.gov

**Michael Volpe** 534-8932; volpemike@aol.com

**Midge Wang** 534-8394;

mthopewang@yahoo.com

**Newsletter Editor: Ruth Rodgers**

All telephone numbers are area code 703.

**VPIS Website: [www.vpis.org](http://www.vpis.org)**

## President's Message

You moved here for a reason!

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) is planning for a busy and productive 2009. Details of several upcoming events are included within the newsletter, but some of the highlights include:

- \* **Spring Neighborhood Tree Planting April 25th;**
- \* **Arbor Day Celebration in Frady Park April 18**
- \* **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Attic Treasures Sale May 2**
- \* **Spring Membership Meeting May 17**
- \* **VPIS Excellence in Design Awards**
- \* **Summer Concerts in Cherry Hill Park**

In addition to the activities VPIS sponsors every year, we expect that several new projects will be important additions to our work for 2009.

**City Zoning Code Rewrite:** The effort to rewrite the City Zoning Code will move into a critical phase in 2009. VPIS is committed to active involvement in this work and strong advocacy of strengthening the existing code and assuring that it is fully enforced. Our letter to the City of May 21, 2008 on this topic is available on the website.

**Environmental Policy:** VPIS has developed a set of five environmental goals for Falls Church and is now seeking comment on a paper describing the goals from VPIS members and others. For more detail see p.6 of this newsletter and our website.

**Green Home Tour:** After a very successful green home tour in 2008, VPIS is sponsoring a second tour at a newly renovated green home in the area. VPIS is actively promoting environmentally sustainable home building practices and is considering making a "green home tour" an annual activity.

These and other VPIS activities are supported by an annual budget approved each year by the VPIS Board of Directors. Because we greatly value your contributions, we want you to know how we plan to spend your money. The budget can be found on the website, along with a description of activities and accomplishments for 2008.

Finally, I encourage all VPIS members to take a moment to consider how you think that VPIS could better serve the Falls Church Community. VPIS is a member organization and we want and need to hear from you. Please call or email me or any member of the Board with your thoughts. Or, stop by the VPIS Booth at the Farmers' Market and share your ideas with us there.

*Jeff Peterson*



## ARBOR DAY CEREMONY SET FOR APRIL 18

Have your New Year’s resolutions come and gone? Is the economy bringing you down? Are you looking for a way to nourish your soul? Then be a part of the VPIS “Coffee for Trees” booth at the farmers market.

On May 2, VPIS begins its 15<sup>th</sup> year selling coffee to raise money for the neighborhood tree program. If you’ve ever been to the farmers market on a busy Saturday morning, you know that the VPIS booth is in the thick of it – definitely the place to be right here in the city of Falls Church.

Like all VPIS activities, volunteers run the booth. Many thanks to the wonderful members who helped in 2008 including, but not limited to, the following: Pete Markham, Gail Wadsworth, Jon Hundley, Hunter Peil, Barry Buschow, Mike Volpe, Riva Adriance, Keith Thurston, Roger-Mark DeSouza , Mary and Jeremy Soule, Gordon Theisz, Melissa Teates, Delaney and Kiera Thiesz, Constance Meade, Rich Meade, Mark Gross, Jeff Peterson, Peng Si, Kate Highman, Kent Taylor, Joan Moody, Alex Roth, Patti Austin, Lili Vivanco, John and Kathleen Nixon, those who stopped by to say hi, but ended up helping out anyway, and anyone I may have missed. We are grateful to each volunteer.

We are looking for even more VPIS member involvement in 2009. So if you want to maximize your VPIS membership, do good for the environment, and be a part of a social and cultural phenomenon right here in Falls Church, join us at the VPIS “Coffee for Trees” booth starting May 2.

If you can help, please contact Elizabeth Meade at [harkinsmeade@verizon.net](mailto:harkinsmeade@verizon.net) or 703-536-2333. The schedule is open now for all Saturdays, starting May 2. Thanks for contributing your time to keeping the VPIS booth up and running!

Elizabeth Meade, Volunteer Coordinator

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society cordially invites you to the 117<sup>th</sup> Arbor Day celebration to be held in Frady Park, the site of the first Arbor Day celebration in the City of Falls Church and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Frady Park is located on the north side of the 300 block of East Broad Street. Parking on North Fairfax Street or in the Falls Church Presbyterian Church parking lot.

Festivities will begin **3 p.m. on Saturday, April 18th** and will include a presentation of Falls Church’s 31<sup>th</sup> consecutive Tree City U.S.A. award by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The City of Falls Church was the first community in Virginia to be recognized as a Tree City and has the longest state record for this annual award.

Midge Wang is coordinating the event for VPIS and the Victorian Society.



### VPIS HISTORY PROJECT

Did you know that VPIS:

- Provided an \$8,000 grant to the State Theater at a critical time that helped the renovation of this historic building to proceed;
- Has recognized dozens of commercial, public, and residential buildings and landscaping in the City for outstanding architectural design;
- Designed and installed the signs welcoming people to the City of Falls Church;

*(Continued on p. 4)*

## VPIS History Project

*(Continued from Page 3)*

- Prevented the widening of Broad Street to five lanes; and
- Provided financial support to community projects ranging from landscaping at the City schools to improvements at Cherry Hill Farmhouse.

VPIS recently formed a Committee to gather material related to our projects and activities over the years and to draft an official statement of specific activities and accomplishments. If you have old VPIS files or newsletters you would like to donate to this effort, VPIS stories we should know, or if you would like to join the Committee, please call Mike Volpe (703-534-8932) or Jeff Peterson (703-532-7635).

## Historically Speaking (7)



### Creation of the Falls Church Village by 1860

*By Ric Terman*

Within a 1.5 mile radius of The Falls Church, 27 land patents were granted between 1715 and 1837. The 1860 census indicates a total population of about 400, including some 90 slaves, with 81 landowners holding 91 properties. The largest property of 966 acres was owned by William Dulin; the smallest property was a quarter-acre lot at Fairfax Chapel. The last sale prices for the 91 properties varied from \$1 to \$9,000; 61 sold for \$1,000 or less. In the 1860 census, the combined land and personal property value exceeded \$10,000 for only 8 owners. The 1861 personal property tax records are available for only 51 families and lists 45 slaves, 32 vehicles, 28 clocks, 11 watches, and 3 pianos.

Within the current city area, 45 properties averaged about 60 acres in size. However, in 1853 Levi

Parker, a 36-year old farmer who had immigrated from Massachusetts, bought the Henry Fairfax estate of 18 acres east of The Falls Church. After multiple transactions during the rest of the decade, some 15 new owners had purchased small lots in that acreage. Thus, in the late 1850s, a true village was created in and around The Falls Church mostly by new store owners and artisans of Yankee heritage.

The 1860 census included 31 families. The average age of the heads of households was just over 40. Twenty-two household heads were from the north, 8 were born in the District or Virginia, and one in Ireland. The residents included 19 farmers, 4 merchants, 3 blacksmiths, 2 carpenters, and one each physician, wagon-maker, and shoemaker. The 1860 agricultural census included 10 farms that were at least partly within the current city limits. The crops, in decreasing order by volume, were corn, potatoes, oats, rye, buckwheat, wheat, and peas/ beans; elsewhere in the region the relative quantity of oats and wheat were much higher. These 10 farms marketed garden vegetables, orchard fruits, hay, and butter, and together they had 64 hogs, 54 milk cows, 36 horses, and 14 cattle; other farmers had a small number of sheep, oxen, and mules. An 1862 map shows 4 churches, 2 taverns, and one each railroad station (railway arrived in 1859), tollgate (on the turnpike), cartwright, blacksmith shop, sawmill, hotel, and post office

In 1861 the stage was set for major expansion of the village. Unfortunately, the Civil War intervened.

### **2009 Neighborhood Tree Planting Events**

**Sat., Apr. 25<sup>th</sup>, Planting Party, 8:30 am**

**Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, Tree Squad**

**Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, Tree Squad**

**Saturday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>, Planting Party, 9 am**

Contact: Seth Hemingway at [hemingway.seth@gmail.com](mailto:hemingway.seth@gmail.com)

# 42nd Annual Attic Treasures Sale

## Saturday May 2, 2009

### 9 AM to Noon

The oldest and largest annual fundraising sale in the City, this is the primary fundraising activity for the Village Society. All of the proceeds go to activities such as Neighborhood Trees, Summer Concerts in the Park and many other community-building projects. You will find bargains that you really "need", plus live music by Andrew Acosta and fine food provided by Classic Caterers.

#### Friday, May 1st, 9 AM - 9PM

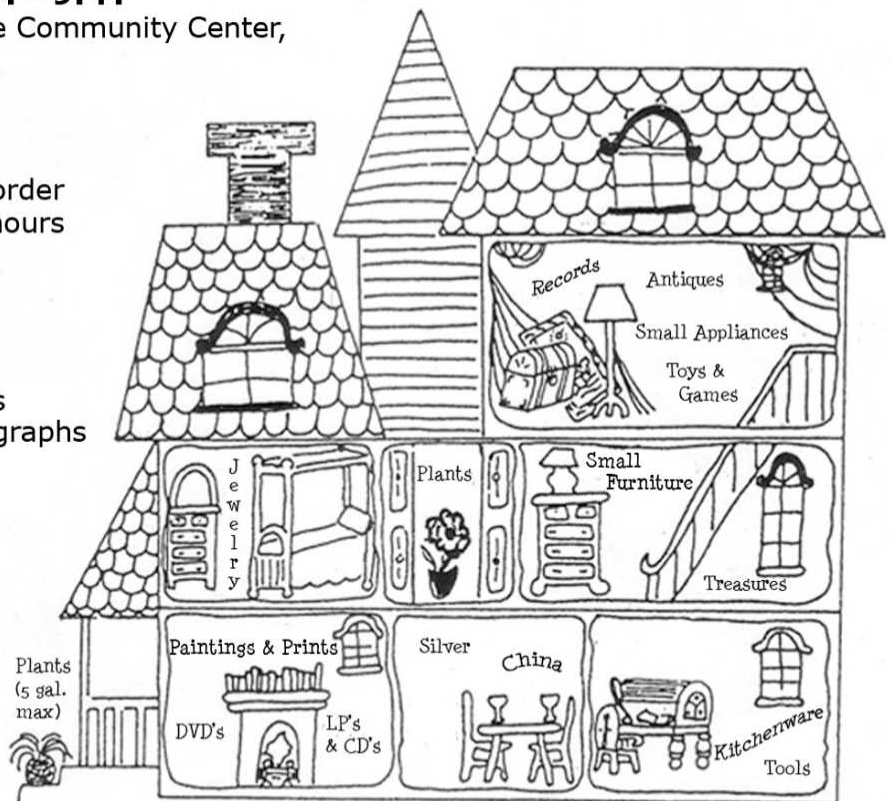
Donations accepted at the Community Center,  
223 Little Falls Street

All donations must be:

- \* clean
- \* in good working order
- \* easy to sell in 3 hours
- \* No Junk Please!

We welcome:

- ◆ Musical Instruments & Recordings (LPs, CDs, tapes, DVDs), Phonographs
- ◆ Plants (5 gal. maximum size)
- ◆ Gardening Items (**no** grow pots)
- ◆ Household Goods & Kitchenware
- ◆ Special Treasures (antiques, collectibles)
- ◆ Toys
- ◆ Jewelry
- ◆ Hardware



**Please-**  
**No books, clothing, bicycles, or computer equipment**

### VOLUNTEERS

are needed *both* days to make the Sale a big success.

For further information, to help with item pick-up, or to volunteer, contact

**Riva Adriance** at **703-241-7015** or email **villagesociety@vpis.org**

*VPIS is a 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Charitable Organization*

# VPIS Seeks Comment on Five Environmental Goals for Falls Church

The City of Falls Church has a long record of forward-looking environmental programs and policies. For the past thirty years, the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) has promoted and supported strong programs to protect the environment in the City.

Today, however, the quality of the environment in the City is at risk from causes as diverse as rapid development and a changing climate. In order to maintain its position of leadership in addressing serious environmental problems, VPIS is encouraging the City of Falls Church to make a concerted effort to expand environmental protection efforts in five key areas:

**Increase Tree Canopy:** The City should adopt a goal of restoring the tree canopy across the City.

**Increase Solid Waste Recycling:** The City should adopt a goal of increasing the percentage of the residential solid waste that is recycled.

**Reduce Release of Greenhouse Gases Causing Global Warming:** The City should adopt goals of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases that are causing global warming from City operations and from the City overall.

**Increase Green or “Pervious” Surfaces:** The City should adopt a goal of improving storm water management by increasing the amount of green or “pervious” surface across the City.

**Promote Building Environmental Standards:** The City should require that large new commercial construction meet at least the “Silver” level in the Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program and adopt incentives for attainment of LEED ratings by existing commercial and residential buildings.

These five draft goals for strengthening environmental sustainability are described in more detail in a *Discussion Paper* available on the VPIS website ([www.vpis.org](http://www.vpis.org)). VPIS is seeking comments from VPIS members and others on the draft goals by May 22, 2009 and hopes to finalize the goals this summer.

The *Discussion Paper* includes measurable baselines and performance targets for future years. In addition, VPIS will take specific steps to promote both the adoption of these goals and the implementation of policies and programs needed to assure their attainment.

Attaining these five key environmental sustainability goals is essential to the long-term health of the environment in the City. Meeting these goals will also demonstrate to neighboring communities that Falls Church is doing its part to meet the environmental challenges the region faces and is implementing a comprehensive and meaningful set of environmental policies and programs. At the same time, these goals are attainable and affordable and are scaled to the resources and capabilities of the City.

Finally, it is important to recognize that these five goals are mutually reinforcing and, together, form a fabric of protection for the environment. For example:

- increasing tree canopy helps protect water quality by reducing storm water and erosion but also helps reduce emission of greenhouse gases that cause global warming;
- reducing impervious surfaces helps make a fuller tree canopy possible while protecting water quality;
- LEED designed building use less energy and thus reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce storm water runoff impacts; and
- increasing recycling rates reduces litter and reduces greenhouse gases because recycled products require less energy to make than products that do not use recycled material.

Please call Jeff Peterson, Melissa Teates, or Peter Adriance if you have comments or suggestions concerning the VPIS draft of five environmental goals for Falls Church.

# SUMMER CONCERTS IN THE PARK 2009



The Village Preservation and Improvement Society is proud to announce its lineup for the 17<sup>th</sup> season of the VPIS Summer Concerts in Cherry Hill Park. Co-sponsored with the City of Falls Church Recreation and Parks Department, the concerts take place on seven Thursdays this summer at 7 PM. Bands with a local connection are always featured, and Falls Church Arts members also present their creations.

## *June 25* **Falls Church Concert Band**

The Falls Church Concert Band continues its annual tradition of performances for the Cherry Hill faithful.

## *July 2* **Andrew Acosta and the New Old Time String Band**

Andrew and his pickers bring swing, roots and bluegrass music to life and no summer is complete without one of his performances.

## *July 9* **Mad for the Road**

Mad for the Road, headed by local musician and teacher Maddy O'Neill-Dean will feature Irish music that brings happiness to your soul and warmth to your heart.

*July 16* **Orange Line** GMHS teacher Ben Powell and his group feature a modern take on Eighties music and also modern rock and roll favorites.

*July 23* **Randy Barrett and the Barretones** Falls Church favorite Randy Barrett and his band always bring out big crowds for his upbeat bluegrass performances.

## *July 30* **Hamburger James**

Take a trip back in time and listen to 1960's rockabilly stylings of Hamburger James. By the time they finish, you might feel like Elvis has left Falls Church!

## *August 6* **Tom Principato Band**

2009 WAMMIE award winner Tom Principato puts the Cherry on top of a great concert season with great blues and rock and a masterful guitar performance.

## Save the Date!

**Sunday, May 17, 2009**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Community Center**

**VPIS ANNUAL  
SPRING MEETING**

## **Green Renovation & Development “Doing it Right in the City”**

Presentation by Patty Shields, who has successfully undertaken a green home renovation, and Doug Fraser, who oversees the new residential green building program for the City. Come for the presentation, stay for the social hour and refreshments!

## **2009 Dates to Remember**

**April 18: Arbor Day Ceremony in Frady Park, 3:00 p. m.**

**April 25: Neighborhood Tree Program Planting Party, 8:30 a.m.**

**May 2: Attic Treasures Sale, Community Center, 9 am to Noon**

**May 2: VPIS Booth at Farmer's Market Opens, 8 a.m. to Noon**

**May 17: VPIS Spring Membership Meeting, Community Center, 3:00 p.m.**

**May 25: VPIS Participation in the Memorial Day Parade**

**June 25: VPIS Summer Concerts in the Park Begin, Thursdays, 7 p.m.**

**July 4: VPIS Independence Day Readings at City Hall, Noon**



Falls Church Village Preservation and  
Improvement Society  
P. O. Box 6824  
Falls Church, VA 22040  
Email: [VillageSociety@yahoo.com](mailto:VillageSociety@yahoo.com)  
[www.VPIS.org](http://www.VPIS.org)

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