

The Village Way

Novemb 2005

Vol. 38 No. 4



Fall Meeting
November 10, 2005
7:30 PM
The Falls Church Episcopal
Nicholson Hall

“Great Design”

subject of the Fall Meeting & Social

Every locality is known by the character of its physical presence as seen in the design of its buildings. The City of Falls Church is undergoing a transition in its commercial sector and in its housing stock that will contribute to the quality of our community – *or not*. We are all interested in ensuring that new development allows our City to evolve in a way that we will make us proud and comfortable to live here in 20 years. The Fall Meeting of the Society will focus on the issue of “Great Design”.

Mr. Milton Grigg was an imminent Virginia architect that practiced during the mid-20th century. He was renowned for his classical designs as well as important historic restorations. His work is seen in Williamsburg, Charlottesville and many other places in Virginia – including the City of Falls Church. **Ms. Sarah Sargent** of Charlottesville will be speaking at the VPIS Fall Meeting with an interesting presentation about the man, his works and the impact of his buildings.

Also, this same evening, the Falls Church Excellence in **Design Awards** will be presented to some of the 16 nominations considered for the awards this year. The American Institute of Architects judged the entries to present plaques to the best of those considered. All entries this year were residential entries, so the pictorial presentation is fascinating to see beautiful homes that really fit into the context of Falls Church. These awards have been presented for decades by the Society to reinforce great design and development for the community.

Upcoming Events

VPIS Fall Meeting

Thursday

November 10,, 2005

7:30-9:30 pm

The Falls Church Episcopal
Nicholson Hall

Future of Retail

In Falls Church

November 15, 7 - 9:30 p.m.

George Mason High School
Cafeteria

See Page 4

Tree Planting Party

November 19, 1PM

See page 5

Come out, enjoy the evening some deserts and meet others.

Village Preservation and Improvement Society

Election of Board and Officers for 2006 at Fall Meeting

VPIS By-Laws call for the election of Officers each year and the election of the one-third Board of Directors seats with terms that expire this year.

Other Directors continue in their three-year term.

The membership votes on officer and directors at the Fall Meeting of each year.

Nominating Committee is Proud to Nominations a Slate for:

Officers for a one-year term

President Barry Buschow

Vice President Jeff Peterson

Treasurer Ida Peterson

Board of Directors:

1. Bob Burnette (Term Ending Dec 2006)
2. David Eckert & Annette Mills* (Term ending Dec 2008)
3. Jerry Pressman (Term Ending Dec 2007)
4. Ruth Rodgers* (Term Ending Dec 2008)
5. Marian Starr (Term Ending Dec 2006)
6. Michael Volpe (Term Ending Dec 2008)

* Incumbents

Members interested in serving on a activity committee or as a director or officer are encouraged to speak with the President or Vice President. We regularly have a need for more people to serve in key positions.

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society, founded in 1885, is an active nonprofit citizen volunteer organization in the City of Falls Church, Virginia. Send comments, questions or letters to the Editor tp: VPIS , P.O. Box 6824, Falls Church, VA 22040, or VillageSociety@yahoo.com. Also See www.VPIS.org

Development Updates

West End Park Senior Housing Project Cancelled

The Falls Church Housing Corporation (FCHC) and AHC Inc. announced on November 2, the end of their joint effort to develop the 48-unit West End View Apartments, proposed as affordable senior housing in Falls Church. The project was to be located on a vacant parcel of land on West Broad Street, adjacent to the NVRPA bike trail and the City's newly expanded West End Park. The project was not awarded crucial tax credit financing in Virginia's March 2005 competition. The next award of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits does not occur until March of 2006, delaying project construction by one year beyond the original plan.

In recent months, architects, engineers and underground construction specialists had been refining the construction plans. Recent estimates indicated that escalating construction costs and utility prices, worsened uncertainties in future interest rates and sources for permanent financing.

Late last week, the West End View partners concluded that financial risks for the seniors housing proposal had become insurmountable. As a result, FCHC and AHC, Inc., voted to terminate further work and dissolve their partnership to develop West End View Seniors Apartments.

Editor's note - VPIS supported the need for affordable housing but opposed the West End Park impact of the original proposal. The project cancelled was for scaled-back project to address those concerns voiced by VPIS and others.

City to Purchase Hamlet Tract for Open Space

One of the impacts of the West End Senior Housing proposal was a heightened concern for open space in a City that is becoming more dense with new development. When the City Council voted to approve the West End Senior housing, it also created the Open Space Task Force. VPIS was requested by Council to provide the chair to the task force and Vice President Barry Buschow was chosen. The group not only set policy direction, but re-ignited the acquisition process for the Hamlet Property, next to Sun Trust (603 W. Broad) and the new Byron condos. The parcel follows the Coe Branch stream bed from Broad Street to Tripp's Run. The City has long sought the property for a connecting trail and park land. The agreement with owners was reached and the Task Force members are to be congratulated for their significant accomplishment. The members are –Barry Buschow, Councilmen Marty Meserve, Lindy Hockenberry, Dave Synder, Planning Commissioner Rob Puentis, as well as Bruce Kulpan, Tom Edmonds Rob Meeks and Melissa Teates.

City Center and the Comprehensive Plan

The Village Society has been very active since January providing input and opinions on the Comp Plan and especially the City Center District portion of it. Also active were other citizen groups that worked with VPIS to create the joint position of the *Coalition for a Great City Center*. The Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Authority all were active with positions throughout the 5 month approval process. The City Council accepted many of the VPIS suggested changes to the documents before they approved the Comp Plan in October. Codifying the Design Guidelines to make them meaningful is our next agenda item. See www.VPIS.org for our position papers and letters.

Consultants November 15th Presentation:

The Retail Big Picture for Falls Church: Where We Are and Where We Are Headed

For the past several months, consulting firm *Retail Compass* of Washington, D.C. has been conducting an intensive study for the City of Falls Church of the retail inventory and conditions in the city, as well as consumer spending power and patterns in our primary and secondary trade areas.

The City Economic Development Authority is hosting their findings in a presentation on Tuesday, November 15, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the George Mason High School Cafeteria for a timely and informative presentation about the retail market in Falls Church, both now and in the future.

The cornerstone of a successful Falls Church City Center will be a strong retail component. The work of *Retail Compass* will help guide the city and its development partners in the planning of City Center. Here are some of the questions that will be addressed at the November 15 event:

- How does the retail industry make its decisions about new store locations?
- What does the retail industry see when it evaluates opportunity in Falls Church?
- How much retail can our market support?
- Where is our retail competition today and where will it come from in the future?
- How can we best build and maintain a successful retail base?
- What type of retailers and restaurants should we pursue in City Center and other new development projects?

There will be an opportunity for audience questions. **All are welcome to see a comprehensive look at the retail present and future of Falls Church.**

**Date: Tuesday, November 15,
Time: 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Place: George Mason High School Cafeteria**



You Moved Here for a Reason...

You may notice the Society's campaign to remind our City residents that they are good reasons that they initially moved to Falls Church – or stay here, and those characteristics are worth protecting. Society membership helps to do that..

For about 12 years the Village Society membership year has been the same as the calendar year. In some years we have avoided the holiday season and waited until the spring to ask members to renew memberships, but this may have caused some confusion about the membership year and cycle. So, this year we will begin in November requesting you renew for 2006. Of course you may renew at the Fall Meeting or at the Farmers market until November 19.

VPIS Year 2005 Officers

President:

Keith Thurston 241-1672

Vice President:

Barry Buschow 533-8610

Treasurer:

Sallie Twentyman 533-7946

Publicist/Newsletter:

Melanie Griffiths 532-5349;

Past President:

Mark Gross 533-8197

Board of Directors

Les & Cindy Brorsen-538-2522;

Nancy Brandon-536-8230;

David Eckert & Annette Mills -532-0884;

Jason Douglas - 538-2945;

Karl Ensign-532-6942;

Ellen Gross-533-8197;

Jon Hundley-534-5492

Jeff & Ida Peterson-32-7635;

Sally Phillips- 532-5693;

Ruth Rodgers-532-8144;

Joanne Rodman&

Wesley Warren-534-9328

Mike Slonim-536-0212;

Midge Wang-534-8394;

Ca y Wiant-533-3831

Neighborhood Tree Program

**Planting Party November 19, 1 pm – 4 pm
Offutt Drive – Behind Staples**

VPIS started the Neighborhood Tree Program and now partners with the City in that effort. A committee lead by VPIS Director Annette Mill, as the volunteer coordinator – works year around to prepare for the planting parties in the spring and fall.

VPIS members are residents of the neighborhoods converge on a Saturday to plant trees along the road side to maintain the tree canopy of the Falls Church.

If you have a tree that is less than 5 years old, it will need to be watered whenever rainfall levels are below normal. The young trees cannot survive droughts; especially in the urban environment where curbs and storm sewers divert much of the water run off that would support trees and the water table. Mulching helps maintain moisture, suppresses competing weed and protects trees from mower and weed whacker damage.

Please bring the family and join us at the tree planting party – or donate funds for a tree by contacting Annette Mills at 532.0884.

Falls Church Trivia –

What building in Falls Church was designed by Milton Grigg?

Answer at www.vpis.org



**Falls Church Village Preservation
and Improvement Society**
P.O. Box 6824
Falls Church, VA 22040
Email: VillageSociety@yahoo.com
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Events and Activities

***VPIS Fall Meeting & Social
Thursday November 10th, 7:30
“Great Design”***

Farmers Market – Coffee and Books

Every Saturday through November 20th –
VPIS Booth at the Farmers Market
8 am to Noon -- Stop by and say hi!