

The Village Way

A Seasonal Newsletter from The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society, founded in 1885, is an active nonprofit citizen volunteer organization in the City of Falls Church, Virginia.

After many years of activism, the Society still is comprised of concerned citizens who address many important issues that face our community. As our Statement of Purpose indicates, the Society works to preserve our natural and built environment, historic structures and landmarks, and promotes cultural activities.

Members are primarily residents of the City of Falls Church, former residents and nearby neighbors who have an interest in sustaining the character of Falls Church and the quality of life here. Members are of all political persuasions and are bonded by their interest in and a commitment to preserving and improving the City of Falls Church community.

Join your fellow members at these upcoming events!

April

Saturday, April 5th: Neighborhood Tree Planting (1 of 2)

Saturday, April 26th: Arbor Day Ceremony @3pm

May

Saturday, May 3rd: Attic Treasures sale

Monday, May 26th: Memorial Day Parade

June

Sunday, June 1st: Spring General Membership Mtg.

Thursday, June 19th, Concerts in the Park begin (weekly for 7 weeks)

July

Friday, July 4th: Independence Day Readings

August

Thursday, August 7th: Final Summer Concert



Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society

P. O. Box 6824
Falls Church, VA 22040
www.VPIS.org

2014 Officers

President:

◇ Michael Connelly 703-237-0604

Vice President:

◇ Mark Gross 703-533-8197

IPP:

◇ Michael Volpe 703-408-7541

Treasurer:

◇ Pradeep Sensharma 703-532-4744

Recording Secretary:

◇ Keith Thurston 703-241-1672

Corresponding Secretary:

◇ Barry Buschow 703-533-8610

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Membership Chair:

◇ Bonnie Murphy 703-532-8065

Directors:

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◇ Dennis Szymanski 703-220-2892

◇ Ruth Rogers 703-532-8144

◇ Carol Sly 703-538-6272

◇ Melissa Teates 703-538-6961

◇ Seth Heminway 703-536-3049

◇ Jeff Peterson 703-532-7635

◇ Tom Clinton 703-241-2902

◇ Peter & Riva Adriance

703-624-4667/64

◇ Paul & Jackie Handy

703-532-2348

◇ Jon Hundley 703-534-5492

◇ Ellen Gross 703-533-8197

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E



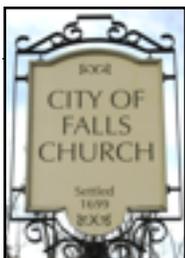
I am struck, when perusing older issues of our *The Village Way*, how much the Society has been a part of our Little City's recent development, and how much we, as a civic organization, have added to the quality of life here. Neighborhood Tree Planting, Concerts in the Park (yes, **VPIS** sponsors those!), Attic Treasures, Independence Day Reading, candidate forums, taking positions on vital projects facing the City – the list goes on and on, and it stretches back decades. Indeed, when considering the positive impact we have had on the smart growth and development of our town, I am both honored and humbled to be a part of it, let alone serve as president. We so very much appreciate your support (in time, energy, and finances), and encourage you to

join us in making the City a great community – as our saying goes, “you moved here for a reason!”

This issue is full of information and activities for all our members and everyone living in Falls Church and the surrounding communities. In April, VPIS will come back to the Saturday morning Farmers Market – come on out, enjoy some great coffee (courtesy of our local 344 W. Broad St Starbucks), meet some friends, and pick up some locally-produced foods. Later that month, the Society will be part of annual Arbor Day celebration – that is, **after** many of our members have planted trees and added mulch in places throughout the City. May brings us the delightful Attic Treasures with its opportunity to donate to the sale or find just that right piece you needed, and the Memorial Day parade. In June there is our membership meeting, and the start of the Concert in the Park series. Oh, and don't forget the Independence Day readings – we had a full house in City Hall Council Chambers last year, and would love to repeat this year!

As always with any group of which you are a member, the Board and I encourage you to let us know what we're doing right, and how we can continue to improve the Society – we'd be happy to get to know you better when you come to our Spring Membership meeting on June 1!

Michael Connelly



YOUR CITY NEEDS YOU!

There are vacancies on city boards and commissions. Please consider serving your community. Visit the city web site or contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov.

2014 Concert in the Park Schedule is Coming Together!

visit <http://vpis.org> for latest schedule

The 22nd Annual Village Preservation and Improvement Society Cherry Hill Summer Concert Series will premiere this year on June 26 and run through August 7. Concerts are held on Thursdays at 7PM in Cherry Hill Park, and as always are FREE to the community thanks to your membership and support. Already booked this year are Tom Principato, Andrew Acosta and the Falls Church Concert Band.

Bring a blanket and picnic dinner and join the fun! And don't forget to bring a neighbor!

Good grief, it has to be spring soon...

The Arbor Day Celebration Saturday, April 26, 3:00pm

The Falls Church Village Improvement Society in 1892 held the first celebration of an Arbor Day to be held in Virginia at the Jefferson School yard, at the same location that we currently call Frady Park in the 300 block of East Broad Street. It was held there to celebrate the community reforestation effort after a major storm destroyed many trees around the school. We continue that tradition each year with an entertaining celebration.

Having a City with beautiful tree crowned streets does not happen by accident. It takes constant attention to nurture and protect existing trees and to replace the trees that die of diseases, damage, construction and storms. Falls Church has won the Tree City USA designation more times than any other jurisdiction in the state, 36 times by 2014, but there are others close behind us. An annual Arbor Day celebration is one of the criteria of the Arbor Day



Foundation to qualify for the award – along with VPIS documenting the planting of a whole lot of trees each year to maintain the urban forest and other requirements.

Come celebrate spring and Arbor Day in beautiful Frady Park (enter off N. Fairfax St. adjacent to the Presbyterian Church) or the Child Development Center – (Cherry Street). Program and Social.

Contacts: Keith.Thurston@Gmail.com about Arbor Day Celebration or Heminway.Seth@Gmail.com about the Tree Plantings.

Excellence in Design Awards – Open for Nominations

Nominations for the 2014 Awards for Excellence in Design of the Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) are encouraged from neighbors, residents and City businesses. New or renovated residential and commercial buildings, gardens and landscaping completed within the past 5 years, are all eligible for consideration. Past winners are recognized by the oval plaques found on the fronts of homes and buildings.

All entered projects must be located in the City of Falls Church.

The Society stands for protecting and improving the quality of our community environment including maintaining the contexts of neighborhoods and preserving period structures as physical reminders of our heritage. The awards consider the quality of design and execution; design context, the expression of local characteristics, style and period; sensitivity to the neighborhood, the compatibility of structural improvements to the original.

The jury considers how an overall design that works as a single whole is provided and over all site development including landscaping (if present) that is compatible with the overall period and style of the structure; and the size and

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setback of the building that is respectful to context of the neighborhood.

Excellence in Design entry forms are at www.VPIS.org and must be received by June 30, 2014.

Reviving Tree Recognition Programs

While the demographics of Falls Church City continue to evolve, it makes sense that our perspective on the urban forest, in general, and trees, in particular, is likewise evolving.

Dating back to the 1970's, VPIS managed a "Noteworthy Tree" program that recognized notable trees with a medallion, presented to a homeowner and mounted on the "Noteworthy Tree." (Times do change, we would never mount such a token of recognition on a tree today.) The City of Falls Church has a similar form of recognition in its "Specimen Tree" program grounded in the City Code (Sec. 44-20). Both programs are poised to be refreshed and revitalized.

Or perhaps a single program to recognize outstanding contributors to the urban forest canopy? In collaboration with the Department of Public Works and the Arborist, the Tree Commission and VPIS are reviewing both programs with a suggested outcome of a single, joint recognition program. Informal "walking around town" suggestions include providing a tax credit and adding recognition to the menu of applicable Stormwater Management best practices under the City's new Stormwater Management program.

Interested in Noteworthy Trees?
contact Dennis Szymanski via email at
dennis.szymanski48@verizon.net.

Membership renewals continue to be strong!

Membership dues are the primary source of funding for most of the activities that VPIS sponsors so a big thank you for your continued participation and support. Please remember to send in your renewal for 2014 if you have not done so already.

We would like to continue to build our membership numbers and we have found that the best way to do that is word of mouth. Please talk to your neighbors and encourage them to log on to our website to learn more about the many things that VPIS does to build our community. The membership form is on the website but you can also tell them to email me directly at murphy.bonnie@gmail.com if they are interested. For as little as \$20 per year, they can be a part of one of the most active (and most fun) groups in Falls Church!!

Bonnie Murphy, Membership Chair



**VPIS will hold its spring
membership meeting on
Sunday, June 1, at 3:00 p.m.
at the American Legion Hall on
North Oak Street.**

FALLS CHURCH NEEDS MORE MULTI-TASKING TREES

Trees are our allies in stormwater management. A mature shade tree not only captures rainfall before it hits the ground, the tree roots improve the soils' ability to absorb water and the tree itself draws upwards of 100 gallons of water out of the ground per day. The City's Stormwater Utility Fee Credits Manual acknowledges this by offering a fee reduction for planting a street tree through the Neighborhood Tree Program. It is just as important to protect and preserve existing mature trees since it is the largest trees that offer the largest benefits, in terms of shade, stormwater, wildlife habitat and greenhouse gas absorption. Falls Church should put trees to work as we implement needed stormwater flow reduction measures by installing tree wells in infiltration and biofiltration stormwater controls. Likewise, as we

trees. You'll want to wear, gloves, boots or heavy shoes and dirt friendly clothes. We'll have light refreshment and extra tools on hand.



Learn more about what you can do about stormwater at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay .

<http://stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/structural-bmps/tree-planting/>

invest in our multi-modal transportation infrastructure it is imperative that we preserve existing street trees and make room for new trees using biofiltering tree wells, permeable pavement and sidewalk bridging to provide space for sidewalks and tree (and their roots).

Please mark your calendars and let Seth Heminway know if you can participate in the following Neighborhood Tree Program events:

- Street Tree Planting Saturday April 5, 8:30-noon location to be determined
- Street Tree Planting Saturday April 26, 8:30-noon location to be determined

(Events are generally rain or shine unless heavy rain is predicted – check Common Place for inclement weather updates)

As always, we'll kick-off at the starting location and then spread out in teams to mulch and plant

In other news, we were sorry to say good-bye to City Arborist Ben Thompson who has moved back to his beloved Washington State with his new wife to raise a family. Luckily we have City Green Space Manager Jeremy Edward and the other hard working City urban forestry crew members who are going to be helping us with logistics, on top of their already full responsibilities. The City is now in the process of hiring a new Arborist - stay tuned.

Contact: Seth Heminway, Volunteer Chair Falls Church Neighborhood Tree Program

Heminway.seth@gmail.com, Cell (703) 389-7360,
www.vpis.org/trees

CONSIDERING SOLAR?



this grid inter-tied house with battery backup generates enough electricity to meet nearly all its electrical needs

Falls Church residents have made a major commitment (the first Green Power Community in Virginia) to purchasing sustainably generated energy from the electric company and that should be applauded. But some want more energy independence, fixed energy costs and reliable backup in case of the inevitable power outage. For those families, residential solar is a real consideration.

The cost of solar panels has dropped to half the cost from 2008, and are 100 times cheaper than they were in the 1970's. With these sharp cuts in cost, solar panels are becoming a cheaper and more viable option for homeowners looking to save money and energy.

VPIS's Spring Membership Meeting

We are most fortunate this year to have not one but two very interesting presentations. The first concerns the concept of "Pocket Neighborhoods." Pocket Neighborhoods, sometimes referred to as "cottage communities," describes a type of housing development that values—among other things—a strong sense of community among its residents. Residents live in "right-sized,"—often architecturally significant—homes, nestled among other similar individually owned homes. These communities balance efficiency with generous common space, and can provide some of the "missing middle" in the continuum running from large single-family homes to apartments or condominium dwellings.

Theresa Sullivan Twiford will present the topic, and will explain the advantages these developments can afford communities that embrace them. She will also discuss the barriers to implementing the concept in Northern Virginia, and suggest constructive ways forward to make this vision a reality.

Residential Solar systems come in three flavors. Off Grid systems, as the name implies, are not linked to the municipal power grid. These systems collect power and store it in battery banks. Grid inter-tied systems are hybrid power system that get energy from the power lines and the solar array any excess power they produce goes right into the grid spinning your electrical meter backwards. Grid inter-tied with battery backup are the most robust of solar power options available to consumers because they enable the homeowner to store the power they generate. Grid inter-tied with battery backup are perfect solutions for areas like ours where power outages are a common occurrence.



inverter and battery bank

To learn more, check out these resources:

Dominion Electric's Solar Purchase Program:
<https://www.dom.com/about/stations/renewable/solar/solar-purchase-program.jsp>

City of Falls Church Green Power Program:
<http://www.fallschurchva.gov/content/green/greenpower/default.aspx?cnlid=4962>

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The second presentation will be made by newly-elected Falls Church City Council Members Marybeth Connelly and Karen Oliver. Both Marybeth and Karen were elected to the City Council for the first time last November. They will speak about the successes and challenges they have experienced as new Council members. Their description of their first five months on the City Council promises to provide us an informative look

into the process by which a brand new member of Council becomes informed and comfortable addressing the myriad and difficult issues facing the City.

Refreshments will be served following the meeting. Please join us for an exciting learning experience and a wonderful opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new people.

47th Annual Attic Treasures Sale

Volunteers needed for May 2nd setup and May 3rd for the sale and cleanup!

This year will be the 47th Annual Attic Treasures Sale, the oldest and largest annual fundraising sale in the City. This is the primary fund raising activity for the Society - and all of the funds go to community activities. More sales mean more Neighborhood Trees, better Summer Concerts in the Park and other community-building projects. The sale will be held on **Saturday, May 3, 9:00 a.m.-1 p.m.** Beside bargains that you really "want & need", we'll be featuring music by Andrew Acosta.

Clean out your attic, basement, closets, garage....and donate to a community cause! Recycling at its purest. If it works, don't throw it away, drop it off for the sale!!

Donations will be accepted at the Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls Street, Friday May 2, 9am - 7:00 pm

Sale Saturday May 3, 9am-1pm

Volunteers are needed both days to make the Sale a big success. For information contact Nisha Sensharma at <nisensharma@gmail.com>.

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



Falls Church Village Preservation and
Improvement Society

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