



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

www.drca.org

May 2025

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Bill Richardson

Bill@drca.org

Thank you for all your dues payments, allowing us to resume sending the newsletter out by mail. Please let us know (kathy@drca.org) if you are OK with receiving it by e-mail instead.

Our next DRCA meeting, on **Wednesday, May 28**, will be devoted to what should be a fascinating history lesson from two long-time Arlingtonians, who will be sharing their unique perspectives on the experiences of black communities in the County over many decades. Many of us are unfamiliar with these challenges, which have done much to shape the Arlington we live in today.

J. Dale Smith is a 31-year veteran of the Arlington County Fire Department. Over the course of his distinguished career, he served as a firefighter, paramedic, Fire Marshal, lieutenant, captain, and made history as the first African American promoted to chief officer in the department. Public service runs deep in his family—his father is the last living volunteer from Arlington's historic Hall's Hill Fire Station 8, and his eldest son, a Yorktown High School graduate, now serves as a lieutenant in the Alexandria Fire Department.

William Vollin, 94, is a retired educator who devoted his career to Arlington Public Schools, serving as a teacher, counselor, and principal. Deeply connected to Arlington County throughout his life, Mr. Vollin was born and raised in Queen City, a once-thriving African American neighbor-

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hood in East Arlington. In the early 1940s, Queen City was dismantled to make way for the construction of the Pentagon, displacing nearly 1,000 residents with little notice or compensation. As one of the last living former residents of Queen City, Mr. Vollin offers a personal lens into Arlington's complex history of displacement, resilience, and community. His lifelong dedication to education and public service continues to inspire.

Please join us to welcome these two speakers, and to learn about their special insight into the way Arlington used to be, how it has changed over the years, and what they may see as its future challenges. As usual, our meeting will be held at Taylor Elementary School, at 7:30 p.m., preceded by a social half hour with light refreshments beginning at 7:00.

The next Donaldson Run Civic Association meeting is at
Taylor Elementary School
Wednesday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m.

COUNTY BEGINS LOT COVERAGE STUDY

Bill Richardson

For many years, the DRCA and other civic associations have been urging the County to tighten the "lot coverage" provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, in order to address the rapid pace of teardowns of smaller homes. The much larger replacements of these homes result in clear cutting of mature trees from entire lots, stormwater management challenges, reduction in the inventory of more affordable homes, disruption of adjacent landowners' quiet enjoyment of the neighborhood, and obstacles to neighbors' ability to rely on alternative solar energy sources.

Over ten years ago, the County staff agreed with the need to revisit these lot coverage provisions given these trends, but current staff has been reluctant to do so. Finally this year, following meetings with DRCA and a group of now up to 25 civic associations representing a diversity of neighborhoods throughout the County expressing these concerns, the County Board has directed the staff to report in May on possible reforms. However, this report will focus not on lot coverage as the Board previously directed, but on limiting total impervious surfaces (building footprints combined with sidewalks, patios, and other impervious surfaces).

This focus will not address all of the foregoing problems associated with the growing size of building footprints. The Forestry & Natural Resources Commission has urged that the May report lay out the contours of a followup study addressing more directly these issues we have emphasized. The Arlington Tree Action Group (ATAG) supports our more expansive study proposal. DRCA and others plan to follow up with County Board members following the May report, to ensure a more comprehensive review of these problems.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY NEAR DOROTHY HAMM MIDDLE SCHOOL

John Seggerman

The DRCA leadership has continued its work on pedestrian safety initiatives near Dorothy Hamm Middle School (DHMS). In February we met with representatives of the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) and County staff to express our concern over the backup of cars on 23rd Street during drop off and pick up at DHMS. Residents of this street have voiced concerns over this backup of cars twice a

The Current is distributed free of charge to all households in the Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA) area. DRCA, like all civic associations in Arlington, is a neighborhood organization, administered by elected volunteers. The DRCA promotes information sharing and discussion on neighborhood, local, and regional issues. DRCA is not affiliated with any political or religious group or with the Donaldson Run Recreation Association that operates the swimming pool on Marcey Road. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at Taylor Elementary School (2600 North Stuart Street). Follow this newsletter for meeting dates. Only dues-paying DRCA residents are eligible to vote. DRCA boundaries are: Military Road on the east (including Marcey Road, North 26th Street, North 25th Place, and North Ridgeview Road); 26th/31st Street on the north; Lorcom Lane on the south (including North Randolph Street and 27th Streets south of Lorcom Lane); and Vernon Street on the west.

DRCA Board

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------|
| President | Bill Richardson | 525-5270 |
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day during school days. We also reiterated our longstanding concerns about the hazards for DHMS student walkers at the Vacation Lane/Lorcom Lane intersection. In March we met with DHMS Principal Ellen Smith to discuss these matters. Ms. Smith sent targeted emails to DHMS parents reminding them that 23rd Street is an inappropriate dropoff/pickup location as the school's one-way driveway leading to Langston Boulevard is the only designated location for such activity. Ms. Smith pledged to work with the County on its signage and install a sign at 23rd Street.

We were pleased to learn of the County's recent announcement of an **Infrastructure Projects Open House on May 20 from 6-8 PM in the DHMS cafeteria**. This session will outline several projects, including the County's plan for safety enhancements at the Lorcom Lane/Vacation Lane intersection. Funds for such a project were included in the most recent Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and we look forward to hearing what the County envisions.

COUNTY TO ENGAGE IN SEVERAL OTHER RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN FY 2026

Bill Richardson

In addition to the study of lot coverage described above, this year County staff has announced plans to study a number of other significant residential land use changes. In contrast to the lot coverage study, these other initiatives could end up extending housing densification well beyond transit corridors. These would be in addition to the “missing middle” (aka “Expanded Housing Options” or “EHO”) effort that was declared void by the circuit court but that the County’s appeal seeks to restore.

Comprehensive Plan Update. State law requires local jurisdictions to have a “comprehensive plan” for land uses, and to update it at least every five years. In Arlington, an integral part of this plan is the “General Land Use Plan” (“GLUP”). And a key feature of that plan (adopted to fit with Metro) has long been to limit densification to transit corridors, while “[p]reserving and enhanc[ing] existing single-family and apartment neighborhoods.”

The County Board has recently approved a number of site plans for development that are inconsistent with this guidance designed to preserve existing neighborhoods. Some Board members have indicated their view that this social compact may be outdated, and that promoting growth of additional housing inventory (including affordable housing) requires a change to it. One of staff’s announced FY 2026 priorities is an “update” of the comprehensive plan. While the intended contours of this update are obscure, staff has suggested it may well reflect this view. Staff proposes that the update reflect new “people-centric” principles that would “replace existing goals/objectives” so as to “align with community values and priorities” such as “interwoven equity” and “responsible regionalism.” The revision would reflect a vision for “growth and development” and establish “new or broader land uses in focused areas.” These statements appear open to an expansion of housing densification throughout the County.

County staff plans a series of focus group meetings this spring to explore these ideas, in partnership with community organizations. We will keep you posted on how this develops.

Special GLUP Study Policy/Process Review. In recent years, to promote densification proposals affecting single-family neighborhoods, the County has used a “special GLUP study” essentially to bypass the existing limitation in the GLUP on a case-by-case basis at specific sites. This study can then serve as a precedent for approving similar site plan proposals in other neighborhoods.

Civic associations and others have criticized this workaround approach for at least four reasons: (1) lack of transparency in engaging the public more explicitly, on whether the GLUP should be changed to relax the goal of preserving and enhancing single-family and apartment neighborhoods; (2) concern about specific substantive infrastructure and other impacts on each neighborhood; (3) failure to establish uniform standards for evaluating such proposals and measuring their community benefits, and (4) lack of input from affected nearby civic associations that is as early and as extensive as that permitted to the developer. The staff study of this process is targeted for completion by the end of June. Whether the result will address or exacerbate these concerns remains to be seen.

Definition of Family. Most residential districts in the County are limited to uses by a “family,” which is currently defined generally to be limited to no more than four unrelated occupants. One of the County’s FY 2026 priorities is to study whether to relax this definition to permit expanded use of group homes in residential neighborhoods.

Major/Minor Amendment Distinction for Approved Site Plans. When a development proposal is not permitted by right under the Zoning Ordinance (e.g., the Kensington Senior Living 7-story proposal next to Lebanese Taverna), the developer must undergo a site plan review approval process. Another concern (e.g., at Virginia Hospital Center) has been the ability of staff and the developer to bypass civic association participation for so-called “minor amendments” to the site plan once it has gone through the approval process. One of staff’s FY 2026 priorities appears to be a study of this process, which may propose expanding even further the scope of what may qualify as a “minor” amendment for these purposes.

UPDATE ON THREE KEY DRCA AREA TRAFFIC ISSUES

Bill Richardson

Here is an update on our January 2025 newsletter article on three intersections in our neighborhood. As noted in the Pedestrian Safety article on page 2, the first two of these will be among those that are the subject of a County staff open house to answer questions on **Tuesday, May, 20, from 6-8 p.m. in the Hamm MS cafeteria.**

Military Road/Nelly Custis Traffic Circle. For some time, this controversial redesign has been operating only on an interim basis. The County has now contracted for the work to make this a permanent feature, and currently plans for construction to start after school ends, around June 23. The work may take up to two years, because it depends on undergrounding of utilities at the site, which Dominion says may take a year. The May 20 open house can answer your questions about this project, and how the County will route traffic during this extended construction period.

For more information, including the permanent design, see <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Project-Types/Transportation-Projects/Military-Road-Safety-Improvements>.

Lorcom Lane/Vacation Lane intersection. At the May 20 open house, County staff plan will describe and seek input on their proposed design for improvements here, designed to reduce safety risks. Shortly before then, we will receive information on the planned design, which we will forward to the DRCA e-mail group as soon as we receive it.

Lorcom Lane/Langston Boulevard intersection. At our meeting with the Langston Boulevard Alliance in February, we provided County transportation staff with data about a number of crashes and pedestrian hazards at this site. Staff has agreed to include this intersection as among those it will formally study this year for possible safety improvements. Among our suggestions was including a right hand turn signal on Langston.

GOVERNOR VETOES TWO NOTABLE BILLS SPONSORED BY DELEGATE HOPE

Bill Richardson

At this year's General Assembly session in Richmond, our local delegate Patrick Hope

introduced two bills of importance to Arlington that passed both the House of Delegates and the Senate, but each was vetoed by Governor Youngkin.

House Bill 2768 would have given Arlington the right (but not the obligation) to change several aspects of its unique form of government (almost a hundred years old now) to include three features common to other local jurisdictions in Virginia:

- Changing the Board from five members to anywhere from three to 11 members
- Electing the Chairman of the Board by the voters, rather than the current system of having the Chairman appointed by the Board on a one-year rotating basis
- Changing the election of Board members to elections on a district by district basis, in whole or in part, rather than electing each Board member by all voters at large

The bill would have required voters to approve these changes by referendum, coupled with a requirement of passing the same bill again next year, and even then it would have given the County Board discretion not to adopt the first and third of these changes. Nevertheless, the County Board opposed Delegate Hope's bill, claiming (as it did with his similar bill last year) that the Board needed more time and community engagement (notwithstanding the referendum requirement). The Governor relied on that opposition in vetoing the bill.

These proposals reflected concerns that at-large elections in Arlington, in which all voters throughout the County cast their votes for each Board member, do not permit adequate representation of the many diverse communities in the County. Another concern is that a permanent Chairman would develop more experience over a period of years. It has also been noted that the rotating Chairman system now in use by the Board permits it to promote the reelection prospects of the Board member up for election each year, by designating that member as Chairman.

House Bill 2638 is another version of a bill DRCA worked with Delegate Hope on last year, to expand from 20 percent to 25 percent or 30 percent the tree canopy requirements that the County would have authority to impose for residential development on larger lots. The Governor also vetoed this bill. His veto message did not focus on this aspect of the bill, but on its extension of tree canopy authority to other areas of Virginia beyond those like Arlington in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

OPENING THE FARMERS MARKET

Stephen Cunningham

Saturdays, as I arrive at the Cherrydale Farmers Market a little before 7:00 in the morning, sunlight shines over the hill and through the trees. Good mornings are said to Christian and Adolfo as they arrange their produce; sometimes it's ruby red, sunny yellow, or dark green and purple tomatoes. In the spring it's crisp lettuce, broccoli and luscious strawberries. They are mostly done unloading the farm truck. My signs and tables, tents and trashcans are propped up next to the light pole waiting for my assistant to arrange the market. I greet the other vendors as I drop off my bags and the market cooler near where the tent will spring up. Then it's up the hill to arrange signs, cones and feather flag at Langston Boulevard, and around the block to park and set up more signs and flags. A bowl and a jug of water go next to the sidewalk for our furry friends. Then it's up the hill again to check on my assistant, usually a young lady from one of our local high schools, as we finish off the market together. I make the rounds to make sure the vendors are ready to go. Some of the farms have been coming to markets for decades; some vendors are in the first year working out of an incubator kitchen they share with many others, at least until their business takes off. This day's musician arrives and as the guitar strums, she sings out and the market begins. It's 8:00 am.

Field to Table is an Arlington based nonprofit that manages farmers markets. We build farmers markets to build community. Each market has a volunteer neighborhood committee that oversees the market. Vendors are required to produce the food they sell and be located within 125 miles of Arlington.

You are invited to visit our neighborhood farmers market at Dorothy Hamm Middle School. Available are picnic tables and grassy spaces. During spring and autumn tiny tykes play soccer and are endlessly entertaining. Have a wonderful day!

Cherrydale Farmers Market

Saturdays | Dorothy Hamm Middle School

Local, producer-only market!

Everyone who sells at our market grows, raises, bakes, cooks, or prepares the food themselves.

And it's all done within 125 miles of Arlington!

8am - 12pm

APRIL - NOVEMBER

Not a bad way to spend a weekend morning!



Terborgh Terrace Garden blooming this spring. Volunteers are welcome!

THE TERBORGH TERRACE GARDEN PROJECT IN DONALDSON RUN

Amelia Wilt

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) is excited to be your neighbor over at the Terborgh Terrace Garden (TTG)! The TTG is a collaborative project between NVCT and Friends of Urban Agriculture (FOUA) as part of their Plot Against Hunger program, where all produce is grown for donation to local food pantries.

The TTG is meant to be a community site for gathering, enjoying green space, and giving back to those in need. The upper portion along 26th Street will serve as a pocket park with a rain garden, a few benches, and possibly a picnic table. The lower portion contains the garden beds that will grow a variety of vegetables for donation and be a site for urban agriculture education. The garden connects to the Donaldson Run trail below via an unofficial path, which residents are welcome to continue to use.

NVCT invites you to get involved at the TTG however you would like! We are seeking support to purchase necessary materials and volunteers to help with regular garden maintenance. You can find out more at www.nvct.org/ttg or reach out to Partnerships Coordinator Amelia Wilt at awilt@nvct.org. If you would like to check out the property, you can stop by any time at 4578 26th St N. Or join us on **Saturday, May 17th 9-11 am** to pull invasive plant species around the gardens and along the trail. We hope to see you out there!

PROFESSIONAL HELP AROUND the HOUSE

Appliance Repair

Paul Mills, Master Appliance Service, (703) 938-6910, recommended by Maxine Nagel, (703) 524-5093

Computer Support Services

Pete Herbst, (703) 283-6595, recommended by Judy Cherrington, (703) 243-6034.

Cameron Jones (571) 217-3596, recommended by Rick DeVore (703) 528-3484 and several other neighbors

Gutter Installation or Cleaning and Repair

Auguste Remy, (703) 425-9595, recommended by Dan Sagalyn, (703) 795-5490

Metro Gutter & Home Services, Inc. (703) 354-4333
Recommended by Judy Cherrington, (703) 243-6034

Northern Virginia Gutter Cleaning (571) 352-7292,
www.NOVAGutters.com, recommended by
Maxine Nagel, (703)-524-5093

Handyman Services

Carlos Pacheco (571)-620-4246, recommended by Sharon Separ, (703) 597-6138

Neil McDonald, 703-200-0746, recommended by Janis Clark and Diane Gronewold, 703-516-0766

Sam Axton, (703)-569-5707 or
Sam_Axton@msn.com,
recommended by Jeanne Svikhart (703) 851-2695

Chris Lamar with Arlington Home Service, (703) 362-0930 or ahservice@verizon.net, recommended by Martha Shmokler, mess14@juno.com

Tulio Pineda, (703) 940-4126, recommended by Chuchi Arevalo, (703) 371-3155

Housecleaning

Nuria Cruz at 571-721-0810, recommended by Susan Martin (susanmartin@icloud.com)

Cynthia Baldo, (703) 843-8272, recommended by Sharon Frey, (703) 405-5674

Sonia Cerna, (571) 428-8616, recommended by Zlatica and Werner Hahn, (703) 528 1982.

Sandra Hueco, home: (571) 277-7579 cell: (703) 338-6160, recommended by Glenn Ward, (703) 527-7315

Professional Housecleaning Services, managed by Alba Isabel, (703) 928-9089 recommended by Rob Jones, (703) 276-0545

Jupiter's Cleaning & Services, Barhas at (703) 981-8700 or e-mail Jupiters.2011@gmail.com, recommended by Karen Hanneman, (703) 527-4604

Squeaky Cleaners, LLC,
squeakycleanersnova@gmail.com, recommended by Shany O'Donnell, Shanybenitah@gmail.com

Interior Decorating/Home Design:

Stefani McNair at McNair Designs, (703) 868-3489.
Recommended by Alexa & James Fleming, (703) 577-3812.

Landscaping and Yardwork

Jesus Reyes (703) 400-0829, recommended by Sharon Separ, (703) 597-6138

Lawn and Tree Services, Tu Nguyen, (703) 622-7988, recommended by Barbara and Dan Taft (703) 276-1987

Painting and/or Wallpapering

Ed Wilkerson of C. W. Wilkerson & Sons, (703) 524-1019, recommended by Liz Hayes, (202) 320-0500

Roof and Exterior Cleaning

Smart Wash, (703) 595-4000, recommended by Dug and Judy Gillies, (703) 528-3437

Window Cleaning

Old Dominion Cleaning Co. (703) 569-2000, recommended by Liz Hayes (703) 528-4119



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR DONALDSON RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Please check your mailing label on page 8 to see how many residents in your home are members and the latest year for which dues have been paid. Dues cover a calendar year. Contributions are not tax deductible. Note that only members whose dues have been paid 60 days in advance are allowed to vote on civic association business.

Dues: \$20 per household per calendar year. Payment for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years (circle one)

Total dues: \$_____ Newsletter contribution: \$_____ Total enclosed: \$_____

New resident: Yes _____ No _____ Email only copy of newsletter Yes _____ No _____

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____ email address: _____

Address: _____

Are you already on the DRCA email list?_____ If you are not on the DRCA listserv, we recommend that you sign up for it so that you will be notified of issues in a timely way. Would you like to be added to this listserv?_____

Special Interests/Volunteer Areas/Comment

Please make check payable to Donaldson Run Civic Association.

Mail to: Kathy Rehill, Treasurer, 2701 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207 or if you prefer to pay electronically, via PayPal @DonaldsonRunCivAssoc.

HIRE A NEIGHBOR

Calling all neighborhood teens! Do you shovel snow? Walk pets? Your Donaldson Run neighbors need you. Send an email to Mary@drca.org and we'll list the service you'd like to provide.

Babysitting

- Zoya Ridgway, 12 y.o. text 703-864-8271
- Molly Doster, 16 y.o., 703-505-0898
- Maia Corson, 15 y.o., 571-329-5871, maia.corson@gmail.com
- Mackenzie Rau, 14 y.o., 703-655-5718, Mackenzie.rau21@gmail.com
- Iris Aitken, 15 y.o., 571-242-7994 or iris_aitken@icloud.com
- Ella Paris, 16 y.o., 571-317-4962

Cat Sitting

- Zoya Ridgway, 12 y.o. text 703-864-8271

- Ayla Mehmood, High Schooler, text 571-599-8282
Experienced in caring for cats with special needs.

Dog Walking/Sitting

- Zoya Ridgway, 12 y.o. text 703-864-8271
- Molly Doster, 16 y.o., 703-505-0898
- Maggie Buchko, 7th grade, 484-803-3189 or maggiesdogwalkingbusiness@gmail.com
- Maia Corson, 15 y.o., 571-329-5871, maia.corson@gmail.com

Guinea Pig/Hamster Sitting

- Zoya Ridgway, 12 y.o. text 703-864-8271

Lawn and Garden Care

- Iris Aitken 15 y.o., 571-242-7994
or iris_aitken@icloud.com

Donaldson Run Civic Association
c/o Kathy Rehill, Treasurer
2701 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207

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This is your neighborhood newsletter.
See page 2 for Civic Association information.

The next Donaldson Run Civic Association Meeting
is on Wednesday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m.
A social half hour will begin at 7 p.m.

Agenda:

The History of Black Communities in Arlington

J. Dale Smith, *The Story of Fire Station #8*

William Vollin, *Experiences in Arlington's Black
Communities*

at Taylor Elementary School