

North Ridge Citizens Association
Minutes for Monday, November 11, 2019 Meeting
Beverley Hills Community United Methodist Church
3512 Old Dominion Boulevard

Call to Order: 7:38 by Kay Stimson, President. The signup sheet showing those in attendance is attached.

Ms. Stimson noted that the George Mason precinct had a 24.8 percent voter turnout in the recent state election, the second highest in the City.

Ms. Stimson reported that she had attended the most recent meeting of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations. The acting fire chief had spoken and said that the department needs additional firefighters. The department has many young firefighters and there is a high turnover among that group. Amy Burwell added that a number of the recent graduates from Alexandria's academy go elsewhere as early career pay rates often tend to be higher in nearby jurisdictions.

Sgt. Thomas Ground reported that over the last two months the Police Department had received fifty-nine calls from North Ridge, which was "abnormally low." Eighteen of the fifty-nine concerned vehicles that were broken into. The large majority of those vehicles were unlocked. There were also two stolen vehicles and two other larcenies reported.

Sgt. Ground also reported that the department had placed a speed monitor on Old Dominion Boulevard. There were almost no speeding vehicles detected. He also noted that the complaints about cut-through traffic on side streets have been increasing since the vehicle lanes on various main roads had been reduced. He said that the department was receiving complaints about traffic density on Seminary Road.

Sgt. Ground noted that Alexandria's helmet laws differ from those of surrounding jurisdictions. For example, Alexandria requires helmets for bike riders under the age of fourteen, while Montgomery County requires helmets for under-eighteen riders of bikes, scooters and skateboards. He suggested that tighter rules might comport better with the City's "Vision Zero" goals.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved.

Ms. Stimson reported that the Association's treasury contained approximately \$15,000 at the end of October.

Martin Barna, Director of Planning & Scheduling for DASH made a powerpoint presentation on the goals and objectives of DASH. According to Mr. Barna, DASH ridership is "down a little" over the last five years. The system's goal is to get more

users, to reduce the number of cars on the street, and to put more busses where the people are. DASH also seeks to have more coverage and to have basic service provided to more people even if the service is less frequent. City Council is moving the balance guidance from about 50 percent ridership/50 percent coverage to 85 percent ridership/15 percent coverage.

DASH planning assumes that the new Potomac Yard Metro station will open in 2022. The current plan is to keep the AT3 and AT4 services at the same level but to end the route at Braddock Road and require riders to transfer to another line to get to Old Town. It is possible that mid-day service on the two routes could be reduced because of low ridership. DASH expects to increase overall service hours by 20 percent. They expect to be able to do this with only a one to two percent increase of fleet size by using the fleet more efficiently. The DASH Board will be making a decision on whether to accept the staff proposals on December 11.

In response to a question by Chuck Kent about how DASH addresses unexpected demographic changes, Mr. Barna stated that DASH does annual assessments of its plan so that the plan can be tweaked if necessary. He said that there has been a great number of comments from residents of the Seminary and Janney road areas so the proposed plan is likely to be tweaked by the Board. He also noted that while the Board makes the final decision, the City Council "controls the purse strings."

In response to a question as to why the plan is for ten years, Mr. Barna replied that the plan proposes a large increase of service that is going to "cost money."

Bruce Snapp asked if the A3 and A4 service will continue to serve the Pentagon. Mr. Barna replied that under the proposed plan they would. He also said that there are no plans for a fare increase as the recent increase to two dollars had brought the system up with other jurisdictions.

Ms. Simpson reported that she, Bruce Johnson and Rich Weiblinger had had a call with the City's Planning and Zoning Department about neighborhood concerns that had been raised about the renovations that have been proposed for the church at the corner of Braddock and Scroggins. The City is looking at installing a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) in order to slow traffic at the intersection.

Amy Burwell reported that the firemen of Firehouse 203 have moved into temporary housing. The inside of the current building is being stripped and construction will follow. The big trees were taken down in spite of promises they would be kept. The given reason was that the trees were sick.

Ms. Simpson said that speed bumps had been approved on Monticello Blvd. This news "came out of the blue" from the traffic department and apparently neighbors had asked for them.

Lyn Gubser reported that at the Planning Commission meeting on November 7 the commission voted to approve the redevelopment plans of the Presbyterian church at Braddock and Scroggins that will result in quadrupling the size of the church. He noted that many complaints by neighbors have been about things that are happening already such as unwanted water drainage. Ms. Simpson stated that the neighbors in church area were happy with the two letters North Ridge had sent the City.

Ms. Simpson reported that the City is updating its plans for Arlandria and has issued survey asking how people use the area and what is important to them on matters such as food, traffic, parks, etc. On November 21 the City will be hosting a meeting at Cora Kelly to discuss the plan.

Bruce Johnson reported that the Gallery family has been trouble acquiring Christmas trees but have acquired enough to last through December 8, which is the end of the North Ridge sale. Frazer firs, though, will be the only tree available this year.

Ms. Simpson announced that the neighborhood tree lighting ceremony will be held Sunday, December 15, at 4 pm. Ms. Simpson asked that the Board approve \$100 for additional tree sale signs and a \$100 for an event backdrop. Russ Bailey made a motion to authorize these sums, Lyn Gubser seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Stimson stated that there will be no outside speakers at the December 9 meeting. The meeting will be dedicated to having a round table discussion of issues of key importance to the neighborhood.

Chuck Kent noted that the cross walk had been painted at the Pit.

Ms. Stimson adjourned the meeting at 9:20.

Russell Bailey, Scribe