



Dulles Direct Newsletter

October 2013

Welcome to the October Dulles Direct Newsletter. October has been a month of long-awaited milestones in the Dulles South area. It was with great pleasure that I took part in a signing ceremony for a funding agreement with VDOT and the Airports Authority to widen Route 606. Later that same day, I attended the groundbreaking for StoneSprings Hospital Center, which will be built at the intersection of Route 50 and Gum Spring Road.

In the near future, I hope to be hosting an additional groundbreaking ceremony—for the Dulles South Multipurpose Center Phases II and III. But that will be up to all of you on November 5. There's more information below on all of these items. As always, if you have further questions, please don't hesitate to email me. I may not respond right away, but I read every email as soon as I get it.

DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

Bond Referendum

On November 5, Virginians will go to the polls to vote for state elected officials—Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, and House of Delegates. In Loudoun County, there will also be four additional bond referendum questions. I know I have been writing about this for months now—but it is really important for the Dulles District so I'm going to review it once again. You will be asked to vote yes or no on the County issuing general obligation bonds to pay for capital expenditures.

Question 1: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum amount of \$34,255,000 to finance in

whole or in part, the cost to upgrade irrigation systems of athletic fields throughout the County; the costs of Dulles South Multi-Purpose Center; the costs of Lovettsville District Park; and other public facilities in the County?

This question includes the needed funding to construct Phase II (Recreation Center) and Phase III (Senior Center) of the Dulles South Multipurpose Center. Phase II of the project will add a 65,000 square foot addition consisting of a full gymnasium, fitness center, indoor running track, and indoor competition and leisure pools. Currently, all swimmers must travel to other parts of the County (or to Fairfax County) to swim indoors. Total cost for construction is \$36 million, and design has already been completed. The good news is that developers have already contributed \$19 million for this project through proffers, leaving \$17 million to be financed through voter-approved bonds. Once open, Phase II will operate at 100% cost-recovery—meaning that the operations of the center will be funded completely through fees and membership. If approved, this facility would likely begin construction in early 2014 and open by mid-2015.

Phase III will be a full scale senior center. Currently, seniors are using two classrooms that were built to house preschool students in Phase I. The preschool has a long waiting list—so freeing up the classrooms will help—and the seniors have outgrown this small space. At my request, the Board has already allocated \$675,000 from last year's budget surplus for the design of Phase III. That process will begin this fall, with plenty of opportunity for public input. The remaining \$5.9 million to construct Phase III is being requested in the bond referendum. If approved, construction on the new senior center would begin in 2015.

The bond question also contains \$2.1 million for athletic field renovation, which we desperately need throughout the county to improve safety at fields, playing times, and access issues. Additionally, \$11.5 million is included in the question for the creation of a Lovettsville District Park. Details on all aspects of the Parks and Recreation Bond can be found at a website set up by community members www.voteloudounrec.org.

Question 2: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum amount of \$3,180,000 to finance in whole or in part, the costs of improvements of Belmont Ridge Road; and other public roads in the County?

This question asks for the funding needed to design the widening of Belmont Ridge Road to four lanes in two sections. The first section is between Gloucester Parkway and Hay Road, the second is between Truro Parish Road and Croson Lane. The section between Hay Road and Truro Parish Road is being funded through another method. Construction is funded later in the Capital Improvement Plan utilizing funds from the \$.02 of the tax rate dedicated to transportation improvements.

Question 3: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum amount of \$14,175,000 to finance in whole or in part, the cost to acquire and equip fire and rescue capital apparatus for use

throughout the County; the costs of a new Lucketts Fire Station; and other public safety facilities in the County?

This question asks for the funding needed to purchase ambulances and pumpers to serve Middleburg, Round Hill, Ashburn, Sterling, and as reserves for the countywide system. Also included is construction funding for a 13,000 – 15,000 square foot replacement fire station serving the Lucketts community. This would provide space and functionality to allow for the full array of Fire and Rescue services offered at most other stations around the county. The current station is too small and due to the age of the building and site issues, an addition was not considered feasible.

Question 4: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum amount of \$10,755,000 to finance in whole or in part, the costs of the Mercer Middle School addition; the costs of the Freedom High School addition; the costs of upgrades to Loudoun County High School stadium; and other public facilities in the County?

This question asks for the funding needed for three public school projects. The first two are additions to two Dulles South school buildings. Both Mercer Middle and Freedom High are planned to receive additions that would increase the student capacity to match Lunsford Middle and John Champe High. Since Mercer and Freedom were originally built, the County increased the capacity of new schools. With the current progression of students from Lunsford to Freedom and Mercer to John Champe, this creates a mismatch in size and creates capacity issues at the older schools.

The third project is a renovation to the athletic complex at Loudoun County High School in Leesburg, bringing it up to match the facilities at newer schools in the County. The aging, under-capacity stadium restroom building will be replaced with a new facility along with drainage improvements in public areas and the installation of synthetic turf on the stadium playing field.

I want to add an important note on the school bond question. The Board of Supervisors and the School Board have already decided that the requested additions need to be made. Therefore, a “no” vote will not stop the construction. It will simply force us to use a different method of financing that will provide a less advantageous interest rate.

I voted in favor of placing all these questions on the ballot—and I will be voting yes on Election Day. The Board of Supervisors is very careful with your money and with debt. These projects fit within our debt parameters. In the case of the Dulles South Multipurpose Center expansion—they will provide much-needed amenities for our area, improve the quality of life and health of our residents, and could even improve property values. I hope you’ll join me in supporting all four questions.

For general election information, including a list of races on the ballot and the full bond referendum questions, please visit the Loudoun County Electoral Board website [here](#). If you are

unsure of your polling place, you can look it up [here](#). Be sure to turn out your friends and neighbors to vote on November 5.

Route 606 Funding Agreement Finalized

On October 23, I joined Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton, Delegate David Ramadan, MWAA CEO Jack Potter, Chairman Scott York and Supervisor Janet Clarke for a signing ceremony to formalize a \$106 million funding agreement between Loudoun County, VDOT and MWAA to widen Route 606 to four lanes from Evergreen Mills Road to the Dulles Greenway. This project is long overdue and was jumpstarted by the Board of Supervisors when we took office in 2012 and by Delegate Ramadan in Richmond. Design and right of way acquisition work will take most of 2014, and construction on the widening is expected to begin in late 2014, just as construction on Route 50 is ending. The project is designed to include a shared-use path to provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the future Metro station at Route 606.

StoneSprings Hospital Center Groundbreaking

Also on October 23, I attended the StoneSprings Hospital Center groundbreaking. StoneSprings Hospital Center will be constructed just across Gum Spring Road from the newly opened StoneSpring Emergency Center (which will be converted into another use). StoneSprings will be Loudoun's second, major full-service hospital, with 104 medical/surgical beds, 10 Intensive Care Unit beds, and 10 Labor-Delivery-Recovery-Postpartum beds and a full service ER. The 230,000 square foot facility is scheduled to open in 2015. The hospital's design will allow it to be expanded in the future, just as Inova Loudoun and Reston Hospital have been.

This project has been a long time in the making—14 years to be exact. Previous Boards had contentious discussions about where the new hospital should be located, and ultimately voted twice against HCA's original proposal to build it in Broadlands. As a citizen at the time, I opposed the hospital in Broadlands because I saw the need for it in the Route 50 corridor. Ultimately, I believe those previous Boards got it right. I appreciate the major capital investment that HCA is making in our community, and I look forward to attending the grand opening of the new hospital in a few years. In the meantime—StoneSpring ER is open 24/7—in fact thanks to our rambunctious two year old bumping his head my family has already paid a visit (he's doing fine and they took good care of him.)

Braddock / Pleasant Valley Intersection Comments

Thank you everyone who made it out to one of the meetings on the Braddock/Pleasant Valley roundabout. Turnout was good at both the Centreville meeting and the meeting I hosted in South Riding. Your efforts are paying off. VDOT said it has received nearly 500 comments on this intersection, which is more than four times the average number of comments on any project. To be sure, some of those comments are from our neighbors in Fairfax County who oppose the project, but I believe we are more than holding our own.

As I mentioned in a previous email, thanks to the work of Delegate Ramadan, the funding shortfall has been closed. We have received a commitment from VDOT to provide an additional \$1.5 million, which will fully fund the project.

The comment period for this project ends today (October 30)—so you still have a few more hours. If you haven't sent your comments—please do so now, and share with your friends and neighbors. You may submit comments to Mr. Leonard “Bud” Siegel, P.E. through email at meeting_comments@vdot.virginia.gov . Please reference “Braddock and Pleasant Valley Roundabout” in the subject line.

West Spine Road (Gum Spring Road Relocated)

I'm sure that many of you noticed the addition of a stop sign at the intersection of West Spine Road and Route 50. The stop sign was installed in preparation for the opening of a new third lane on east bound Route 50. The acceleration lane currently in place will be going away with this new lane.

Due to concerns with the impact of this stop sign on the flow of traffic from Gum Spring Road onto Route 50, I asked Van Metre, which is doing the construction, and VDOT to remove it at that location until the signal is operational and the third lane has been opened.

Work is beginning now to install the signal at the West Spine Road intersection and it is expected to be operational around the first of the year. At that time there will be a number of changes in that area. When the signal is operational, the third lane will be open all the way back to Stone Springs and West Spine Road will begin being used for two way traffic. For traffic going from west bound Route 50 to south bound Gum Spring, there will be dual turn lanes for expanded capacity over today's single turn lane. As I noted above, the signal will begin controlling traffic going from northbound Gum Spring to east bound Route 50 and there will also be dual right turn lanes for that purpose.

Existing Gum Spring between Tall Cedars and Route 50 will be closed permanently in a way that only allows access from Route 50 into the Gum Spring Village Center. Traffic continuing north on Gum Spring Road will have to take a left onto west bound Route 50 at the West Spine Road and a right onto Gum Spring Road.

For a period of 60-90 days, Tall Cedars will be closed between Gum Spring Road and Millstream Drive while the intersection at Gum Spring is expanded to add turn lanes and filled so that Tall Cedars is at the same grade as Gum Spring Road. Once we know exactly when that will occur, we will certainly be providing additional information.

Keep in mind also that Stone Springs Boulevard will be extended across Route 50 to provide access to the new hospital. It will connect with Gum Spring road further to the north and provide alternate north/south access for Stone Ridge and Kirkpatrick Farms residents that currently use Gum Spring Road.

Signal Issues at Gum Spring Road and Route 50

As many of you are aware, we have been experiencing a number of issues related to the traffic signal at the intersection of Route 50 and Gum Spring Road. In order to accommodate the addition of a third lane on east bound Route 50 and changes on the northern side of the intersection related to the StoneSpring Emergency Center, the intersection needed to be enlarged by the developer. While the existing pavement was milled and work completed in the median, the signal was placed on camera detection instead of the normal loop detection embedded in the asphalt.

During this time period we experienced timing and detection issues related to the Gum Spring Road traffic and for the turn lane from westbound Route 50 to southbound Gum Spring Road.

The paving and median work has been completed and the signals for Route 50 have been placed on loop detection. The signals for Gum Spring Road on the north side remain on camera detection awaiting completion of the work on the north side of the intersection that will add a new lane. That project has been delayed due to some design and permit issues. My office has been in touch with HCA and VDOT with some frequency to try to move that along as fast as possible—I think it will help some with traffic heading south on Gum Spring during rush hour.

In order to help these signals work effectively and properly detect vehicles waiting at each approach, it is important that all drivers pull all the way up to the stop bar and not roll past. In some instances the contractor and VDOT have had to tap on a car's window after observing a missed cycle to advise them that they have not pulled all the way up on the bar.

That said, I still receive emails about missed cycles and delays at the intersection. They seem to be better this week. I appreciate those emails and I report these instances to VDOT every time it happens. VDOT has been running diagnostic tests on the equipment and trying to figure out what the problem is. From my standpoint, they have been responsive and I think it is only fair to note that VDOT was not responsible for the problems that occurred when the intersection was under camera control.

Ultimately, when the new signal and larger intersection are in place at the West Spine Road, we will not be relying on this intersection to handle as much traffic traveling through north and south.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Non-Profit Item

Over the past few months, I have been working with County staff to implement a change in the Non-Profit Grant process following passage of my Board Member Initiative on this topic last summer. My goal in this process has been to shift the County to a needs-based grant program, where County funds are distributed to groups who provide services to residents that the County would otherwise have to provide, usually at a higher cost. After several Finance Committee meetings where we hammered out the details, the Board approved the final revisions this month.

County funds will be appropriated as a lump sum during the budget process and distributed by a percentage set by the Board into five “Areas of Need,” which are: Health and Related Services (60%), Hunger and Homelessness Mitigation (7%), Emergency Services (20%), Administrative Services (8%), and Recreation and Culture (5%). Non-profit groups may apply to only one Area of Need and must offer services that fit within the specific parameters of that category. Each application will go through a rigorous review where staff will evaluate based on a thorough formula. Staff funding recommendations will then come back to the Board as an administrative item for approval.

I think this process will help remove some of the politics from how funds are distributed and ensure that taxpayer dollars are going to programs that are truly needed. It will also be much more efficient and allow us to focus time in other areas during budget season.

Odyssey of the Mind Winners Honored

I was pleased to welcome to the Board Room students from the Lunsford Middle School Odyssey of the Mind Teams who advanced to the World Finals back in May. The Heart Throbs team placed third in their division at World Finals and the Amateur Experts team placed 15th out of 55 teams competing from all over the world. The Board approved a resolution of commendation for each team and I presented it to team members, coaches, and Lunsford Principal Mr. Slevin. Congratulations!



Supervisor Letourneau and School Board Member Jeff Morse with Lunsford Middle School Odyssey of the Mind team members, coaches, and Principal Neil Slevin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Route 50 Lane Shift on November 4

On or about November 4, the lanes for westbound Route 50 traffic will be shifted to the right between Route 28 and Avion Parkway. This switch also includes shifting the traffic to the right at both the Avion Parkway and Lee Road intersections. The temporary traffic signals will be adjusted to accommodate the shifted traffic pattern through the intersections. The necessary

work to complete the traffic shift will be done at night starting at 7:00 p.m. utilizing temporary lane closures. Delays are anticipated during these operations and it is recommended to utilize alternate routes. The temporary lane closures will be picked up by 5:00 a.m. the next morning. As with any change in the traffic pattern, you may notice some additional delays while drivers adjust to the change. For more information on the Route 50 Widening Project, please visit the project website at:

http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/route_50_widening.asp

New Dulles District Appointee on Joint Board/School Board Sub-Committee

Kelly McLaughlan has been appointed jointly by myself and School Board Representative Jeff Morse as the Dulles District appointee to the Citizens Work Group on the Joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Committee. Kelly has already been involved in the group and brings much-needed perspective on issues related to Thomas Jefferson HS and advanced education programs.

Patriot Project to Honor American Revolution Soldiers

For decades, the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution placed wreaths on the lawn or gates of the Loudoun County Courthouse in Leesburg to honor veterans of the American Revolution who served from Loudoun County. Recognizing that there were already memorials to residents of the County that served in other wars, a group of concerned citizens decided to create a memorial on the courthouse lawn to honor these veterans. They started what became known as the Patriot Project as a way to raise the needed funds.

After an extensive national search, the sculptor Jay Hall Carpenter was officially commissioned in July 2013 to begin work on the statue. It will take nearly two years to complete and the Patriot Project board of directors has the goal of conducting a dedication ceremony on the courthouse lawn on July 4, 2015.

For information about the Patriot Project and various sponsorship and investment opportunities to ensure the statue is completed, please visit the Patriot Project website at www.thepatriotproject.org.

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