



Dulles Direct Newsletter March 2014

Welcome to the March edition of the Dulles Direct Newsletter. Over the past month, the Board has spent much of our time working on the FY2015 budget. Final approval of the budget will occur on April 2. Following that vote, I'll be sending out a budget-specific email which will cover all the details. There are several items of major significance for our district, so make sure to look for that.

In the meantime, this newsletter will outline some of the other things we've been working on. You might be particularly interested in my update on StoneSprings Hospital Center, which is the first item in the Dulles District Update section.

LEGISLATIVE

Route 28 Improvements

While Route 50 has the most impact on our district, Route 28 also is very important for many Dulles South commuters. Over the years, 28 has evolved from a two lane road to today's limited access highway. Many of those improvements have been funded by a special tax district which was set up in 1987—the Route 28 Transportation Improvement District Commission. The Route 28 tax district is comprised of portions of Loudoun and Fairfax County and the businesses within the area are included in a special tax district which is governed by members of the Loudoun and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Many people don't realize it, but every business you see in the 28 area pays an additional .18 cents/\$100 assessed in taxes to pay for Route 28 improvements.

I was appointed to the Commission by the Board when I took office in 2012, and last week was elected Vice Chairman for the coming year. Fairfax Supervisor Cathy Hudgins will serve as Chairman.

While a great deal of progress has been made on Route 28, there are several more significant projects that are now moving forward:

- Southbound 28 between the Dulles Toll Road and Route 50 will be widened by one additional lane at an estimated cost of \$20 million, pending approval by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) utilizing new funding from the state transportation bill.

- Northbound 28 between McLearen Road and the Dulles Toll Road will also see the addition of one lane, at an estimated cost of \$11.1 million, also pending NVTA approval.

- Southbound Route 28 between Sterling Blvd and the Dulles Toll Road will go from 3 to 4 lanes, at a cost of \$12.4 million, pending NVTA approval.

- Finally, the bridge that 28 uses to cross the Toll Road will be widened at a cost of \$4.3 million. This project has already been funded and design is complete.

The Loudoun and Fairfax members of the 28 Commission will continue to work together to plan improvements for 28. There are several others that are being studied and we may pursue them in the coming years. Once again, I'm pleased we're making progress on road construction projects that will benefit the region.

Transit Summit—Future of Bus Service

The Board of Supervisors held a Transit Summit earlier this month to take a close look at all the issues related to bus services and Metro. While I'm not sure that we necessarily reached conclusions on as many items as I would have liked, we did thoroughly cover all the issues and decisions that need to be made in the next few years.

The discussion about bus service has two parts—the existing commuter service and local transit service. Our commuter bus service is extremely popular and ridership is gaining every day. The Dulles South facility has seen the highest ridership increase in the County—over 40% in the last year. In order to address capacity in the parking lot at the Stone Ridge Village Center, I worked with staff to bring forward an item that will allow further development of a 300-space lot adjacent to the existing lot. That item was approved by the full Board at our March 19 meeting. In addition, a 100-space addition to the existing lot is underway and will be open this spring.

The 100-space addition is meant to address existing capacity issues, while the new expansion is meant to meet future needs. In addition, the process is underway to construct a 220 space park and ride lot in East Gate.

The County already owns about 60 long haul buses, but at a cost of over \$1 million each, our ability to purchase new ones is limited. We will be adding transit buses to our fleet this year which will serve Phase I Silver Line Metro stations. Once the Route 50 project is complete, I will be working to get buses assigned to East Gate to serve the Wiehle Avenue station. In addition, transit buses may be replacing long haul buses on some Metro station routes from other locations in the County, which could potentially free up long haul buses for overcrowding routes like we have here in Dulles South.

With regard to local transit service, residents will soon be contacted by a consultant that is working for the County to help determine interest in a potential new local route to serve Dulles South. Dulles South currently has no local bus service, so this would be a first. The goal would be to figure out exactly where the route should go and what the needs of the community are. This type of bus service is typically used by those who are unable to drive, for various reasons, to their destination. We'll provide more details on this as the survey gets underway.

Loudoun is basically building a transit system from scratch, so this is not an easy process. There will be some bumps along the way, but ultimately we need to get this right in order to fully utilize our Silver Line service when it comes.

Standard application for appointees

In a previous newsletter I mentioned the need for the Board to establish a standard application process for candidates who are seeking appointment to Advisory Boards, Commissions, or Committees. I worked with staff to develop a process that was ultimately approved by the full Board on March 19.

The standard application form we developed includes questions intended to vet a nominee's qualifications, background and interests. It also asks basic questions about criminal and civil history. Nominees to a select number of commissions, which have the most responsibility, will be subject to a similar criminal background check like County employees.

Vehicle Fleet Management Recommendations and Changes

At the Board's direction, the County recently completed a thorough third party analysis of our vehicle fleet management and utilization.

Overall, the County was found to have sound practices, but there were several steps recommended by the consultant that have been implemented to further improve our fleet management. Over the past few months, changes have been made to bring our operations in line with the recommendations, including right sizing our fleet.

I'm pleased to report these changes have already saved taxpayers \$2.5 million through cost avoidance. In addition, through the online auction of existing County vehicles we generated \$424,000 in revenue. The smaller, more efficient fleet will also save about \$350,000 a year in maintenance costs. We will continue to look for ways to make County government work more efficiently.

Key Staff Retirements

I wanted to take a moment to recognize two longtime County employees who informed the Board this month that they would be retiring. While most of you probably haven't met either one of them, their work has likely impacted you as a Loudoun citizen.

First, County Attorney Jack Roberts announced he will be retiring on July 1. Jack has worked for us for over 30 years and became County Attorney in 1989. As County Attorney, his job has been to serve as the chief legal counsel to the Board of Supervisors and County Administration—he is “our” lawyer. His service coincides with a period of unprecedented growth, and Jack and his legal team have been instrumental in overseeing everything from developer proffers to cable franchise agreements. Jack has served us well, with candor and integrity, and we'll miss him.

Diane Ryburn, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services, also announced she will be retiring this May. Diane has also been working for Loudoun for 30 years and was promoted to her current position in 2005. I worked closely with Diane on my Field Utilization Initiative and appreciate her commitment to developing facilities and programs for our youth and citizens. Under Diane's leadership we have some exciting things now underway, and even in retirement, I know she will be taking great satisfaction when projects like the Dulles South Indoor Recreation Center are completed.

DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

StoneSprings Hospital Center Update

I recently met with representatives of HCA to discuss the StoneSprings Hospital Center, which we broke ground on in October. I'm pleased to report that the project remains on schedule. There will be some major road network changes taking place in stages, between now and the time that the hospital opens—most notably the relocation of Gum Spring Road north of 50 to a new section of StoneSprings Blvd being constructed through the hospital property. As those get closer I'll share more details.

In terms of the hospital itself, grading work is now underway on the site. By mid-summer, you should expect to see steel beams being erected, both for the hospital itself and for a medical office building that is being constructed next to it. Construction of the facilities themselves are projected to be completed in early fall 2015. The office building will open right away, while the hospital will then be outfitted and tested internally, with a planned opening in December 2015.

StoneSprings Hospital will be a 124 bed, 239,000 square foot facility that represents a \$175 million investment by HCA. 500 new jobs will be created by the hospital, and around 400 doctors are expected to become affiliated. StoneSprings Hospital will generate over \$2 million per year in local tax revenue for Loudoun.

This is obviously a monumental project for Dulles South and for the entire County. Until the hospital opens, residents can utilize the Emergency Room facility. Next month, the Board of Supervisors will be considering a request from HCA to install new outdoor electronic signage that will provide the live wait times for the ER. I will be supporting the request and expect it to be approved.

Loudoun County Parkway/Center Street Intersection Presentation April 3

It's been almost nine months since the temporary flex posts were installed at the Center Street/Loudoun County Parkway intersection. I'm pleased to report from a safety perspective, the new configuration continues to work as planned.

In order to address concerns about the impact of the change to the flow of traffic, Loudoun County pledged to do a traffic study before and after the change. Last spring, the first study was conducted in order to establish a baseline of existing conditions.

Last fall, after the changes had been in place for 90 days, a new traffic study was conducted, along with an analysis of the findings.

I will be joining County Transportation staff to present the findings of that study to the South Riding Proprietary Board of Directors on April 3. The meeting begins at 7 pm at the South Riding Center at 42420 Unicorn Drive. I would encourage interested residents to attend that meeting. If you can't attend, but would like more information, feel free to email me at matt.letourneau@loudoun.gov.

The next step is to decide whether to make the existing configuration more permanent.

Miltec Terrace Decks

My staff and I have been working with homeowners on Miltec Terrace in West Riding to help correct a conflict between the County's zoning ordinance and the configuration of townhomes in the neighborhood.

Six townhomes are unable to have a second story deck on their units because the front doors to the townhouses were placed on what the County considers to be the back yard, instead of the front yard. The front doors on these townhomes front common area instead of a street, which is in conflict with the zoning ordinance.

To rectify the situation, I initiated a Zoning Ordinance Modification (ZMOD) that would allow these six units to build decks - consistent with all the other townhomes in the neighborhood if they choose. The Board approved the ZMOD unanimously and the process will take about six months to complete.

New Road Markings for Tall Cedars/Elk Lick

I am well aware of concerns about the Tall Cedars/Elk Lick intersection and have addressed it before in this newsletter. A recent accident, in which a vehicle ended up making contact with an adjacent residential unit, brought some additional attention to the issues at the intersection. While the vehicle in question was involved in a minor accident at the intersection, it ended up making contact with the building after the accident actually occurred—it was not knocked into the building as a result of the accident itself.

In any event, at my request VDOT conducted a traffic study. When that yielded nothing unusual, VDOT went further by conducting a video surveillance program to watch traffic over a longer period of time.

While some have requested a stop light at the intersection, it is located very close to the stop light at South Riding Blvd and thus it is not considered a good option by VDOT. However, even after the camera study, to date nothing has really been identified in the road configuration itself that is unusual.

We've been continuing to work with VDOT to try and think outside the box on solutions. As you probably noticed, they recently painted "stop ahead" signs on the southbound lanes of Elk Lick Road, and we'll see if those make any difference. This intersection is also slated to receive extra attention from law enforcement.

Unfortunately, like many of the issues on local roads—the basic problem is that some drivers simply aren't following the law and stopping when they should. If we continue to have issues, there are other, more disruptive solutions that could be pursued - though I'm hoping it won't come to that.

Rt 50 Update/Project Timelines with Updated Link

Last week I sent out an email update on the Route 50 project timeline. Included in this email was a link to a VDOT fact sheet on 50. As several of you noted to me, the link didn't work. That is because VDOT made a change on the fact sheet and swapped it out for a new one (with a different link) after my email went out. The new link is [here](#).

For those that didn't see my email, I'll reprint the project timeline here:

By the end of **Fall 2014**, VDOT is projecting that three full lanes will be open for **Eastbound** traffic throughout the entire project. The project will not be considered 100% complete, because work will still be underway on multi-use trails, final grading, medians and utilities--but you should see significant improvement on 50 Eastbound.

By the **end of 2014**, VDOT is projecting that three full lanes will open for **Westbound** traffic west of Stonecroft Blvd. Again, work may continue beyond that on other components.

The change that is reflected on the sheet relates to the **Westbound section between Route 28 and Stonecroft**. After the project was started, a decision was made to add a fourth lane between 28 and Stonecroft, and to build a spur from the 28 offramp for Lee Road traffic. The spur will allow vehicles that currently have to cut across traffic from 28 to take a left on Lee Road to have a direct entry onto the left side of Westbound 50, which should make it safer for them and remove congestion for other traffic. These changes were originally expected to be completed in June 2015, but that date has now been pushed to **November 2015**.

I will once again be hosting the entire project management team--Shirley Contracting and VDOT--for a public information meeting in the South Riding area. I expect to hold that meeting in May, and we'll of course provide details as we get closer. I would encourage everyone with questions about Rt. 50 to attend that meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JWCL Prom Wishes

Need more room in your closet? Donate your new or gently worn formal dresses and accessories to Junior Woman's Club of Loudoun (JWCL) Prom Wishes. Dresses will be given to local area young ladies who might otherwise not have prom attire. Donations may be left at the Dulles South Community Center through March 30. Please email any questions to info@jwcl.org or visit www.jwcl.org

Gum Spring Library Book Sale

Friends of the Gum Spring Library will be hosting a book sale at the Gum Spring Library on March 28 (10 am – 9 pm), 29 (10 am – 5 pm), and 30 (1 pm – 3 pm). Books, movies, music, and more will be available for purchase – with all sales benefiting the Gum Spring Library. For more information please visit www.GumSpringLibrary.blogspot.com.

Loudoun Symphony Concert

The next concert by the Loudoun Symphony will be held Saturday, April 5, 2014, in the Concert Hall of the Community Church/ Virginia Academy (19790 Ashburn Road, Ashburn, VA) beginning at 7:30 PM.

Ticket information and news of other Symphony events, including our many youth activities, is available at www.loudounsymphony.org.

VDOT Public Hearing on Dulles Access Road

VDOT is holding public hearing regarding the proposed road that would link Route 50 to Route 606/Dulles Airport on Tuesday, April 22, 2014, from 6:30-8:30 pm at Liberty Elementary School in South Riding.

This is an extremely important discussion for the Dulles South community. I will be sending out a separate email with details shortly. In the meantime, you can review the project information at www.virginiadot.org/projects.

DMV 2 Go Coming to South Riding

DMV 2 Go will be in South Riding at the Dulles South Public Safety Center on Monday, April 7 from 9 am – 4 pm. The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services, such as updating your address and voter registration if you have recently moved or applying for or renewing your driver's license.

Reporting Potholes

Due to the snow this winter, potholes have become an everyday occurrence. Please email me (matt.letourneau@loudoun.gov) the details of where the pothole is located and we will be happy to pass the information along to the correct department and make sure it is repaired. Also, if your vehicle has been damaged as a result of a pothole, you *may* be entitled to reimbursement. Send me an email and we'll work with you on the claims process.

Construction Thefts

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office is asking residents to report suspicious activity at construction sites, especially after hours, due to a series of larcenies of building materials.

In the first two months of 2014, there have been 29 reported larcenies from construction sites. A majority of the items targeted by the thieves include tools, building materials, and copper materials. The thieves typically enter unfinished homes where delivered materials, high priced materials, and appliances are often left unsecured.

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office is working with members of the building and contracting community and are asking residents who neighbor constructions sites to report suspicious activity. If you see a suspicious person or a vehicle on a construction site after dark or during off-hours, be sure to report it immediately by calling the LSO 24-hour-non-emergency line at 703-777-1021.