



## **Dulles Direct Newsletter - April 2015**

Welcome to the April edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. Earlier this month, the Board completed work on the FY2016 budget. You can find the details in a statement I sent following the vote by [clicking here](#). One of the things I was able to get included in the FY2016 budget is direct bus service to Metro from the new Eastgate lot. In the newsletter below, I now have some details about this service.

On March 26th I was joined by representatives of Shirley Contracting and VDOT to discuss plans for the Route 606 Widening project. This project is just getting started and is expected to be completed in 2017. One of the headlines from that meeting is that there will not be regular lane closures on 606 for construction—one lane in each direction will remain open. For more information on the project, including timing, you can visit the project page: [http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/old\\_ox\\_road\\_widening.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/old_ox_road_widening.asp).

We had a successful Town Hall meeting on Tuesday night, and were joined by representatives from VDOT and Fort Meyer Construction to discuss the much anticipated roundabout project at Braddock and Pleasant Valley Road. Details of that discussion are below, as well as some of the other items that were discussed.

A few weeks ago, Delegate David Ramadan announced that he would not be seeking reelection. I share all but 3 precincts with Delegate Ramadan, and we have worked together very closely over the past four years. I am particularly grateful for his efforts to secure funding for the 606 widening and the Braddock-Pleasant Valley roundabout—those projects will be serving constituents for many years to come. I will miss having David as a partner in Richmond, but I know he'll continue to be an active voice in our community.

I enjoyed participating in the opening ceremonies for Loudoun South Little League's spring season. It is the 10th anniversary of LSLL, and the league now has over 900 players and 250 coaches. I wish LSLL a successful season—especially #12 for the Single-A Bulls! I shared some good news on Byrne's Ridge Park and on the Dulles South Multipurpose Center (updates below).

Finally, I am looking forward to participating in the grand opening of Dick's Sporting Goods at Dulles Landing on May 19th. The grand opening and special preview event will take place from 4:30 - 9:30 pm at the new store at 24670 Dulles Landing Drive. A ribbon cutting will begin at 4:30pm. As I understand it, Dick's is the first store to open, with most of the rest expected to open in early July.

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**

### **Waltonwood South Riding**

At the April 15th Business Meeting, the Board unanimously approved an application to construct Waltonwood South Riding. This project is a 233 unit continuing care facility located at the corner of Tall Cedars Parkway and East Gate View Drive. The facility will include memory care, skilled nursing units, (etc). Waltonwood is also building a similar facility in Ashburn that the Board previously approved.

I view this project as an excellent complement to StoneSprings Hospital Center, Healthsouth Rehabilitation Center, the Adler Center, and the new County senior center we are building in South Riding. From a land use perspective, most of the permitted uses in the Commercial Light Industrial zoning district (which includes this parcel) would have a greater impact on traffic and the community than this one. The employee shifts in this facility will be on the edges of rush hour, and the peak time for visitors is weekends and holidays. The location, across the street from the new Park and Ride lot, will provide a level of accessibility to residents of Waltonwood to public transit options, such as local Route 85 and Metro. The application was supported by the Ridings at Blue Spring homeowners association, which worked with Waltonwood to minimize impacts on adjacent homeowners.

### **Whitman Property Rezonings**

The Board will soon be considering two proposals to rezone property on both sides of Braddock Road on the east side of Gum Spring Road (both are known as the Whitman property). The two applications are moving on a different track, and the north side will be in front of the Board first.

The Whitman North application from Van Metre would rezone about 50 acres from R-1 (one unit per acre) to R-8 (with an actual total of 4.8 units per acre), resulting in 239 houses. In return, Van Metre has agreed to rebuild the Braddock/Gum Spring intersection at a cost of about \$4 million to create better traffic flow and allow for right turns on red on Braddock Road heading westbound onto Gum Spring Road north. In addition to the intersection improvements, Van Metre is providing the County \$4.2 million in proffers to offset the costs of development.

While the base zoning on this parcel is R-1, the parcel is located within what is known as the Suburban Policy Area in the Loudoun County Comprehensive Plan, which calls for more dense

residential development. The suburban policy area is generally east of Northstar Boulevard and north of Braddock Road, and incorporates much of South Riding, Ashburn and Sterling.

With that in mind, the County's Planning staff reviewed the application, received referrals from every County agency, including Loudoun County Public Schools, and ultimately is recommending that the application be approved. The Planning Commission just finished its review of the application, and the commission voted 9-0 to recommend approval as well.

As you know, I spend much of my time working on issues that really are a result of growth—traffic, fields, school capacity, etc. Residential development has stretched our area very thin. The challenge with an application such as this one, however, is that the precedent has been long established that it be allowed. In this case, all of the surrounding parcels have been rezoned to higher density development, including Little River Commons, Braddock Corner, Kirkpatrick Farms, and South Riding Station.

This leaves the Board without many options, other than seeking to mitigate the impacts of the development as much as possible. As I review the Whitman North application, it will be with an eye toward making sure that the County is receiving the best deal possible from Van Metre. The Planning Commission has already addressed concerns from residents on Magistrate Court by requiring Van Metre to enhance the buffering and plant additional trees in the back of the property.

If you wish to review the application, you may do so online at [www.loudoun.gov/lola](http://www.loudoun.gov/lola). Click on searchable list in the first paragraph and enter ZMAP-2014-0006 in the application number field and click search. This page has all of the submitted documents related to the rezoning application as well as the referrals from all the County departments. The item is likely going to be on the Board's June 10th Public Hearing agenda. Those meetings are open to the public and televised, and you may address the Board at the appropriate time at the meeting.

The Whitman South application has not yet come to the Planning Commission and I am not as familiar with it. On the south side of Braddock, the zoning is TR-1 and TR-3)—Transition Residential. The TR zoning districts are intended to have less dense housing. My understanding is that the application will request approval of a commercial center with a small grocery store, and several daily needs (i.e. banks, daycare) type of buildings. We will provide more information as it comes forward.

### **Metro Silver Line Phase II Delayed**

As you may have seen or heard in the news this week, MWAA has announced that Phase II of the Metro Silver Line project from Reston to Ashburn will be delayed by about 13 months. Obviously, this delay is disappointing, but it was probably inevitable once the Commonwealth of Virginia instituted new stormwater management regulations, forcing significant design changes very late in the process for the Dulles Corridor Rail Project. These regulations come as a result of more stringent federal EPA regulations on stormwater and have

been something that localities and other projects have had to deal with as well. All told, about 150 changes were made to the Phase II project after the final design was completed. The good news is that the additional costs associated with the project are expected to be covered within the existing project contingency. The opening date for Phase II, which includes stations at Route 28, Dulles Airport, Loudoun Gateway (Route 606) and Ashburn (Route 772) is now 2019-2020. (See below for information about connectivity to Metro from Dulles South).

### **Zoning Ordinance Amendment- Air Conditioning Units**

At the Board's April 8th Public Hearing, we approved an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that would allow air conditioning condenser units, depending on size, to be located in the required side yards of homes.

The prior version had a much lower size threshold for the condenser unit, requiring some homes (mainly townhome end units) to place the units in the rear yard which inhibited outdoor space. The Board's Zoning Ordinance Action Group reviewed the requirement with County staff and found that the distance requirement was overly burdensome and thus proposed revisions to the allowable size and decreased the distance from side lot lines.

I supported the amendment partially because my office had been contacted by new homeowners that were disappointed in having to have condenser units in the middle of patios. While this change may not help them at this point, it will be there moving forward.

### **Loudoun County Parkway 7-Eleven Hours Expansion**

At the April 15th Business Meeting, the Board also approved a request to allow the new 7-Eleven on Loudoun County Parkway to operate 24 hours. I supported the request. While there was not a great deal of public input, there were some residents concerned about the impacts from the store being opened 24 hours. However, the nearest residential unit is over 260 feet away, and the lighting is being designed to face inward so I was comfortable with the request.

On a related note, I have been informed by VDOT that the traffic signal at Nations and Loudoun County Parkway is expected to become fully operative on May 5.

## **DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES**

### **Gum Spring Road/Stone Springs Boulevard**

Beginning yesterday, a new section of Stone Springs Boulevard opened on the north side of Rt. 50. The original Gum Spring Road on the north side next to the existing ER has been closed and



This is the next phase in a series of road network changes that I shared with you back in the fall of 2012. The roads surrounding the hospital property are changing to accommodate future capacity increases, and the eventual construction of Arcola Boulevard between 50 and 606.

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Detail map of new Stone Springs Boulevard/Gum Spring Road alignment.

## **Braddock-Pleasant Valley Roundabout Construction About to Start**

Construction activities on the Braddock-Pleasant Valley roundabout are about to start. Fort Meyer construction and VDOT have prepared a presentation that explains the various phases on the project, which they presented at my Town Hall meeting. The presentation is available here: [http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/braddock\\_and\\_pleasant\\_valley.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/braddock_and_pleasant_valley.asp).

Of note, the intersection will remain open on all sides throughout the project during peak times. There will be intermittent flagging operations during all other times. The project is expected to take about one year, and the first step is utility line relocation. My office and Delegate Ramadan's office have been assisting Fort Meyer with easing this process.

## **Direct Metro Service Coming to East Gate**

Loudoun County Transit has just released its proposed schedule, effective July 6, for service between the new East Gate park and ride lot and the Wiehle Avenue Silver Line Metro station. As you may recall, I was able to get this service funded in the FY2016 budget utilizing the County's existing contract with our fixed route provider.

The service being provided this summer is a little bit different than what we will ultimately provide. The County's next delivery of transit buses has been delayed until spring of 2016 due to the manufacturer's backlog. The buses that will be operating this route are smaller, and will not be able to accept credit cards or Smart Trip. However, the route will be priced at \$1 each way. The proposed schedule shows service from about 5:50-9:30 in the morning and 3:30-8:30 in the evening, with buses departing roughly every 30 minutes. You can view the proposed schedule and review other changes to LC Transit service here: [www.loudoun.gov/buschanges](http://www.loudoun.gov/buschanges).

## **Route 50 Traffic Troubles**

I commute on Route 50 everyday, so I'm well aware that there has been significant congestion over the past several weeks. The congestion seems to be worse in the Pleasant Valley Road area. I have been in regular contact with VDOT over these issues. This week, VDOT approved a task order for new traffic counts and intersection analysis at all of the intersections in the widening project. This will help ensure that the permanent signals to be installed this summer have the right timing at each intersection. Unfortunately, given the delays getting onto 50 from the side roads, I don't think there is a great deal that can be done on either side to help. VDOT believes that the congestion is seasonal, and indeed this week has been marginally better than last week, at least for me. The period between spring break and mid-May is typically the worst in the year for traffic congestion (along with September) because very few people are on vacation. VDOT does expect things to lighten up soon.

Westbound, there have been delays between Loudoun County Parkway and Stone Ridge. This is largely driven by the fact that the merge down to 2 lanes is now occurring after Loudoun County Parkway. As you may have noticed, work has begun on widening 50 westbound in this area by the developers that have projects here. Specifically, Dulles Landing is building their section, and we expect Van Metre to start working on theirs, which is close to the ER, soon. That leaves the Arcola Center proffered section. Arcola Center is required to add the third lane within 6 months of completion of the other sections. The County has been in touch with the developer and received assurance that they are also gearing up for construction. In the meantime, we continue to closely monitor signal timing at Gum Spring Road, and the new configuration with StoneSprings Blvd should help some because time can be added for westbound traffic at the Gateway Village Place intersection.

### **Byrne's Ridge Park Lighting Update**

At the April 1st Business Meeting, the Board approved the award of the contract for the lighting and landscape buffering at Byrne's Ridge Park in Stone Ridge. Originally, the contract award was delayed because no bids were received on the first round. There were concerns from contractors over requirements to keep the park operational during construction. I'm pleased to report that the bid was re-advertised and that the award processed under an expedited procedure.

In order to complete the work the park will be closed from June 12 until August 14 (outside of league schedules). In addition to the installation of lights at all fields, the project includes landscaping and buffering to create some separation from the houses adjacent to the park as well as parking lot lighting. The lights will increase the hours that fields will be available and help alleviate the current space crunch that leagues are facing.

### **Dulles South Multipurpose Center Expansion Update**

The County put the Phase II and Phase III expansion project out to bid earlier this year. There were a number of inquiries and questions submitted by potential bidders requiring an extension of the bid deadline to April 7th.

The County received several bids on the project at or slightly below the project cost. As Chairman of the Finance Committee, I have been informed that a contract award will be ready for my next meeting on May 12, which would allow the Board to formally award the contract on May 20. I have been told to expect actual construction activities to begin in August. I will have more details about that, as well as a groundbreaking ceremony.

### **Dominion Power Line Project**

As I mentioned last month, Dominion has a project to build 230 KV power lines in the Route 50 corridor to serve a large, new data center on the existing South Riding Nursery Parcel at Poland Road. This is a major project with significant implications for our area. An Open House was held last night, and while attendance was not large, there were some concerns from residents and landowners.

As I explained last month, the data center is a by-right use in the Commercial-Light Industrial zoning district, which means that it does not require legislative review by the Board of Supervisors. Dominion will need a Commission Permit from Loudoun County for its planned substation, but the review process for the power lines is entirely with the State Corporation Commission. Regardless of the route selected, there will be some impacts to property owners along Route 50. It is important to note that Dominion is required by law to serve the data center—they do not have a choice and this project wasn't really their idea. I point this out because during this process, I am sure there is going to be some frustration with Dominion. You can view details about the project and provide input here: <https://www.dom.com/corporate/what-we-do/electricity/transmission-lines-and-projects/poland-rd-230kv-transmission-line-and-substation-project>.

Loudoun County is carefully reviewing the proposed routes and comparing them to existing and planned development. At some point, the Board of Supervisors may weigh in with a recommended route, but I'm not yet sure. I am in contact with our staff regularly on this project.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **May 2015 Hunger Awareness Month**

For the past four years, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors has supported the efforts of a county food drive organized by many in the faith community. This effort is called the Love Your Neighbor Feed Your Neighbor Food Drive.

The Love Your Neighbor, Feed Your Neighbor (LYNFYN) food drive started in 2012 and was organized to help food pantries, like the Dulles South Food Pantry, prepare for the summer months when donations are low. Last year, the LYNFYN food drive collected over 90,000 lbs. of food.

For more information or how to get involved, see [www.LYNFYN.org](http://www.LYNFYN.org) or "like" them on Facebook at Multi Faith Food Drive for Loudoun County.

### **Loudoun Lyme Event**

The 5th annual Loudoun Lyme 5K/1K & New 10K Event to benefit the National Capital Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Association will take place on Sunday, May 17th at the Brambleton



Town Center in Ashburn. More information about the event can be found at [www.loudounlyme.org](http://www.loudounlyme.org).

### **Community Services Board Seeking Volunteers**

The Loudoun County Community Services Board (CSB) is in need of volunteers. The CSB, oversees the programs and services of the Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services (MHSADS), sets departmental policy and procedures, and determines priorities as mandated by the state of Virginia.

For more information visit [www.loudoun.gov/csb](http://www.loudoun.gov/csb).

### **Dulles South Community Outreach Project**

The Dulles South Community Outreach Project continues through a series of surveys and discussion topics. For more information, [click here](#).

### **Dulles South Food Pantry**

The Dulles South Food Pantry is a multi-faith emergency food pantry. They provide nutritious food, personal supplies and other services to those in need in Dulles South and the surrounding area that come to them regardless of income, faith or other criteria. They are an all-volunteer organization focused both on feeding the hungry and promoting the self-sufficiency of those they serve. Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry are tax deductible. The Dulles South Food Pantry needs canned chicken & tuna; soups and stews with protein; 2 or 5 lbs. bags of rice or rice mixes; pasta; boxed potatoes; breakfast cereal and pancake mix; granola bars; fruit (in cans, plastic or dried); canned beans; pasta sauce (no glass please); seasoning packets; toothpaste; shampoo; and grocery store gift cards in any amount. They are now able to accept food donations at Dulles South Multipurpose Center located at 24950 Riding Center Drive in South Riding during business hours. The Dulles South Food Pantry is open to distribute food the 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesdays of the month from 5 pm to 8 pm located at 24757 Evergreen Mill Road, Dulles VA 20166. For additional information please visit their website at [www.dsfp.org](http://www.dsfp.org).