

Dulles Direct Newsletter October 2018

Welcome to the October edition of the Dulles Direct Newsletter. It's that time of year again - election season (not that you need me to tell you, if you've turned on the television recently). Election day is November 6. Polls are open from 6 AM to 7 PM. If you don't remember where your voting precinct is or you have recently moved, check out [this link](#) for more information. If you think you may not be able to vote on Election Day, you can vote in-person absentee this week at the Dulles South Recreation and Community Center. The voting location there is open from 4-8 PM through Friday, and from 8 AM-4 PM on Saturday.

Speaking of the election, there will be two bond referendum questions on the November 6 ballot that I wanted to alert you to beforehand. The Board of Supervisors has placed these questions on the ballot with unanimous support. The first asks if Loudoun should accrue debt and issue general obligation capital improvement bonds not to exceed \$152,585,000 for transportation projects. This referendum includes a number of projects in the budget that will directly benefit our area, including designing and constructing Braddock Road (Route 659 to Royal Hunter), designing and constructing improvements to Evergreen Mills Road (Northstar to Stone Springs), designing and

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constructing intersection improvements countywide, designing and constructing a Prentice Drive extension (an alternative to the Greenway), designing and constructing Route 50 Corridor improvements, and paying for other public roads and projects already approved in Loudoun's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). If you recall the Route 50 traffic study that I had done last year, the Route 50 corridor improvements on the ballot are top tier recommendations that the consultant and staff made to help alleviate some congestion along Route 50. They include things like an extra lane eastbound from 50 to Loudoun County Parkway, improvements at the Gum Spring and Tall Cedars intersections, and several others.

The second question asks if the County should contract a debt of \$98,820,000. This would finance design, construction, and equipment of ES-23 Dulles North Elementary School and ES-29 Dulles South Elementary School (as well as the installation of school security vestibules countywide).

ES-23 will be located in the upcoming Arcola Center development (more on that down below). It will have an estimated capacity of 937 students and contains over 100,000 square feet of school space. It is expected to be ready for use in the fall of 2021. On the south side of Dulles South is ES-29, co-located with Lightridge High School and a County park on a purchased site off Lightridge Farm Road. This school will be the same size as ES-23 and have the same estimated capacity. It is also scheduled to open in the fall of 2021.

Opening ES-23 and ES-29 will alleviate overcrowding problems at elementary schools like Goshen Post Elementary, which opened above capacity just this year. While some attendance boundary changes will be necessary (and are discussed below), it is better to open schools at a rate that keeps up with student growth.

A security vestibule is a sort of double entrance at the front of a school building. We have begun installing them in new schools, such as the recently opened Goshen Post. The vestibules ensure that everyone who



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enters the school must go through the office and check in first. They cannot simply walk through the front door and access classrooms or cafeterias where lots of students assemble. This is obviously a huge buffer to school safety, and every school in the County would benefit from having a vestibule system to prevent security concerns.

When it comes to the school bond questions on the ballot, I will repeat what I tell you every year. You are voting solely on the method of financing, not whether or not we should undertake the projects. The Board of Supervisors and School Board have decided the projects are necessary and will be constructing them sometime in the future. If the bond referendum fails, we will use alternative financing with higher interest rates, so they will cost more money.

Bottom line: I strongly encourage you to support both ballot questions. These items have been accounted for in the County capital budget and are needed.

I hosted a resolution honoring the Hindu holiday Diwali at the October 18 Board business meeting. We welcomed representatives from two groups, BAPS and the Vedic Temple of Virginia. Diwali, or "the Festival of Lights," is one of the most important holidays on the Hindu calendar. It is also celebrated by Sikhs and Jains in the United States; it commemorates the end of harvest season and celebrates the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness. This year, Diwali will begin on November 7. We have many Indian Americans living, working, and going to school in Loudoun County. Their contributions to our community are vitally important, and it is only right to honor them at their most special time of the year. Join me in wishing a safe and happy Diwali to all our Indian American neighbors and friends!

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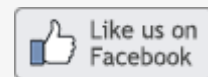
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

State Park

At our October 18 business meeting, the Board voted to acquire 600 acres of land from the Robert and Dee Leggett Foundation for \$2.9 million for the purpose of establishing a state park in Loudoun County. This will be the first state park in Loudoun; it has been a work in progress ever since I joined the Board in 2011, and I am glad to see steps being taken toward a finished product. The property is specifically located in northwestern Loudoun near Neersville. With the growing urbanization and commercialization of Loudoun, it is important that we set aside areas for natural attractions like parks. This parcel of land will be a great resource for Loudoun families when they want to hike, fish, or just enjoy a day in the great outdoors. While the project is still in its early conceptual phase and I'm not yet aware of a timetable for completion, I will be sure to update you when it comes before the Board again and we learn more details.

Now, you may be asking why the County is spending money on what will ultimately be a state park. There are a few reasons - the state already has land set aside in this area, but that land lacks infrastructure or amenities. In contrast, this land has those things on it already, and can be combined with the adjacent

existing project for one large facility. The land itself was relatively affordable, and once established, the state will pay to maintain and staff it. The Board of Supervisors tried unsuccessfully for several years to get the state to buy this remaining piece, but there was not support in the General Assembly and it didn't go anywhere. While I personally wasn't thrilled that we had to pay for it, I always recognized the value in having the state park as a resource and wanted to see this issue get settled.

Preliminary 2020 Budget Guidance

At our October 18 meeting, the Board provided budget guidance to the County Administrator to develop a budget at the equalized tax rate (no rate increase) with options to increase and decrease by up to 2 cents. This is an annual process that ensures that the Department of Management and Budget has policy goals and guidelines for the Fiscal Year 2020 countywide budget. We are planning to update the budget guidance parameters again in December or January to reflect requests from the School Board. I ultimately made this motion because it gives the Board a solid baseline with ideas of what the County believes are the most important items to add and the things we could potentially live without if we needed to.

This year's big ticket item is something I have been writing about for a while - compensation increases for County employees. Nobody likes to give government employees pay increases at any level. There are certainly benefits to working for the County, but compensation is on the low end for the jobs required. The Board of Supervisors has undertaken a classification and compensation study that is nearing completion, and as a result we will need to start implementing significant changes to our pay scales - which will cost money. While we are planning to phase the changes in over time, I expect a major outlay to be in this next budget cycle. It also needs to deal with normal growth issues for various departments. I want to emphasize that these increases go beyond just being the right thing to do, though they are. We are having

service delivery issues in some departments due to high vacancy rates and constant turnover thanks to low compensation. There is a cost associated with that as well. I will of course be discussing this in much greater detail but I want to give you a head's up that this will be a big discussion for the Board in this budget cycle.

DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

Glascok Field / Arcola Center Approvals

Zoning amendments for the Van Metre Glascok Field project were approved at the October 18 Board business meeting on a 6-1-2 vote. Supervisor Saines from the Sterling District opposed. Three specific prongs of the proposal were approved. First, the applicant can remove a proffered community center in order to add 12 townhouses. The community center was not needed and was not going to be staffed by the County. It originally was a request from the previous Blue Ridge District Supervisor. Second, the applicant can use the property for an auxiliary pharmacy and potentially a daycare. Third, the applicant can revise capital facilities contributions. In return for all of those, the applicant is providing the right of way necessary to build Arcola Boulevard. I cannot emphasize enough how important that is. The right of way acquisition took Van Metre five years to complete and the County would have had an even more difficult time trying to complete it. A few updates were made to the plan at the October 18 meeting in response to comments from community members and staff. The applicant agreed to install a new hard surface court as an amenity for the neighbors. There was also an added proffer to take care of any environmental issues that may arise from the relocation of the Valero gas station.

The Board also approved the Arcola Center zoning amendments on a 6-0-2-1 vote, with no one opposing and Supervisor Umstattd abstaining. The developers can increase the area of construction for data center development from 1.6 million square feet to 2.3 million square feet. The proffered elementary school site will be moved, and several key road projects will be accelerated. The most important proffered projects

involve expanding Dulles West Boulevard to Arcola Boulevard and completing Arcola Boulevard from Route 50 to Evergreen Mills Road. The timetable for these projects is 2021, as much as 5 years sooner than the County would take to complete the same construction. The retail area that will be used for building Wegmans in Arcola Center will be retained. The applicant did agree to increase cash in lieu for the school site, should it be affected by interference from the Dulles Airport noise contour. The amount agreed upon was roughly \$500,000 an acre, which was what I asked for. The applicant also agreed to more robust buffers and landscaping in the area around the data centers and along adjoining communities.

Route 50 / Fleetwood Road Signal

Construction has started on the signal at the intersection of Route 50 and Fleetwood Road. Current work includes the installation of the controller, boxes, and conduit while they await arrival of the signal pole equipment. Completion is expected in early 2019.

Tall Cedars / Riding Center Drive Signal

This intersection has been a constant source of headache in recent months, as congestion has been building and we have had a few accidents. I gave you the entire history last month. The bad news was that Toll Brothers told us they wouldn't have it done until October 2019. I said we would try to get that done earlier, and I have been working towards that end. I was able to bring Toll Brothers and VDOT together to get on the same page on the design review process and timelines, and also emphasize to Toll's regional leadership the importance of this project for the County. I don't necessarily have a new timeline, but I believe they will beat the original estimate. There are some steps that have to be taken regardless and they do take time. For example, the poles have to be custom ordered and constructed; there is currently a backlog for them. As an interim solution, Toll Brothers has agreed to install battery powered flashing red beacons to the tops of stop signs at the intersection. This is only temporary, but will hopefully alert cars to the stops and

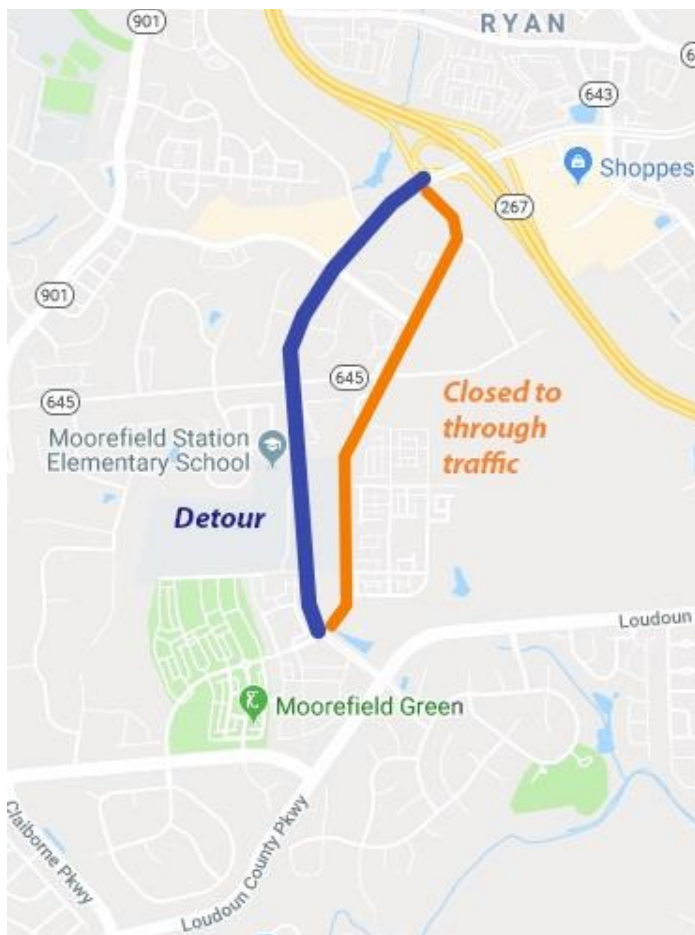
allow for safer passage through the intersection. I expect the beacons to be in place by the end of the year. VDOT has approved it and Toll is now trying to procure the right equipment and get it installed as soon as possible.

Claiborne Parkway

I expect the new section of Claiborne Parkway to open in early December. There is still some work underway and we are waiting for the signal installations at each end. There have been some community concerns in Belle Terra about landscaping and the County is working with the residents to try to address those as well.

Update on Old Ryan Road Closure

You may remember that portions of Old Ryan Road have been closed for work on an underground pipeline. Due to inclement weather early in the project, VDOT has been forced to extend the closure through the end of this week. This is about one week later than expected. Please continue seeking alternate routes, as through traffic will still be detoured via Mooreview Parkway.



Blighted Properties Update - United Rentals Building

After months of waiting, the owner of the United Rentals property has finally begun demolition of the building. I'm not sure what the exact timetable is, but it looks like crews are more than halfway done tearing the building down. This has been a long time coming, and I appreciate everyone who showed solidarity on this issue. Since the property owner is taking care of demolition, the County will not need to expend funds. The plan is for the property to be cleared, and then we expect that the owner will try to sell it.

There have been continued conversations with the owner of the hotel site. With an active site plan and recent revisions that it completed, the County cannot

enforce the blight ordinance at this time. I understand that their next step is securing needed financing to begin the project.

RETAIL UPDATES

Avonlea

I spent several hours having conversations regarding Avonlea a few weeks ago. Peterson Companies continues to work with H&R Retail to handle marketing and leasing for the project. They are seeing a lot of interest and activity for the smaller inline stores, but still need the anchor tenants to be in a position to secure the necessary financing. There are no new announcements at this time. H&R had a productive meeting with the Director of Loudoun County Economic Development to discuss specific ways that the County can help market the project. I also had discussions directly with recruiting targets.

Sonic

I wanted to clear up some confusion regarding future retail at the corner of Braddock and Gum Spring Road in Aldie. A couple weeks ago, news got on a local retail website and then social media that Sonic would be opening a location in that spot. The reception was mixed, with some enthusiasm from Sonic fans and concern from those closest to the site. When I saw all the social media traffic, I posted an update after speaking with Van Metre, which owns the site in question. I made it clear that the Sonic site is subject to a rezoning by the Board of Supervisors.

It was not always Van Metre's plan to build a drive-through restaurant at Whitman South. The project, however, has been in the market for a few years and has had little success outside of a single gas station user. Van Metre recognized it may need to expand its market, so a new special exception has been brought to the County (the original approval did not include a drive-through restaurant). The gas station would be able to remain on the property, but a whole host of other changes would occur if Sonic was to move in.

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors have not yet seen the application, but it should be on the Planning docket in November or December at the latest. After that, the timing of the project (should it be approved) will depend on various concerns that must be addressed.

As far as my personal opinion, I said on Facebook that traffic management is always a priority concern, and the applicant will have to demonstrate how they are planning to manage that. Van Metre is working to address issues with its project from the residential component of the first rezoning. The improvements are aimed at increasing capacity at the intersection. The County also required turns lanes into the Paul VI campus, and a traffic management plan from the Diocese of Arlington. I realize that Sonic is an exciting prospect for many residents, so I am working to ensure the best situation for everyone involved. When we have a firm plan, we'll provide further updates, and I will be interested to hear your opinions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

School Attendance Boundary Changes

New schools mean new boundaries, and the opening of Waxpool Elementary will bring about changes. The School Board is responsible for developing and implementing these changes. At my last Town Hall meeting with Loudoun County School Board Chairman Jeff Morse, we outlined some of these boundary updates - particularly regarding Waxpool Elementary, which is set to open next fall. Please direct your questions to Chairman Morse and the School Board, since the onus of the project rests in their hands. Jeff and I ask for your continued cooperation in the process. More information on the schedule and process moving forward is available [here](#).

Loudoun Fire & Rescue Comprehensive Service Plan Community Meeting

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LC-CFRS) is working on a comprehensive service plan and would like to include community feedback in its efforts. LC-CFRS will host a community meeting on Friday, November 2 from 6:30-8 PM. It will take place at the Dulles South Riding Senior Center, located at 24950 Riding Center Drive, South Riding, VA 20152.

The meeting will seek to address LC-CFRS' response to dramatic growth and community demographic changes in the last few years. While making this road map for the future of emergency services in Loudoun, your input is valued. Please consider coming out to the meeting.

LCSO Quarterly Meetings

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office will be hosting the next quarterly public safety meetings at the Dulles South Public Safety Center (25216 Loudoun County Parkway in South Riding) on November 8 at 7 PM. The meeting will cover topics such as recent crime, overall crime trends, traffic safety, and other public safety concerns.

VDOT Incident Management Open House

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will host an open house to allow residents a behind the scenes look at what goes into incident clearance and the maintenance of Virginia traffic flow. Visitors can look at equipment and systems, and staff will be on hand to answer any questions. An outdoor exhibit will simulate a highway crash scene, so visitors can see the process VDOT uses to safely and expediently clear out such accidents. The open house will take place from 10 AM-2 PM on Saturday, November 10. VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office is located at 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.

VDOT Fall Transportation Meeting

VDOT's Commonwealth Transportation Board will conduct an open house public meeting on Thursday, November 29 at 5:30 PM at its NOVA District Office (located at 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030).

The meeting will take place in the office's Potomac Conference Room. It will give stakeholders an opportunity to review and provide comments on transportation projects and priorities. Specifically, information will be provided on projects and strategies submitted in consideration through the Smart Scale prioritization process. Several Loudoun County projects will be on the agenda for consideration, so it will be a great time for residents to advocate for important projects in the Dulles District. You can access a list of these projects and other meeting materials at [the website](#).

If you're not able to attend the meeting, you can send comments to the Infrastructure Investment Director at 1401 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219 or email them to Six-YearProgram@vdot.virginia.gov by December 13. If you have comments on rail or public transportation, those can be sent to the DRPT Public Information Officer at 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219 or emailed to drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov.

Step Up Loudoun Youth Competition

Loudoun Youth, Inc. is partnering with the Loudoun County Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department to host the Step Up Loudoun Youth Competition (SULYC). The program is aimed at middle and high school students. It encourages them to find an issue in their school or community, research potential solutions, and create an action plan. It also stresses evaluation of the plan, so that effective strategies for problem solving can be developed and honed over time. Students can work alone or in teams. While the main competition won't take place until March 28, 2019, registration is open now through December 21. The top ten teams will win monetary

prizes ranging from \$250 to \$1000. To register a project, please use [this registration form](#).

Dulles South Food Pantry

The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance to any person who resides in the school attendance zones for Freedom High School, John Champe High School or the upcoming Independence High School in Brambleton. The food pantry is open Wednesdays in the historic white chapel at Arcola United Methodist Church, 24757 Evergreen Mills Road, Dulles, VA 20166. Call 703-507-2795 or email info@dsfp.org to schedule an appointment. See the Dulles South Food Pantry's website at <http://www.dsfp.org/> for information on how you can help the food pantry fight local hunger. Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry, Inc. are tax deductible.

FOIA Update

I'm assuming that most of you reading this are on my mailing list. Virginia law now allows your personal contact information to be exempt from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) disclosures. However, you must proactively request that your contact information be withheld from future FOIA requests. To do that, please go to your Constant Contact settings and opt out of FOIA disclosure. You can do that by clicking on the "update profile" link at the bottom of this newsletter.

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