



Dulles Direct Newsletter January 2019

Welcome to the January edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. 2019 is off to a busy start with work beginning on our budget, discussion about the Dulles Greenway, and some big land use cases coming to the Board.

We have certainly experienced a bit of winter weather already since the holidays. There is information in the announcements section below regarding VDOT snow removal policies. I do get a fair amount of emails and calls to my office about roads that are unplowed when it snows. I appreciate being made aware of these cases, and sometimes there are oversights that I can help correct (we had a few of those with the most recent large storm). VDOT focuses on clearing main roads first so that the largest points of access are free and ready for travel. Secondary roads sometimes take a while to plow. As a native New Englander, I know that for those from other areas it seems like it takes a long time to clear snow - and it does on residential streets. But this region doesn't get nearly as much winter weather, so both the public and private fleet of equipment is much smaller than it is in other parts of the country. It just isn't economical to maintain the level of equipment that it would take to get faster service for the amount of snow we get. Those decisions

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are made at the state level, and the County is always supportive of more funding from the state for maintenance and snow removal.

Some good news from our Economic Development Department: Loudoun County led the state of Virginia in business growth for the third consecutive year in 2018. This trend hasn't happened by accident. Over the past 7 years, we have built an economic development team to complement the natural advantages we have here in Loudoun. We have seen a 13.9% increase in business growth over the last two years. I know the perception is that all we get is new data centers, but in actuality there are plenty of employers moving here creating jobs as well. With Metro coming in the next couple years, I expect that business growth will take off even more. Here's the [full article](#).

I am honored to have two new appointments this year which will help the County as we prepare for Silver Line service to start. I was elected the first ever Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) from Loudoun County. NVTC is the body that oversees public transit in Northern Virginia. It is made up of representatives from all the jurisdictions that have Metro service, as well as members of the General Assembly. NVTC provides oversight to Virginia's funding of Metro and also oversees the commuter train Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and the utilization of I-66 toll revenue.



[Announcements](#)



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Loudoun County Board of
Supervisors

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In addition to NVTC, I also became the first Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) Board member from Loudoun County as the NVTC alternate. DC, Maryland, Virginia and the federal government each appoint Board members, and there are alternates to each. I first rode the Washington Metro system as a 13 year old in 1993. As a college student at Catholic University, it was my lifeblood to all that the city had to offer - internships, activities, etc. I never could have imagined that all these years later, I would have a role in overseeing the system. Over the past two weeks, I spent many hours at Metro headquarters meeting with senior staff. I was briefed on the operating and capital budgets, the Inspector General's office, General Counsel, safety and operations, and spent an hour one on one with the General Manager, Paul Wiedefeld.

The story is a bit of a mixed bag. On the positive side, I think the GM is excellent; he has assembled a team of experts, several from other larger transit systems, to really improve Metro's daily operations. I won't get into all the data, but over the past year the system's functionality has greatly improved. I feel confident that the team has made great strides and, more importantly, has a handle on what needs to be done next and how to do it. Metro is unquestionably safer - which is the first priority. On the negative side the binding arbitration that Metro was involved in with its largest union did not go well, and as a result Metro will continue to face financial pressure. I'm most disappointed that the arbitrator did not allow Metro to implement badly-needed pension reforms, which the GM was seeking. As one of the two alternate members from Virginia, I won't be voting unless our principal member (Arlington's Christian Dorsey) has to miss a meeting. However, I am now participating in numerous calls and discussions leading up to meetings and decision points and I have access to the full complement of WMATA staff at all times. I think it's important for Loudoun to begin to have this familiarity as Metro will be such a big part of our future.

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As I mentioned last month, please be on the lookout shortly for my annual report. We are working through all the information now in preparation for printing and mailing to take place. It will feature a look back at 2018, including projects we completed and updated information on those that are still in the works. I hope you find it useful.

Finally, on a personal note, 2019 is an election year for the Board of Supervisors. As I did four years ago, I had the chance over the holidays to talk things over with my wife and children. Together we decided I would seek reelection to represent the Dulles District on the Board. I want to emphasize that I could not serve in this position without the support of my family - my wife, my kids and my parents all come in to help out on busy weeknights. The support at home makes it possible for me to be out so many nights in meetings all over the region. While it is a lot of work, I truly believe it is worth the time and effort to improve our community. Quite simply, there is a lot of work left to be done and I'd like the opportunity to do it.

DULLES UPDATES

Silver District West

Silver District West is a 158-acre mixed-use community between the Ashburn and Loudoun Gateway Metro stations. It is proposed to have 3,706 residential units, over one million square feet of non-residential construction such as office space, and recreational amenities such as trails, and will be built over the next twenty years. It will be one of, if not the largest, land use applications I've voted on during my time at the Board. The Board's Transportation and Land Use Committee (I am not a member and do not have a vote, although I did attend for some of these discussions) voted in November to send the application to the full Board with a recommendation of approval on a 3-1-1 vote. Originally, the application was expected on the agenda for our second Business Meeting in January, but at the time the County had just been briefed on updated noise contour data for Dulles and the actual proposed proffers were not yet finalized. The

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current expectation is that this will be considered by the Board at our February 21 Business Meeting.

While there are still some specific details in the proffers to be finalized, there has been improvement over the initial proposal. Specifically, the developer is proffering to widen Loudoun County Parkway between Ryan Road and Shellhorn Road and make several intersection improvements through the corridor in two phases. The first phase - from Westwind to Shellhorn - has been proposed to begin construction prior to the 150th residential zoning permit. The second phase - from Ryan Road to Westwind - has been proposed to begin construction prior to the 550th residential zoning permit. However, they have yet to provide an actual trigger that would compel them to complete construction within a specified amount of time, which concerns me. The applicant has also proffered to construct Shellhorn Road and extend Barrister over the Greenway, with construction to begin within 3 months of plan approval and be open to traffic within 36 months. This would significantly expedite the current plan that the County has to fund and construct Shellhorn Road.

The initial proposal failed to include any sort of phasing for bringing on much needed commercial office space concurrently with residential units. The updated proposal provides 125,000 square feet of commercial development prior to the 1,501st residential zoning permit and 250,000 square feet prior to the 2,501st residential zoning permit. There is no commitment to a specific amount of this space being constructed as office, which our Department of Economic Development has told the Board is sorely needed and I specifically communicated to the applicant.

I still feel that more can be done to make this a better project for the County and will be communicating this to the applicant before our meeting next month. I am paying particularly close attention to the exact schedule of Loudoun County Parkway widening, as well as the ability of Barrister Street to get built across the

Greenway, which provides another way "out" of this parcel. The County staff also still needs to complete their review of the impacts of updated noise contour data from Dulles; the impact on this specific property may not be significant and the applicant is proffering to build to that line to ensure residential development is not within contour lines. When the proposed proffers are finalized, I will be in a position to engage with communities that are most directly impacted by development on this site to gather their input. I will be meeting with these folks before the Board considers the application in late February.

Claiborne Parkway

I am very pleased to announce that Claiborne Parkway between Ryan Road and Croson Lane is finally open. This project was one of the most challenging the County has undertaken, even though it didn't seem so at first glance. There have been many obstacles: right of way acquisition, funding, and constructing a new gas pipeline under the roadway - just to name a few. But in the end, one of our highest priority missing links is now complete and open for use. Staff was immensely helpful during this process, and a big thanks goes out to everyone who collaborated to get Claiborne done. I'd especially like to thank the residents of Forest Manor, Belle Terra, and Windermere who had to deal with construction for the past several years.



Tall Cedars / Stone Springs Intersection

Work is progressing towards construction of a signal at this intersection, but we are experiencing some delays in the original timeline. As the design process was coming to completion, there were electrical easements and water line conflicts that were identified before construction could begin. VDOT has approved the overall signal design, but pole locations are being adjusted to avoid conflict with a large water main at the intersection.

Once final pole location and signal pole designs are complete, the right of way for construction can be obtained from the property owner at the intersection and the project can be bid for contract award. At this point, I expect completion this fall. Honestly, I'm extremely frustrated by the timeline on this project; it has taken much longer than I imagined it would. There are a lot of different reasons and excuses that I've been given for why this has slipped so much. Some of them are valid, but we quite simply have to do a better job getting signals built. Our Transportation Director has been engaged in an effort with VDOT to try to streamline the process for priority signals which would help in future circumstances. At this point, I have requested weekly updates from the construction team so I can personally track exactly what progress has

taken place. I've only done that a few times over the years because I know it takes staff time to put those together, time that could be spent on the actual work. I think it is warranted in this case because it helps ensure that staff stays focused on getting this done. I'll keep you updated as timelines become clearer. There are still some issues with steel availability that I'm concerned about.

Tall Cedars / Riding Center Drive Intersection

As reported previously, the estimated completion date of October 2019 should be accelerated. For now the flashing beacons are operational while Toll Brothers works through the process to get to construction. I am looking forward to updating you when signal installation finally commences.

Tall Cedars / Elk Lick Intersection

I met again with the joint County/VDOT team working on this intersection, and we are in the process of finalizing a design concept that I will be able to share shortly. We will not be installing a signal at this intersection. The VDOT Chief Engineer for the NOVA District has personally been involved in this process and VDOT does not support a signal. With that in mind, our County team explored other potential changes to the intersection and we've tentatively come to an agreement on a significant configuration change that will result in the stop signs being removed from Tall Cedars. Access restrictions similar to the Center Street/Loudoun County Parkway project will be applied. My goal is to have the final layout ready to present to you at my next town hall meeting, which I anticipate will be in the end of February. Stay tuned.

Route 50 / Fleetwood / Lenah Mill Intersection

As you may recall, VDOT is installing a traffic signal at this intersection. I was hopeful it would be complete by the time this newsletter went out, but the delays in getting steel for mast arms and poles have persisted. The latest update from VDOT is that the materials should be delivered sometime in mid-February. It will

probably take about a month to finish construction after that. I hope to have better news next month. In the interim, warning signage remains at the intersection. Thank you for exercising patience as this project nears completion; as always, make sure you're driving safely through the intersection.

Beach Property

At our February 13 Public Hearing, the Board will review an application by Van Metre requesting Special Exceptions for commercial property on the north side of Tall Cedars Parkway, directly across from the Derby Meadow Way entrance to Eastview at Stone Ridge. This property was residual after the County secured the right of way for Tall Cedars. The Special Exceptions that are being requested would allow a convenience store, gas pumps, and car wash or auto service facility. I am not exactly excited about the prospect of a gas station for this location - and I told that to Van Metre when they first shared their plan with me. However, they feel that the limited size of the parcel and its position at the rear of other larger commercial properties that front on Route 50 (Meadows Farms and Long Fence) limits the attractiveness for other uses. This particular area of Tall Cedars seems to be attracting a number of gas stations; there is already an approved gas station on the southeast corner of the Tall Cedars and Gum Spring intersection and I recently met with a group about a gas station with restaurant component near the northwest corner as well. I would note that not wanting a particular use is not a valid reason for the Board to deny a Special Exception. However, I am still evaluating this application against the criteria that the law allows the Board to consider.

The Public Hearing will be held on February 13 and begins at 6 PM. Anyone that wishes to speak can call 703-777-0200 to sign up to speak in advance or sign up the night of by attending the meeting at 1 Harrison Street SE in Leesburg. Copies of agenda items are posted [here](#) by the Friday before the meeting.

Braddock Spring

Braddock Spring was originally a retail development planned by Peterson Companies at the southwest corner of Gum Spring Road and Braddock Road. It was proposed to rezone 16 acres from residential for 98,000 square feet of commercial development. Feedback from adjacent communities led the applicant to propose a scaled back version of the commercial development with a residential component of 76 townhomes. That residential component was spun off into a separate application called Ridge View. The Ridge View application was recently recommended for denial by the Planning Commission because any proffers associated with the application were attached to the Braddock Spring commercial application and couldn't be reviewed as part of the residential application. (This has to do with the General Assembly's proffer laws which does not allow us to collect proffers on residential applications in certain areas of the County.) Given the feedback they received as part of the residential application review, the applicant has indicated to staff that they wish to defer the application coming to the Board of Supervisors until this fall. The commercial application piece is currently waiting to be scheduled for a Planning Commission Work Session and the applicant has asked to defer while they work through some access details with the neighboring church property. I will post an update here when there is further activity on either of these fronts.

C-PACE Program

Commercial property-assessed clean energy (C-PACE) is a funding structure that is employed for certain energy efficiency initiatives. Property owners can borrow money for projects involving energy efficiency, water usage efficiency, and renewable energy. They then make repayments through an assessment on their property tax bill. The financing arrangement is tied to the specific property rather than the owner(s), which means that even when the property is sold it remains under the structure. The purpose of C-PACE, therefore, is to encourage long-term investment and energy efficient solutions to construction projects. C-PACE is often funded by private investors and government

programs. Virginia is one such state that enables C-PACE via legislation and various programs. A C-PACE program has been proposed for Loudoun County and is under consideration by the Board of Supervisors. As envisioned, Loudoun County would collect loan payments and provide enforcement of the lien with the loans being made by private entities. All costs to the County are expected to be recouped through loan payments. At our January 9 Public Hearing, we voted to forward the proposed C-PACE program to our February 21 Business Meeting for consideration by the Board; there are still some outstanding questions around enforcement of the liens and we have requested an Attorney General opinion prior to finalizing the program for Loudoun.

Of particular note to our community, the owner of the hotel property on Route 50 in East Gate has expressed a desire to pursue C-PACE funding to help jumpstart financing for the project. I understand that financing has been the issue that has kept the hotel from getting off the ground and I am hopeful that, once up and running, C-PACE will provide another avenue for them and others to pursue moving forward.

Meadows Farms Construction

I have received some questions concerning construction adjacent to Meadows Farms. It is for a by-right self-storage business, which means that the property owner can develop what he wants there without Board approval. It is currently zoned PD-GI so no special exceptions are needed. In 2016, the owner submitted and eventually withdrew a County application to request a larger storage facility. I had met with the property owners and developers and expressed concerns about conflicts with the planned interchange at 50 and Loudoun County Parkway. I don't have any information about a brand/operator for the storage business, nor knowledge of any County filings at this point.

LOUDOUN UPDATES

County Traffic Studies

Last year, I joined my colleague Supervisor Buffington of Blue Ridge in directing a review of the County's process for doing traffic studies tied to land use applications. Up to this point, applicants were responsible for all traffic studies. These studies would often make it to the Board incomplete and (shockingly enough) favorable to the applicant's project. The Board recently voted to begin the process of having the County take charge of scoping traffic studies. In practice, this will look like County staff setting the exact parameters for what the applicant studies and how they study it. This new process gives us an additional layer of oversight and accountability that will hopefully eliminate some of the errors that have plagued studies in the past. Furthermore, it will allow Board members to understand the outputs of the studies better since the County will be more intimately acquainted with the internals of the research. The County will need to add a position to accommodate the new process, but the cost would be incorporated into the fees charged to applicants as part of the land use application process. The Board will be receiving a proposal from Staff to implement the new process.

Loudoun Drug Court

The Board voted unanimously at our January 2 Business Meeting to establish an adult drug court program serving up to 25 initial participants. It will be implemented during FY2019. \$500,000 of federal grant revenue will be appropriated for the Department of Community Corrections. As I have written in newsletters before, the drug court is a rehabilitative program for nonviolent offenders. It is intended to help people break harmful addictions and get back on their feet, thereby reducing the number of petty drug crimes and improving quality of life in the community as a whole. Alternatives to jailing people for minor drug offenses are always welcome, and the drug court is primed as an excellent example of the good that can come from a community working with its law enforcement for the betterment of everyone.

The drug court will begin with a limited number of participants to test how it functions and what resources are needed to expand it in the future. I am excited at the prospect, and will certainly keep you updated as it is implemented and research on its effectiveness begins to emerge.

Federal Furlough Assistance

It looks like the government shutdown is over, at least for now. That being said, I was really proud of the way our community came together to support our neighbors who were furloughed and missed two paychecks.

Living in the shadow of the nation's capital means that our population feels government shutdowns more than most. The Board of Supervisors approved \$25,000 of financial aid for Loudoun Hunger Relief and the Dulles South Food Pantry and temporarily waived fees for federal employees who ride Loudoun County buses. There are an estimated 15,000-20,000 federal employees living in Loudoun County (4% of all federal workers).

Additionally, Loudoun launched a website that contains a repository of resources for those affected by the shutdown. Many local business have undertaken initiatives to aid federal employees during this time. While I hope no one needs to use it in the foreseeable future, that list can be found [here](#).

Emerald Ribbons

Emerald Ribbons is a countywide trail project featured in Envision Loudoun's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. At our January 17 Business Meeting, the Board voted to get closer to an action plan to actually construct the trails. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Board will now develop a detailed vision to implement the project. Emerald Ribbons would function as a network of linear parks and unpaved trails for public uses such as walking, hiking, biking, and horseback riding. It will include parts of both the Appalachian Trail and the W&OD and connect to stretches of Goose Creek and the Potomac Heritage Trail. The plan would give the County a basis to work in conjunction with developers,

Homeowners Associations, and private land owners to connect these areas in a network that can be an amenity for our residents.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOVEC & VMDAEC Scholarships

The Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) and the Virginia, Maryland, & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives are offering higher education scholarships to high school seniors who get their electricity from electric co-ops. NOVEC will give out ten \$1,500 scholarships to their greater service areas. NOVEC applications are due on Wednesday, March 13. Students will be considered who demonstrate scholastic aptitude, community service, and leadership initiative.

For more information about the NOVEC Scholarship Program, contact Ashley Arnold at scholarships@novec.com.

VMDAEC is giving out \$1,000 scholarships with applications due Friday, February 8. Winners will be selected based on financial need and academic capability. Applicants can access the application and guidelines at www.vmdaec.com/node/67. Applications must be submitted by Feb. 8. For more information, contact scholarship@vmdaec.com.

LCSO Public Safety Meeting

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office will host a meeting at the Dulles South Public Safety Center, located at 25216 Loudoun County Parkway in Chantilly, on February 27 at 7 PM. Issues to be discussed include recent crime and crime trends, traffic safety, and other issues. Sheriff Chapman or a member of his leadership team will join an LCSO Officer to discuss these concerns. All residents of the Dulles South Station service area are encouraged to attend.

VDOT Snow Plowing Information

As mentioned before, we've already experienced the first snow of the season.

When we have a snow event this winter, VDOT's goal is to have at least one passable lane on every road within 24 hours when snowfall is 2-4", 48 hours for 4-6". Over 6" is expected to be at least 72 hours. If you feel that your street is missed after these time frames have passed, you can use the resources below to get more information on plowing status and/or report your issue directly to VDOT:

- http://www.virginiadot.org/about/emer_response.asp for news releases, important messages, frequently asked questions and links to many other resources, including:
- @VaDOTNOVA on Twitter
- www.511virginia.org for road conditions and traffic cameras
- www.vdotplows.org for neighborhood status and locations of plows
- <http://www.virginiadot.org> or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report issues

Dulles South Food Pantry Expanded Service

The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance up to twice a month to any person who resides in the school attendance zones for Freedom High School, John Champe High School, Independence High School, Rock Ridge High School and Briar Woods High School. The Pantry also provides one-time emergency food assistance to anyone in need. 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.

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