

Greater Wilton Woods Citizens Association Meeting – November 15, 2011

GWCA President Larry Dempsey brought the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Introduction of Jeff McKay, Lee District Supervisor.

Thank you for voting last Tuesday. Jeff is looking forward to the next four years of working with his constituents.

Community Issues

1. The Franconia Rd improvements have all been installed. Police have been monitoring them. There was one accident involving one of the medians, but all in all they seem to have slowed traffic down considerably. New signs have been installed and some trees have been trimmed. The median in front of Twain hasn't been installed because this would cause major logistical problems for bus entry and exit. Jeff continues to work on a solution at this location. A traffic light at Clermont is not supported by VDOT studies; however, Jeff has spoken with VA State Delegate Mark Sickles about it. They agreed to continue to monitor this intersection over time in case new options develop.
2. Penn Daw Shopping Center on Kings Highway near Route 1. The Shopper's closed because of the Walmart nearby. Jeff stated that the Mt. Vernon District allowed the by-right development there that resulted in no road improvements. The Penn Daw shopping center is struggling since the closing of Shopper's. Jeff wants to see something that is economically viable and that puts value into the shopping center. The county has completed an economic analysis, which Jeff would like to see with every development. There was also a transportation analysis completed, another action Jeff thinks should happen with every development. These two reports are being reviewed by the community task force.
3. Springfield Mall. The buyer closed on the property last December. According to studies, this property has fantastic marketing potential among available properties all over the country. They aren't able to begin anything with the holiday season approaching, so the current plan is for construction process to begin next spring.
4. Wegman's. Construction was delayed because a lawsuit was filed by a neighborhood landowner regarding drainage issues. It was dismissed by the court, and work has been approved to begin at any time. This will be a Wegman's, office space, and retail.
5. County budget. The fiscal picture for the county is improving, and overall is better than the past four years.

Questions

1. Status of Mulligan Rd (going through Belvoir between Telegraph and Rte. 1? Even though this is a fully-funded project, the progress has been stalled due to two bid protests. The bid protests should be resolved and work should resume in January. This has been a frustrating situation for all involved. Completion is scheduled for spring of 2013.
2. Will the part of Telegraph Rd. at South Kings Hwy be included in the Mulligan Rd. project? No; that's a separate project that is county-funded. This will be an \$11M project from Van Dorn St. through Kings Hwy. Timeline: utility relocation and land use acquisition will take most of 2012. The rest of the work will take most of 2013. Huntley Meadows will benefit from this project with a new parking lot and some additional wetland protections.
3. What is the new building being constructed across Memorial Dr. from Beacon Mall? The county used to own that property. It used to be a school and a bus storage yard, among other things. It was traded for the South County Redevelopment building land. It will be ground floor retail and above ground residential urban townhouses. It is one of the few condo projects in the county under construction. On the taller end, it will be six to seven stories, and on the lower end it will be four stories.
4. Costco status. This project was approved last summer. The site plan is in, and construction should start next spring. Because the developer was required to request a zoning change in order to build, the county will receive many traffic improvements with the development, including turn lanes, bus shelters, and more that will benefit the community.
5. Please explain the recent sidewalk extension on Franconia Rd near Telegraph Rd. This land was provided to the county by the developer and Jeff found money recently for the county to pay for it. While it is only a small section, Jeff believes that construction small sections of sidewalk at a time is better than nothing, and the hope is that eventually there will be continuous sidewalk on Franconia Rd.
6. Browne Academy. What's happening with the trail to the metro here? The school is reluctant to allow the public to use their property, but they are willing to allow the land to be designated an easement. People are currently using the informal trail. As far as an official trail construction, a slope near the townhouses that could not be made ADA compliant, which is required. Also, the foot traffic has caused some erosion near the townhouses. Jeff has walked the site and has not been able to figure out a way to make this work. Suggestions are welcome.
7. Sidewalk on School St? Jeff has been working on obtaining funding for a sidewalk on this street. Again, it is most likely to get this in sections, with the top section being first because it is the easiest and thus least expensive. While the hope is to eventually have a sidewalk on the entire street, the cost will be significant due to the topography and the need to acquire significant pieces of land.

8. Regarding the sidewalk on Franconia, who is responsible for shoveling snow? Technically, it is the responsibility of VDOT, but they generally don't do it because their top priority is roads. Occasionally, the Sheriff's office is able to bring inmates to do it for free to the county.
9. Is there any way we can get recycling containers in the parks? Jeff can ask the Park Authority about this. He said schools have only recently begun doing it. Libraries should be doing it, too.
10. What are expectations for the next four years? Hiring new county executive; silver line for metro; keeping state funding for roads.

Jeff thanked the membership for their time.

Catherine Foltz presented on the Penn Daw task force.

1. She explained how the task force came to be established about a year ago, after Combined Properties (the management company) sought to obtain a change in the county Comprehensive Plan to change the zoning from commercial to residential.
2. Catherine discussed the economic and traffic studies, which are very complex and will require significant review.
3. Catherine presented the various development options presented by the consultant.

GWCA Business

Neighborhood watch? More information to come in the newsletter, and we will discuss in detail in February.

Next meeting: elections for president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer

Review of finances: treasurer's report. Balance is \$4,370.41

Questions from membership? None

50/50 raffle

Next meeting is 02/21/12. Speakers will be Greg Kotteman, Crime Prevention Officer of Mount Vernon Police Station.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01.

Submitted by Monica Rodgers
Secretary of GWCA