

Greater Wilton Woods Citizens Association Meeting – September 20, 2011

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

He said the organization is looking for candidates for three positions. A Public Relations Chairperson is needed immediately, a new Secretary will be needed in February, and the current Land Use Chairperson is stepping down. The latter position requires attendance at 1 to 2 meetings a month.

ID Theft Protection

MPO Jim Reid from the Franconia District Police Station made a presentation on identity theft. When he was a detective, he investigated ID theft crimes for 6 years.

ID theft is obtaining someone's information with intent to defraud and gaining something for it. The most common form of ID theft is stealing a credit card and using it.

Fairfax County has a team of 10 investigators in their Financial Crimes section. They receive about 6,000 complaints a year.

His PowerPoint presentation highlighted several examples of identity theft, including:

- Mail being stolen from a mailbox.
- Dumpster diving for documents such as bills.
- Stealing applications/histories on file from doctor's offices, rental offices, etc. These documents often include SSNs. He cautioned the audience not to give out your SSN unless you have to.
- Computer hacking and phishing
- Opt out of pre-approved credit card applications. To reduce the number of applications you get in the mail, call 1-888-567-8688.
- Review your credit report annually to make sure there is no suspicious activity on it.

If your credit card is compromised, report it to the police.

The Virginia Attorney General's office can provide ID theft victims with an ID Theft Passport to present to authorities as proof of your identity.

He suggested the following ways to protect yourself from ID theft:

- Purchase a shredder. Shred documents such as bills, pre-approved credit statements, convenience checks, account statements and old check.

- Do not carry your SSN, excess checks, or extra credit cards in your wallet.
- Review your monthly bank, credit card and retirement account statements each month.
- Use online banking.

If you are a victim, contact the credit bureaus, report it to the local police and report it to the Federal Trade Commission.

Ways in which your stolen identity can be misused:

- Checks can be recreated using blank check stock
- Counterfeit checks
- Counterfeit IDs

The Real ID Act of 2005 is a nationwide effort to improve the integrity and security of state-issued driver's licenses and ID cards.

To protect yourself against credit card fraud:

- Don't carry cards you don't need
- Limit card value
- Monitor accounts online
- Sign your card and add "ask for ID"
- Beware of phishing emails
- Use trusted websites

Credit card and ATM skimming, which captures the data on the magnetic stripe of the card, are significant problems.

He also warned against defrauding the elderly and suggested monitoring the accounts of elderly relatives, having payments made by ACH directly from an account, and even consider having their mail redirected to a trusted individual. He cautioned against "woodchucks," individuals who come to your door and offer to trim trees or do other work around the house. They are prevalent in this area and often defraud elderly residents of significant amounts.

He stressed that online transactions are safe when dealing with reputable banks and merchants. Beware of PayPal and eBay.

After this presentation, he took a few questions from the attendees. It was suggested that police cars regularly drive through neighborhoods to promote more of a police presence. A significant amount of damage from BB guns, some on Pinebrook Rd., occurred just before school started. He noted that he has some good leads.

To close his talk, he handed out key tags and stickers with the Fairfax County Police Department emergency and non-emergency numbers.

Mr. Dempsey thanked Officer Reid and presented him with a GWWCA mug.

Wilson Bridge Project Update

Andy Graf, PE, a bridge engineer with the Wilson Bridge project, gave a construction status update.

The Telegraph Road interchange is a \$236m project. It includes eleven new bridges and 500,000 tons of asphalt. Its boundaries are East Drive on the south, Duke Street on the north, the Eisenhower Connector on the west and just past the Yellow Line tracks on the east.

The Telegraph Road bridge over Cameron Run will be completed in a year. The new one will be on the same footprint, but will be wider. Stage One – the east side - is done. They are currently working on Stage Two – the middle of the bridge. There will eventually be 5 lanes going northbound and 4 lanes southbound on Telegraph.

They have to coordinate with three entities when working on the bridge over the railroad – WMATA, Amtrak CSX, so work can be difficult to schedule. This bridge will have 4 lanes northbound and pedestrian access. It will be the last thing done on the interchange.

The express lanes on the Beltway are currently being constructed. They will remain in the current configuration until spring.

As of September 4, 81% of the work on the interchange is completed and 66% of the time is completed, meaning they are ahead of schedule. The contractors have until June 30, 2013 to finish, but as they are ahead of schedule, it may be done in a year.

For the long term, the Beltway will have three lanes on each loop from the Eisenhower Connector to east of Telegraph Road.

For the short term, Telegraph north and south will be closed periodically from Duke Street to the Beltway. Westbound Pershing is closed at Telegraph for one more month.

Goals for the rest of 2011:

- Complete all Beltway ramps and open them to traffic
- Complete base pavement on the express lanes
- Complete Beltway bridges over Telegraph and Cameron Run
- Complete the first two of three stages of the Telegraph Road bridge over Cameron Run
- Complete first stage of the Telegraph Road bridge over the railroad

Goals for 2012:

- Substantial completion of the project in approximately one year
- Complete surface pavement and open express lanes
- Complete the Telegraph Road bridge over Cameron Run
- Complete the Telegraph Road bridge over the railroad
- Complete Telegraph Road surface pavement and final lane configurations

Someone asked what was going to be done about the high volume of traffic on Duke Street that Telegraph Road will produce. Mr. Graf said that was up to the City of Alexandria.

Attendees also asked if the merges off the Beltway onto Telegraph will be improved. Mr. Graf said he believed the traffic coming off the Beltway would have its own lane when merging with Telegraph.

Other attendees expressed concern about the traffic light at Telegraph and East Drive. The time for the green light on East Drive needs to be reduced.

The WWBGEC currently has control of the lights from Farmington to the Beltway. After construction is finished, VDOT will take charge.

Some concern was expressed about the rear exit from the Bestway grocery store and the amount of cars illegally using the parking lot as a cut-through. The store has no plans to close that driveway.

Mr. Graf encouraged all to contact him or others at the Wilson Bridge project with any questions or concerns. Contact information:

www.wilsonbridge.com - lane closures are posted every Friday and you can sign up to be on their e-mail list.

Phone: 703/329-0300

E-mail: publicaffairs@wwbgec.com

Andy Graf's e-mail: grafa@wwbgec.com

Mr. Dempsey thanked Mr. Graf for his informative talk and presented him with a GWWCA mug.

Franconia Road Traffic Calming

Next, some updates were given on the status of the traffic calming project on Franconia Road. At Franconia and Wilton, it is 100% complete and at Franconia and Ridge View, it is 99% complete.

Longer term improvements along the south side of Franconia Road have been studied, but there are no funds. However, it is a high priority in Jeff McKay's office.

Penn Daw Special Study

There was a discussion about the Penn Daw Special Study, which was presented at a 9/13/11 meeting with an independent consultant to discuss options. There's a lot of commercial completion in the area, so few companies are interested in opening an anchor store at the site.

There is a 4% vacancy rate in multi-family dwellings in the area. Prices of condos are declining and many are being rented by the developers.

A 130-page report will be posted later this month on the Penn Daw website (http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/penn daw/final_penn_daw_market_feasibility_study_102011.pdf). An e-mail will be sent out when the report is released.

The next community-wide meeting about the project will most likely be in early January. This meeting will include a discussion of a traffic impact study done by an independent consultant.

Other Business

Treasurer's report: there is a balance of \$4,461.39 on the checking account.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 15. Jeff McKay will be the guest speaker.

The Flag of Honor from the 9/11 Remembrance was on display. It features the names of all those who died on 9/11.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.