

Minutes

Traffic Calming Committee Update – Kathy Hughes presenting

Almost 2 years ago the traffic calming committee was reinstated after witnessing many reckless driving events. They've initiated some programs in the neighborhood (including slow down signs – there is still one available).

In the spring of 2008 a Fairfax county engineering board approved a speed study of Braeburn, Argonne, Rockcrest, and Ashmeade and confirmed the mean/median speed for a residential area was above average – 80% of the cars drive more than the posted 25MPH – and since then the committee has been talking to the FPD, getting increased patrols, received approval for the county to install “Watch for Children” signs, and there will be \$200 speeding fine signs attached to strategic sign locations as well. The fines will be enforced as soon as the signs are posted. There has also been a speed monitoring trailer assigned to Olley Ln to try to capture data and remind drivers of their speed. It will move to Rockcrest next as this is a particular concern when students are released from school. It will make its final move to Ashford.

NOTE: Additional speed humps have been approved by the county – two on Braeburn, one on Rockcrest. To have them installed is a multi-step process, starting with permission from the homeowners directly impacted, then the county will hold a public hearing; and then EVERY neighbor who will be impacted by the speed hump (the road/lane and all cul de sacs) will have the opportunity to vote (with 60% approval required); then it has to go to the county board for final approval.

Things you can do: report wreckless driving to FPD non-emergency; if it's an ongoing problem with a particular vehicle you can contact Kathy directly or Office Genesco with the West Springfield station. He suggests keeping a log of times, and the vehicle information, so that they can come and patrol. If you have ideas that you feel could help with traffic issues (wreckless driving and safety) please contact Supervisor Cooke's office.

Questions/Comments:

- Meghan McLaughlin offered her appreciation for the community members coming forward to bringing these problems to the attention of Supervisor Cooke and herself. It makes a big difference, and it strengthens the community. When sending comments Anne and Lindsey in Supervisor Cooke's officer are always able to give answers or send your comments to the Supervisor.
- When were the original speed humps on Braeburn installed? Answer: Early 2000's and there is no empirical data, mostly anecdotal, about the success of have them installed. The speed trackers installed for the traffic calming study in the past two sessions were in two different locations on Braeburn, making it difficult to say explicitly the impact of the speed humps. This is just part of the larger picture – one of several steps to making our streets/community safer.
- Erin commented – we are all ambassadors of this, remind our families to be good stewards of our safe community on and off the roads.

Neighborhood Eagle Scout Project - Krish Soni presenting

Krish will be working on his eagle scout project in October: reapplying the storm drain labels which were last applied in 2006. They are faded and without them most people do not know that these are not filtered drainage systems that lead directly to Lake Accotink; dumping can cause extremely hazardous/toxic environments. He will be applying approximately 200 labels.

School Board Update – Megan McLaughlin presenting

Megan is a 19 year resident of Rutherford and has been on the school board since January of 2012. She wanted to give information about a few issues:

- The School Bond will be on the 11/5 ballot – with a goal that 80% of Fairfax County residents will continue to support Fairfax County schools. They are SO important – FCPS is the 10th largest school system in the US, supporting 200 schools. Many of them were built in the 1960's when Fairfax grew rapidly, and this bond will specifically target renovations and retrofitting our schools to be safe, quality schools for our students. In particular, Wakefield Forrest Elementary and Frost Middle Schools are on the bond to be directly impacted by this additional funding. The quality of our schools means the quality of our communities means the quality of our home values.
- Fairfax County schools now offers ombudsman services, i.e. someone to help navigate the complex services that Fairfax County schools can offer. The Ombudsman helps with students and employees. Please see the FCPS website for more information – or contact Megan directly.
- Third, we are proud to say that Fairfax County teachers are teaching and being paid competitively nationwide, and our retention rate is better than the state and national average and we're so excited about this but will strive to keep Fairfax County schools the best they can be.
- Finally, please note that Wakefield Forest Elementary School is one of the Woodson pyramid feeder schools and is currently facing severe overcrowding. In addition to the overcrowding issue, the school is in disrepair and is slated for a renovation. After the renovation is complete, it will be possible to see if the school can continue to serve the current population, but there is the potential for a boundary change – depending on how the renovation goes and what they can do with the space and footprint of the building. If this happens, the elementary schools affected would be Canterbury Woods, Little Run, and Olde Creek – but NOTHING would happen to the feeder pyramid to Frost and Woodson; these schools would all still feed into Frost and Woodson. Keeping children in their local communities is the number one priority.

Feel free to send questions/comments any time to Megan.

Questions/Comments:

Clarification – 75% of the residents of Fairfax County do not have children attending schools.

NOTE: Voting is at Little Run ES on November 5th.

Treasurers Report – Erin Hildreth presenting for Renee Faulkner

Renee was unable to attend but sent her notes:

- We have sponsored the LRES 5K – this will put the RCA on the t-shirts, a table at the finisher
- We have given out some of our mini-grants! A community party on Ashford Lane, and community party on Argonne Lane, and sponsoring the triathlon this past summer. The mini-grants are limited to \$100. If you have an idea for a community event please contact the board!
- Our annual donation campaign is going well and we have approximately of \$8000 in our savings.
- The question went out - are the donation envelopes still helpful? Overwhelmingly yes! thank you to all who have donated, either via paper or online!

Trunk or Treat/Fall Festival – Erin Hildreth presenting

Please join us on Saturday, October 26th at the Rutherford Pool for a fall festival featuring trunk-or-treating, a pumpkin carving contest (bring your carved pumpkin!), a pie bake-off (no fee to enter either contest), and a movie at sundown. Prizes for the pumpkins and the pie bake-off sponsored by Jay Alesandro and the RCA. This is for neighbors of ALL ages – and will not conflict with trick-or-treating.

Neighborhood Sign Update – Erin Hildreth presenting

After having enough of our poor sign, Erin went out with scraping/sanding tools and had THREE offers while out there for help with the sign. Right now Peter Shogran offered to give us a short term fix (lasting approximately 2-3 years) and Harry Hink of HB Home Services may be providing a more long-term solution.

Questions/Comments:

- Ann Prior pointed out that the median is VDOT property which will impact the type of sign we can place; Killian will look into this.
- Megan McLaughlin offered her support and thanks for the work to get the sign fixed – it is a key part of the neighborhood.
- Julia Wilson added that a dream project would be a Rutherford entry sign on Olley! This would mean getting a neighbor to agree to have it on their property, but maybe!

Special Thank Yous – Erin Hildreth presenting

Thank you for Mareva Gomes taking over the newsletter!

Thank you to everyone who purchased the Rutherford themed shirts! We met our minimum and they will be mailed out on or around 10/15.

Thank you to Evan Flint, our webmaster, for keeping the information up to date and keeping us regularly informed!

Thank you to Ann Prior for the Argonne block party!

For Discussion:

Advertisers – people have shown interest in advertising in the newsletter, on Facebook, in the directory, but it is a bit of a project; maybe not every location is best for all adverts? Does anyone have an objection if we're approached to have advertising?

- Ann Prior pointed out that in the past it made the newsletter too bulky and took up half the space, but reserved the advertising for the directory.
- Gary pointed out that it is helpful to have ads in the directory as a reference for local organizations, community groups, etc. because they are hyper local (within a mile or two). There may be other opportunities to advertise community events – such as in the newsletter, calendar based. Also, there would be opportunities to highlight local small business owners, maybe once a year, such as “hey, did you know” this was just down the street? Also suggested, maybe we enlarge the paper sizing of the newsletter – newspaper style.

Facebook group – if something is offensive, or horribly advertorial, we will attempt to speak with that member directly but please keep in mind this is a community page and all voices are welcome.

Neighborhood events – please let the RCA know if you have an idea for ways to engage their neighbors, we'd be happy to help get that kick started to the best of our ability.

Question: what about neighborhood watch? Answer: as much as it was attempted to jump start the neighborhood watch it has sort of fizzled in the past few years. Currently there is no one to organize the group, and it is not very active. You may still see sentries walking the neighborhood in their vests, but there are fewer and fewer and it is not a scheduled time or group.

Question: do we know the crime statistics for our area? Answer: we do not have a specific answer, but Erin can look for more information.

- One comment was that the neighborhood is quick to rectify problem situations, especially through the advent of social media. A big thank you to our neighbors who keep an eye on our community.
- Julia Wilson suggested that we could possibly have an Officer, Michael Stewart, from the West Springfield Police Station come to speak at one of our RCA meetings to give an update on statistics for our neighborhood.

New business:

Mareva Gomes – we have a few vacant block captain positions, especially long vacant is area 1 (Ashmeade). Others needed, one to fill in for a gentleman on Argonne who recently passed away, and also an area VP for Area 6 (Braeburn). Erin is on it! There are definitely some new families in the area that might be interested!

Adjourn: 8:02pm