

INTERSECT

NEWSLETTER

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OF THE

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WASHINGTON REGIONAL NETWORK FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Rail~Volution Comes to Washington October 3-6

On October 3-6, 2002, in Washington, D.C. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, the 8th annual Rail~Volution conference will attract thousands of participants to what is now considered the definitive national conference on building livable communities with transit. Rail~Volution brings together a unique cross-section of citizen activists, developers, financiers, transit operators, local and federal officials, planners, health advocates and nonprofit organizations.

This year's conference focuses on investments - with its myriad of meanings - and how those investments can reap tangible, innovative results. The conference will help participants explore the issues of financing transit-oriented development, motivating people to be advocates for livable communities, ensuring land is used wisely as part of a smart growth strategy, and creating diverse partnerships that achieve consensus and positive results. The conference will focus on policies that create appealing, workable travel choices such as: walking, bicycling, buses, light rail, commuter rail, inter-city rail, and car sharing. Rail~Volution will explore strategies that communities can consider when investing the time, money and political capital to provide travel choices, and that those travel options work effectively with land-use decisions and vice versa.

Speakers include: Shelley Poticha, Congress for the New Urbanism; Rudy Pyatt, formerly of the Washington Post; Alice Rivlin, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution; Harriet Tregoning, Special Secretary for Smart Growth, State of Maryland; Richard White, CEO WMATA; Andy Altman, Planning Director, District of Columbia; Carl Anthony, Director, Sustainable Metropolitan Communities Initiative, Ford Foundation; Christopher Leinberger, Robert Charles Lesser & Co.; Congressman Earl Blumenauer, 3rd District, Oregon.

For more information see: www.Railvolution.com.

Neighborhood Parking Solutions A WRN forum with Adam Millard-Ball of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting

Thursday, November 7, 2002
at the Sumner School, 1201 17th Street, NW, D.C.
(at M Street, near Dupont Circle Metro, South Exit)
Refreshments: 6:30pm, Program: 7pm

Adam Millard-Ball, a San Francisco-based transportation planner with Nelson\Nygaard Consulting, is working with developers, cities, transit agencies and advocates to resolve thorny parking problems. Join him to learn about the latest innovative policies to manage parking to promote vibrant, livable communities. To read more about his work see: http://www.nelsonnygaard.com/articles/cur_article_parking.htm. RSVP to WRN at: 202-667-5445, staff@washingtonregion.net.

Road-building Slate Wins in Montgomery County by Cheryl Cort

The Montgomery County primaries resulted in a surprise win for supporters of the Intercountry Connector highway (ICC). Running on a County Executive Doug Duncan-endorsed slate calling themselves the "End Gridlock" team, incumbent at-large county council members Steven Silverman and Michael Subin, and newcomers Nancy Floreen and George Leventhal squeezed out longtime incumbent and slow growth proponent Blair Ewing. With all at-large democratic County Council candidates supporting the ICC, and two contested district races, the November 5 elections open the possibility for a major shift in a decades-long battle over transportation and land use priorities. Four county council members are elected at-large and five from districts.

The Duncan-backed slate, however, did not fare as well in district primary contests. Topping the End Gridlock agenda for district elections was the ouster of Phil Andrews (D) in District 3 (greater Rockville and Gaithersburg).

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WASHINGTON REGIONAL NETWORK

FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

WRN advocates transportation investments, land use policies, and neighborhood designs that enhance existing communities and the environment of the Washington D.C. region.

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Aisling O'Connor, Managing Editor. Comments and articles welcome. Views expressed are not necessarily those of WRN. All articles by WRN board and staff unless otherwise mentioned.

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Andrews kept his seat despite challenger Robert Dorsey's 12 mailings. In District 5 (Kensington, Silver Spring, Takoma Park and Wheaton) civil rights attorney and Latino activist Thomas Perez beat out Duncan-backed Sally Sternback, a Silver Spring activist with close ties to the business community. Duncan-supported Mike Knapp in District 2 won his Democratic primary, and faces a Republican incumbent, Nancy Dacek in the general election. Dacek is known regionally as the Montgomery County member of the regional Transportation Planning Board, and as an ICC opponent and prominent opponent of the "Techway," a highway and bridge that would connect I-270 with the Dulles corridor in Fairfax County. Eastern District 4 incumbent Marilyn Praisner (D), whom Duncan supported despite her opposition to the ICC, won her primary and faces no Republican challenger.

Observers attribute Duncan's win in the at-large primaries to aggressive, expensive and negative tactics. Longtime civic and transit activist Pam Lindstrom called the negative campaign unprecedented in Montgomery County. Blair Ewing attributes his defeat to "lies and distortions" and "a classic smear campaign," as quoted in the Montgomery County Gazette (Sept. 18). According to Lindstrom, a large war chest amassed by Duncan, mostly from contributors of over \$1,000, funded a series of attack mailers and phone calls aimed at unseating Ewing and Andrews. An unregistered group, Citizens for Quality Living, operating out of a Bethesda mail box, sent five mailings attacking Andrews in his district and several more in other parts of the county, according to Lindstrom. The election group is currently under investigation by the State Board of Elections. Lindstrom, environmental and smart growth activists expressed concern that county politics are being redefined by negative attacks through high-cost campaigns.

Ewing and three other at-large candidates opposing Duncan's transportation spending plan were supported by a grassroots political action committee called Neighbors for a Better Montgomery (or "Neighbors PAC"). While Ewing and the Neighbors PAC agreed on goals around stemming real estate developer influence and focusing on improving education and transportation, they did not run candidates as a coordinated slate.

The premier issue for the End Gridlock slate was the building of the ICC. The results of the primary give Duncan a start toward getting a 5-vote pro-ICC majority council after years of council opposition. The highway proposal, viewed by environmental and smart growth groups to be a costly purveyor of sprawl development and increased traffic, was taken off state plans several years ago by Gov. Parris Glendening (D). To get a 5-vote majority,

Duncan-backed candidates must defeat Council member Dacek for the upcounty District 2 seat. Council District 1 (Bethesda) has a hotly contested race between incumbent ICC supporter and anti-Inner Purple Line Council member Howard Denis (R) and anti-ICC and Inner Purple Line supporter Democratic candidate Duchy Trachtenburg.

Also on Duncan's agenda is an Outer Purple Line, a proposal not advanced in the current State of Maryland's transit study which is focusing on an inner route linking Bethesda to Silver Spring, Langley Park, College Park and eventually to New Carrollton. However, the Inner Purple Line has support from most of the Duncan-backed at-large slate. Of the 36 contested council and state legislative races in Montgomery County, pro-inner Purple Line candidates won 80 percent of their races, according to transit advocate and WRN board member Jim Clarke.

Referenda on Conservation Bond and Transportation Tax Top Virginia Elections

by Aisling O'Connor with Allen Muchnick

When Virginia voters go to the polls on November 5, 2002 they will have two land use questions to determine: financing preservation and extension of Virginia parkland and the introduction of a regional sales tax for transportation projects. The Coalition for Smarter Growth, the Sierra Club and other environmental groups are urging voters to support the parks bond issue and reject the sales tax.

The proposed bond issue, Parks and Recreational Facilities Bond Issue, will determine whether or not the Commonwealth of Virginia will be able to issue debt as a means of raising funds for capital projects in state-supported parks and recreational facilities. The capital projects include land acquisitions and improvements to existing facilities in state parks. Intended land purchases

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Support *Intersect*, Join WRN

This newsletter is a free service. Please help WRN continue to report on these issues important to livable communities; join WRN and support *Intersect*. WRN welcomes all donations but a basic membership is \$35 for individuals and \$200 for organizations. Contribution forms are available on our website: <http://www.washingtonregion.net/html/contributionform.html>.

WRN would like to thank the following for their recent contributions: WRN thanks the following individual and organizational donors for their continued support of WRN's programs advocating for livable communities in the National Capital Region: Allan Borut. Thank you!

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will create three new state parks and additions to 11 existing parks. These land acquisitions in addition to preserving the state's natural resources will help Virginia meet its conservation obligations under the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement. The agreement commits the bay states to permanently protecting 20 percent of the land area of the Chesapeake Bay watershed from development by 2010. Intended capital improvements include repairing shoreline erosion at some state parks as well as creating, repairing or enhancing cabins, campgrounds and recreational trails throughout Virginia's 34 state parks.

The second land use issue Virginia voters will decide in the November elections is a regional sales tax referendum to finance transportation projects in Northern Virginia. Environmental and smart growth groups criticize the sales tax as inadequate and confounding the transportation issue in the region. Critics highlight that the proposed sales tax increase would raise only approximately 12 percent of the revenue the Transportation Planning Board says is needed to keep traffic congestion at the current levels over the next 20 years. Additionally, smart growth groups emphasize that the sales tax is unlikely to provide long-term solutions to sprawl and congestion in Northern Virginia as comprehensive land use and transportation planning does not accompany the tax.

For official details on the ballot items in the Virginia election and for voting registration information see :
<http://www.sbe.state.va.us/Election/default.html>.

For further information on the smart growth issues in the Virginia elections see:
<http://www.valcv.org/>
<http://www.smartergrowth.net/community/virginia/>
<http://www.virginia.sierraclub.org/>

Columbia Pike Charts Path to Redevelopment by Tom Greenfield

After three decades of failed attempts at revitalization, Columbia Pike, South Arlington County's main street, could be headed for success. Over a two-day period this September, 500 people participated in a hands-on design charrette. This planning workshop, involving architects, planners and local residents, allowed participants to suggest ideas for redevelopment along the corridor. The event is a key step in moving forward with Columbia Pike revitalization efforts that began in January 1998. At that time, the Arlington County Board launched the Columbia Pike Initiative, creating three new staff positions focused on the corridor and entering into a partnership with a local non-profit, the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO). Together, the County government and CPRO

created a comprehensive planning process for the realization of a community-based vision of Columbia Pike.

The charrette directly engaged citizens in a detailed discussion of how they envisioned development in each community along the corridor. On a block-by-block basis Columbia Pike residents sketched ideas for building scale and situation, locations of public spaces and landmarks and general improvements. The aggregate vision portrayed a human-friendly environment with low to mid-rise buildings, fronting on the street and parking placed behind buildings or in the interior of blocks within shared parking structures. The community vision is currently in the process of being distilled into a form-based code for the corridor, which will describe the shape and organization of buildings on a block. This code is a departure from Arlington's traditional land use coding which focuses on the type of use of structures and together with current zoning and on-site parking requirements has encouraged large block assemblages and inhibited small site development.

Prior to hosting the charrette and gaining citizen input, the Arlington County Board and CPRO formed a concept plan for the area. Approved by the Arlington County Board in March 2002, the concept plan for Columbia Pike includes many transit-oriented development (TOD) elements. The plan emphasizes multi-modal transportation with improvements to transit services, including new tramway technologies [street car or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)]; proposed additions of two bikeways running the length of the corridor located one block north and south of Columbia Pike; and a significant number of pedestrian improvements such as raised medians, wider sidewalks, realigned intersections, more signalized crossings, and pedestrian crossing countdown timers.

In December 2002, the form-based code produced from the charrette along with specific transportation improvements, economic development tools and historic preservation actions will be presented to the Arlington County Board. If adopted, the form-based code will become an official component of Arlington's zoning ordinance. County staff will be empowered with new development tools and funding mechanisms to begin incrementally constructing the transportation improvements.

For more information on the Columbia Pike Initiative, see:
<http://www.columbiapikepartnership.com/>

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Affordable Housing Resonates as a 2002 Election Issue in Washington D.C.

The Peoples' Forum on Affordable Housing held at the John Wesley AME Zion Church in Northwest D.C. on September 5, generated a standing room only crowd. More than 250 people attended the forum, placing it among the most well-attended D.C. Council candidates' forums held in the city that evening. The forum, organized by WISH (Washington Innercity Self Help) with assistance from WRN and other organizations in the affordable housing alliance, gave District residents the opportunity to relate their experiences with the city's affordable housing shortage to Council candidates, the press and fellow residents.

For further information on the event see: <http://www.wishdc.org/docs/houseforum.htm>

Transit Proximity Increases Home-Buying Power by Steve Jones

As part of its effort to support communities already served by transit, Fannie Mae, the nation's largest source of financing for home mortgages, is making it easier to purchase homes near public transit. As part of its Smart Commute program, Philadelphia area residents purchasing a home located within a half-mile of a transit station or a quarter-mile of two or more bus stops, will be able to add \$200-\$250 to their monthly qualifying income when applying for a mortgage loan. Fannie Mae hopes soon to offer the program in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Baltimore, Louisville and State College, Pa.

The program recognizes that households living near and using public transit have lower overall transportation costs than those who must depend on an automobile for their transportation needs. The program seeks to apply these savings toward the purchase of a home. The borrower is allowed to count these savings as additional income in exchange for agreeing to limit the number of cars to no more than one per adult driver. With this "additional income," a borrower may now be able to qualify for a mortgage loan that his or her income did not previously support.

Over the past two years, Fannie Mae has conducted similar transit-related mortgage programs in San Francisco, Chicago and Seattle. The decision to launch a pilot program in Philadelphia reveals that the organization is continuing to receive reliable and credible data supporting the lower transportation costs of individuals located near and using public transit. Additionally, Fannie Mae's decision to expand the pilot program and develop new

underwriting standards for loan application assessment underscores the credibility of the data. This codification of the value of transit into the fundamental practices of a key mortgage financing institution supports the assertion of transit-oriented development (TOD) advocacy groups that transit is an essential element in sustainable, livable communities.

Water Shortages Made Worse from Sprawling Development: Smart Growth Key to Clean and Plentiful Water Supply

by Aisling O'Connor

According to a recent report released by American Rivers, Natural Resources Defense Council and Smart Growth America, the Washington area is the 3rd most land consuming metropolitan area in the country. As a result of this sprawling pattern of growth, the Washington region wastes billions of gallons of water, annually. John Bailey, co-author of the report and Smart Growth America's Associate Director emphasizes the severity of the water losses associated with sprawl. "Sprawl development that consumes agricultural land and open space causes the Washington area to lose 24 to 55 billion gallons of water each year -- an essential and costly resource is being squandered at an alarming rate. These losses could provide for the annual daily water use of 650,000 to 1.5 million households."

The report, *Paving our Way to Water Shortages – How Sprawl Aggravates the Effects of Drought* estimates the volume of water loss from the dramatic increase in paved surfaces associated with sprawling development. As the impervious surfaces that characterize sprawling development – roads, parking lots, driveways and roofs – replace meadows, forests and wetlands, rain no longer can seep into the ground to replenish aquifers. Instead, it is swept away by gutters and sewer systems. The report recommends smart growth policies and low impact development techniques to use existing infrastructure more wisely and to ensure adequate water supplies.

The Washington area developed 343,000 acres of open space, an area larger than all of Montgomery County, between 1982 and 1997. While population grew by only 21%, this pattern of growth resulted in a 59% increase in developed land and an 82% increase in the amount of driving (Vehicle Miles Traveled) over the same time period.

To read the full report, visit Smart Growth America's website at <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/waterandsprawl.html>

Washington's Air Pollution Problems Persist

by Aisling O'Connor

On September 5, 2002, Earthjustice on behalf of the Sierra Club demanded the EPA reclassify the Washington area's ozone and smog levels as "severe", threatening suit if the reclassification did not occur within 60 days. Presently the EPA classifies the Washington area's air pollution levels as "serious." The letter sent to the EPA further threatens suit if the EPA does not disapprove the region's current air pollution mitigation plans within the 60 days, citing the plans as deficient.

The Sierra Club's threat of legal action comes as a response to EPA's reluctance to require air pollution reduction measures in the Washington region. The Washington region missed a 1999 deadline to meet federal health standards for ozone, and the EPA attempted to extend the 1999 clean air deadline to 2005 without reclassifying the area to "severe." A federal court rejected the extension in July, but the EPA has yet to take measures to require stricter clean air measures in the region and may delay requirements for such measures until 2004.

The Sierra Club advocates adoption of a clean air plan for the region with a focus on promoting transit use and smart growth rather than suburban sprawl. The organization maintains that these measures will assist the Washington region in meeting federal clean air standards.

For more information, see:
<http://www.sierraclub.org/dc/sprawl>.

For a calendar displaying the region's summer 2002 ozone levels, see: http://www.mwco.org/dep/air/download/calendar_2002.pdf

Metro Goes Bike Crazy

by Lyn Stoesen

Washington, D.C., has joined the ranks of bicycle-friendly cities around the world with the announcement of a program to install bike racks on all city buses. The Metropolitan Washington Area Transit Authority (Metro) approved the "Bike-on-Bus" program in May. The \$1.6 million program includes the purchase and installation of bike racks on the front of each of the system's buses. According to a Metro news release, the plan calls for all of the racks to be installed by the end of the year. Metro operates more than 1,450 buses.

The racks Metro has installed are already being used in other cities, such as Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Denver, and Seattle, and are designed for quick and easy use. Each rack holds two bicycles, which are secured in place by spring-

loaded clamps. There is no additional charge for bus patrons using the bicycle racks.

Metro already allows bicycles on Metrorail except during rush hour and on some holidays. Some Metrorail stations include bicycle racks or lockers. According to Metro, the cost of the Bike-on-Bus program is being paid by Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. through Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds as part of efforts to reduce the amount of emissions in the air.

For more information, see:
<http://www.waba.org/new/news/3143.php>

What's in a Name?

The WRN Board of Directors is searching for a better name for the organization. Our full name, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities, is accurate – we do have a regional focus and we promote livable communities – but it is rather, er, cumbersome. We would like our new name to be more concise while still letting people know the breadth of our work and what we support. This relatively simple task can become daunting, so we wanted to put the question out to our members and supporters. A helpful way to think through this exercise is to answer the question, "What do you think WRN does?" Use your answer to come up with a name.

Please email suggestions to staff@washingtonregion.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 26th, 8:30-5:30pm. **Conference on International Green Building Practices.** Targeted to architects, engineers, developers, building owners and operators, and government officials this conference will center around green building and "cross-pollination" of technologies, strategies, and the philosophies of building green from around the world. The True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street NW, Washington, DC. For more information see: <http://www.eco-ipso.com/Conference.htm> or contact: conference@Eco-ipso.com for questions or registration.

Monday, September 30; 12:30-1:30pm. **Placemaking and Smart Growth presentation by Project for Public Spaces (PPS).** Fred Kent, President of PPS will discuss the importance of great public spaces to smart growth, and he will explain why public spaces are so hard to get right. Mr. Kent will also highlight PPS's "Principles for Public Spaces." National Building Museum, 401 F Street N.W., Washington D.C. (Judiciary Square Metro).

Monday, September 30, 7-9pm. **Transportation Sales Tax Referendum Debate.** Local experts supporting the transportation sales tax referendum (Al Eisenberg, Greater Washington Board of Trade and Stephen Fuller, George Mason University) and those opposing it (Stewart Schwartz, the Coalition for Smarter Growth and Ed Risse, Synergy Planning Inc.) will provide information and views about the referendum. Speakers will also take questions from the audience. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), Room CC-2, 4301 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA (Ballston Metro). RSVP to acst@postmark.net.

September. The Smart Growth Alliance (SGA) is accepting applications for the **SGA Recognition Program**. The SGA seeks to recognize outstanding private sector smart growth project proposals in the Washington area. The SGA rewards successful applicants with a letter of recognition and exposure via press releases and during SGA events. Visit <http://washington.uli.org/sga> for a full description of the program and an application packet. Direct questions about the program or process to sga@uli.org. Applicants who submit between September 17 and December 16 will be notified by January 20, 2003.

October 2, 6-8pm. **D.C.'s Major League Baseball Park Site Evaluation Project: Public Meeting** at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library at 901 G Street, NW, in the 4th Floor Main Room. The event, hosted by the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and the Washington Baseball Club, L.L.C., will feature a review of input gathered from the public, the criteria developed for identifying potential ballpark sites, and a look at all the potential sites considered as well as those still under evaluation. For more information see: www.dcsec.com Office of Planning, www.planning.dc.gov, and the Washington Baseball Club website at www.baseballindc.com, You may make also make comments and ask questions at www.publicspace.justicesustainability.com or call: (202) 327-2255.

October 10, 6:30-10:00pm. **D.C. Zoning Commission Inclusionary Zoning for Affordable Housing Hearing.** Affordable housing advocates encourage attendance at the hearing to testify in support of inclusionary zoning as a means of increasing the availability of low-income housing. The meeting will be held at 441 4th St., NW, room 220, Washington D.C. Sign up to testify by calling 202-727-5373.

November 7, 6:30pm. Neighborhood Parking Solutions: A WRN Forum with Adam Millard-Ball of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting. Adam Millard-Ball, a San Francisco-based transportation planner, is working with developers, cities, transit agencies and advocates to resolve parking problems. Join him to learn about the latest innovative policies to manage parking and promote livable communities. The Sumner School, 1201 17th Street, NW, D.C. (Dupont Circle Metro). RSVP to WRN at: 202-667-5445, staff@washingtonregion.net.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Webpage volunteer needed: WRN is seeking volunteer assistance to help revamp our webpage. Please call us at 202-667-5445 or email staff@washingtonregion.net

WRN Contribution Form

Individual Contributions

- \$15 limited income \$80 supporter
 \$35 basic individual \$120 sustainer

Organizational Contributions

- \$60 small \$500 sustaining
 \$200 basic

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