



NEVCAnotes

www.nevca.org

Issue 43

November 2017

Letter from NEVCA President, Bob McCahill

NEVCA members & Northeast Vienna friends,

This summer the town completed a review/prioritization of zoning code changes to the “CM”-light industrial/commercial area of Mill St/Dominion Road. Codes go back decades, to the 1950s. Towards this effort, several residents of Park St NE and I pushed to include *lighting standards* in the corridor, the goal being to ensure that garish/unshielded high intensity lighting at businesses does not spill over into residents’ properties. I am pleased to report that Council ranked this item a high priority and am confident that it will be addressed in a timely fashion by Planning & Zoning. This has long-range importance for how NE Vienna will look in the future. **A number of NE Vienna residents in close proximity to the CM area have just created a new association to specifically address concerns for the corridor. Read of their efforts on page 4!**

NEVCA officers attended town budget meetings months ago to support Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB’s) which were installed this summer at Ayr Hill & MacArthur Avenues to assist with safer pedestrian crossing over Beulah Road. This project began over two years ago with a petition by residents that NEVCA supported and assisted with. Now that safer crossings over Beulah Road in town are in place, I appealed to our members in October to support another: the crossing at Wolftrap School on Beulah Road just outside town. It is hoped that with enough support, Fairfax County will fund an enhanced crosswalk there.

Mary Ellen Larkins, Ray Viets, and I submitted comments on the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission’s (TSC) draft *Pedestrian Master Plan* (PMP) at the TSC July meeting. We focused on (a) safety, especially on the increasingly congested W&OD trail, (b) increased police enforcement at stop signs for pedestrian safety, and (c) a clear exposition of how sidewalk construction will be prioritized going forward. I then clarified our positions at a TSC work session in August, and in September the full TSC forwarded the PMP to Council.

Robin Ballou of NEVCA’s North East Vienna Parks Committee and I, along with other NEVCA members joined Vienna’s Parks & Rec (P&R) department this past spring, summer, and fall to clear large areas of Northside Park and Stream Valley Park NE (along East St NE) of invasive Japanese bush honeysuckle. The most dramatic improvement was made in the flats below the aluminum bridge linking the park with the W&OD Trail. Robin host-

Enhancing the W&OD in Vienna

Town Council recently supported an Urban Land Institute (ULI) grant to fund a ‘stakeholder discussion’ coordinated by the ULI focusing on the Vienna portion of the W&OD trail. I was invited to represent NEVCA at the discussion held at Caboose Brewery in August, along with business owners in the “CM” zoned area of Mill St & Dominion Rd, Ann Stuntz of Historic Vienna, Inc, and several others. The panel of land design and planning professionals who heard our suggestions met with Council the next day to present feedback, and a draft of recommendations was submitted to Council on October 16th (read it at www.viennava.gov >Government>Town Council>Agendas&Minutes). A full report should be ready in 2-3 months. Some suggestions, like enhanced way-finding signage leading to the trail, could be easily and inexpensively accomplished. Others, such as finding ways to separate bikers from walkers, would be problematic, as the Regional Park Authority is owner. These recommendations will help guide the full master planning of all of Vienna’s parks and trails.

Bob McCahill

Next NEVCA Meeting:
November 16 @ the Community Center, 7:30pm

Continued on page 2

Letter from NEVCA President, (continued)

ed Girl Scouts in August to learn about certification requirements for a Wildlife Sanctuary, native plants/animals, and pesticide/herbicide-free lawns. Sadly, she recently moved closer to her work in Maryland. We wish her well. Thank you! Center Street resident and Fairfax Certified Master Naturalist Shawn Dilles has agreed to serve as chair of our NE Vienna Parks Committee.

RRFBs on Beulah Road

We were happy to see the Town of Vienna installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at two crosswalks on Beulah Road recently, just before school began in August. At MacArthur Ave. NE and Ayr Hill Ave. NE, these solar-powered devices give us a new level of safety when crossing Beulah Road. The lights are hard to miss!

But recently, as I turned onto Beulah, I saw a mother and son going to Holy Comforter Pre-School still having to wait for cars to stop. On another day, the Vienna PD was standing in the middle of the crosswalk to stop traffic. Although having the Police there is good, I don't feel it should be necessary to get drivers to obey the law.

Although I know my neighbors appreciate the extra visibility at the intersection, adding signs reminding drivers of the State law requiring them to stop should also be added to the poles. Washington, DC already does this, and these signs will put drivers on notice. We saw that earlier center line bollards were run over too easily. Adding signs on the new flasher poles will allow the Vienna PD to enforce the law already on the books.

So far, the neighbors feel the RRFBs are positive and are using them daily.

Doug Francis



Please consider joining the 100+ Northeast Vienna families, your neighbors, who belong to NEVCA. Use the membership application / renewal form on the back of this mailing.

Please note the new policy:
Annual memberships of \$10 are due
January 1, 2018.

Dues and contributions are tax deductible.

NEVCA Meeting — November 16

NEVCA will hold a general membership meeting on *Thursday, November 16th, 7:30 pm*, at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St SE.

Featured speaker will be Dr. Robert Leggett to discuss his 2017 publication “*U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of 1963 Goes to War — A Collection of Stories Involving Combat, Tragedy, and Lasting Memories.*” The publication chronicles the little-known story of the role played by the U.S. Coast Guard during Vietnam, specifically “Operation Market Time,” a mission to prevent North Vietnam from infiltrating arms and other war materiel into South Vietnam by sea. Thirty four members of the Class of 1963 served on 82-foot cutters, fourteen were awarded Bronze Stars and three earned Silver Stars for their wartime duty. The book is dedicated to Lt. (j.g.) David Brostrom, who was killed in the war.

Door prizes will be awarded courtesy of Great Harvest Bread Company, 132 Church St NW.

All are welcome!



Church Street Stroll

Enjoy a lovely stroll (with **no cars**—safe for the entire family) on **Monday evening November 27**
from **6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

Visit the merchants.

*Santa will arrive in an old-fashioned fire truck;
and help the mayor light the tree.*

CHURCHST

Vienna Presbyterian Church offers something
for everyone to kick-off the Christmas season!

Fresh popcorn for strolling Church Street

*Christmas Carol Sing-a-long and
live music in the Chapel*

Free Elf Dinner in the Great Hall

Interactive Christmas Skit

Christmas craft making

Bikes ...



Holiday Bike Drive

Saturday

November 11 & November 25
9 a.m. to 12 noon

Locations

Vienna Presbyterian Church
Parking lot — Mill Street entrance

Antioch Christian Church
1860 Beulah Road

Marco Polo Restaurant
245 Maple Avenue W.

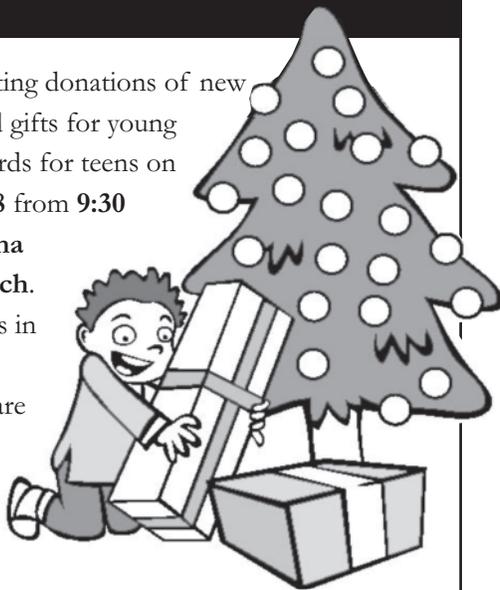
Make Christmas a little better this year for a less fortunate child in our community. If you have a *gently-used bike in good riding condition* that you no longer need, let CHO direct it to someone who will really appreciate it. You'll feel good, you'll get a tax receipt, and — best of all — some child who doesn't have much to look forward to will get a special surprise this Christmas!

NEVCA and CHO want to thank *Bikes@Vienna* for invaluable assistance in our bike drive *again* this year!

... and more!

CHO will be accepting donations of new (*not used*) unwrapped gifts for young children, and gift cards for teens on Friday, **December 8** from **9:30 until noon** at **Vienna Presbyterian Church**. Food gift certificates in any amount from Giant and Safeway are also needed.

If you would like to **“adopt” a family** for food/gifts or if you would like to help set up at the church or help with distribution on Saturday, December 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 11 a.m., please call 703-281-7614 and leave a message in mailbox #1.



*Do you and your co-workers exchange gifts?
This year, how about considering gifts for CHO instead?*

CHO Food Drive



November 1
through
December 31

Please bring your food contributions to:

Vienna Town Hall
127 Center St. S

Vienna Arts Society
115 Pleasant St. NW

Bikes@Vienna
128-A Church St. NW

Caffè Amouri
107 Church St. NE

Evolution Fitness
216 Dominion Rd. NE

Rexall Drug Store
150 Maple Ave. W

Drs. Covel, Stack & Henon
120 Beulah Rd. NE

Patrick Henry Library
101 Maple Ave. E
(Co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins)

and the  **Vienna Community Center!**

CHO is especially short of: cooking oil, jelly, canned fruit, shampoo, laundry detergent, cereal, and dish washing liquid.

Please: No expired food!



Thanks!

High School Girl Scout Troop 2684 will be helping NEVCA by picking up the food that you donate.

Who — or What — is CHO?

CHO is ...

- ✓ Twenty-six churches, a half a dozen local organizations, and a host of individuals assisting people in our area who are in need of a helping hand
- ✓ Your friends and neighbors who volunteer to stack food shelves, sort clothing, collect donated furniture, deliver warm meals to invalids, and so much more
- ✓ On the web at cho-va.com

And who does CHO help?

Some are recent immigrants. Others are elderly or retired and living on a small pension. Others are single mothers or caregivers for other family members. Many have jobs, but the pay is insufficient or too erratic to cover all expenses.

The Mill Street / Dominion Road Corridor; Vienna's Future at the Crossroads

The Mill Street / Dominion Road Industrial Corridor (“the Corridor”) is at a critical cross-road in its development, with far-reaching implications for the residents and businesses of Vienna.

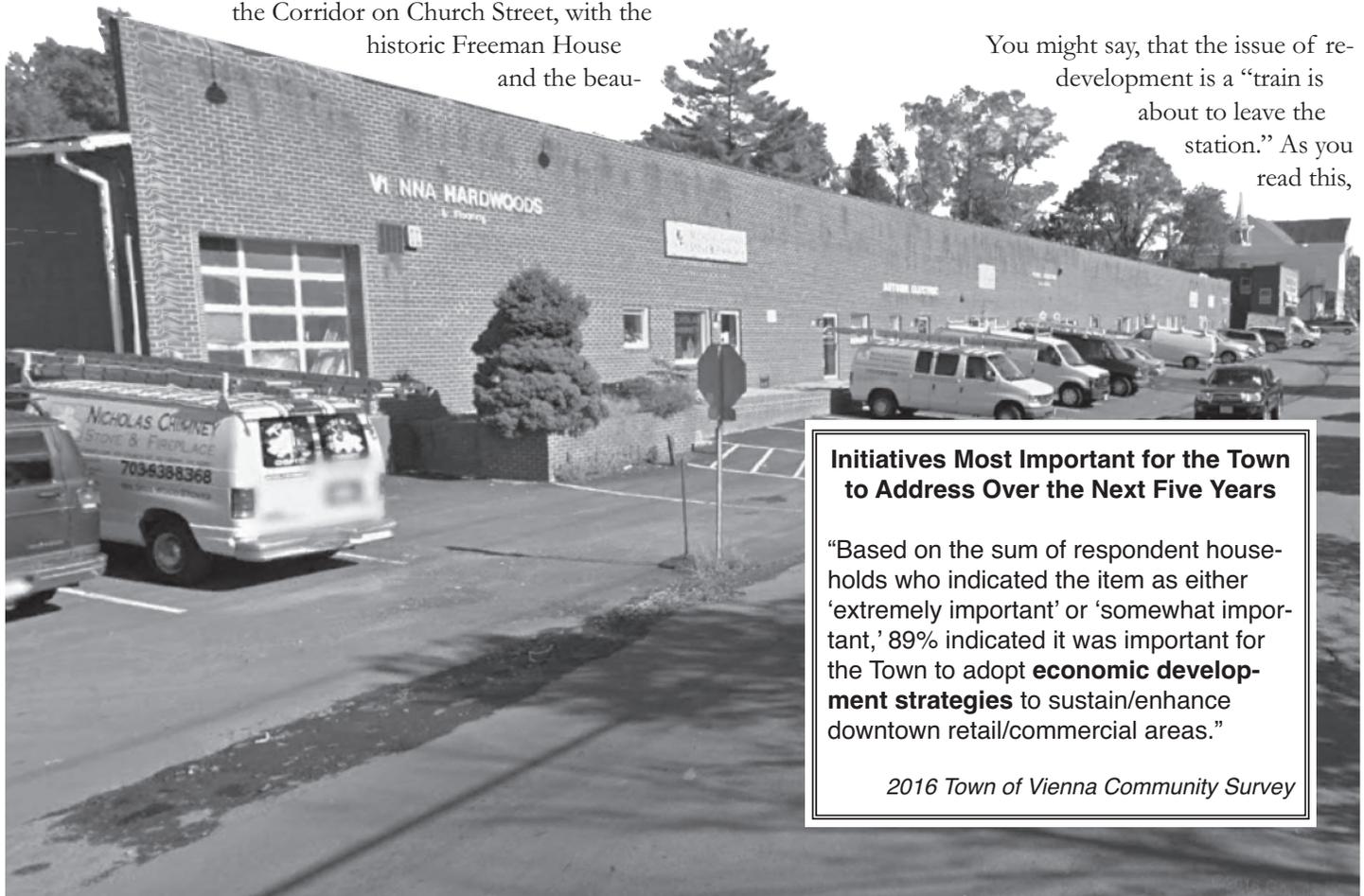
Properties in the Corridor that have long supported light industrial/commercial businesses are now changing hands, and the new owners most likely want to re-develop them for their highest and best use. The options for re-development will be driven by the types of use permitted by the Corridor’s zoning regulations, and by market forces. Because these re-development efforts are still in their early stages, the Town has a unique opportunity to influence their direction, by taking a comprehensive, forward-thinking look at the range of options, and deciding on a land use and zoning framework that is best for Vienna residents and businesses alike.

For anyone not familiar with the Corridor, it’s the warehouse and industrial area of Vienna that bumps up against Church Street, with Mill Street and Dominion Road on the sides, and the W&OD Trail running through the middle. The Concorde Lodge (circa 1910) and old bank building border the Corridor on Church Street, with the historic Freeman House and the beau-

tiful Town Green across the street. Events on Church Street, such as ViVa Vienna! or Oktoberfest usually spill into the Corridor by the old caboose and train station. The Corridor stretches all the way from Church Street to the Town’s Northside property yard, and is lined on both sides with residential communities, with homes on Park Street, Center Street and side streets sharing back-yard property lines with businesses in the Corridor.

The Corridor is unique to Vienna, in that it is zoned “CM Limited Industrial,” which restricts development to warehouses and similar structures for non-residential use; a holdover from the days when Vienna actually had a railroad running through it. These zoning regulations are in stark contrast with the “C-1B Commercial Pedestrian” regulations for neighboring Church Street, that permit commercial and limited residential development. Home owners on streets lining the Corridor have had their share of issues with businesses in the CM zone, including noise, lighting, industrial emissions, safety and upkeep, and are concerned about the impact of the Corridor on their property values and rights to quiet enjoyment.

You might say, that the issue of re-development is a “train is about to leave the station.” As you read this,



Initiatives Most Important for the Town to Address Over the Next Five Years

“Based on the sum of respondent households who indicated the item as either ‘extremely important’ or ‘somewhat important,’ 89% indicated it was important for the Town to adopt **economic development strategies** to sustain/enhance downtown retail/commercial areas.”

2016 Town of Vienna Community Survey

Single story building on Mill Street to be converted to four story warehouse

The Mill Street / Dominion Road Corridor (continued)

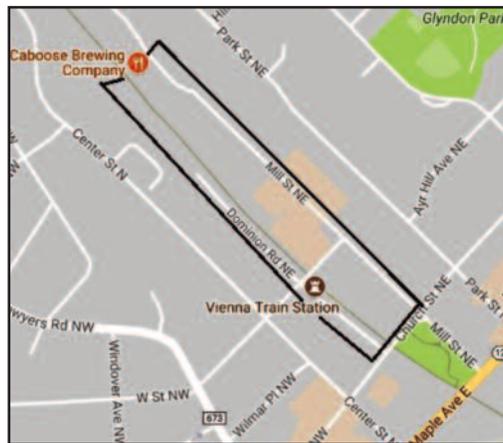
a new owner of a property on Mill Street (next to the Concorde Lodge) is currently negotiating with the Town Council for approval of its plans to re-develop it. The Town Council may choose either to retain the existing zoning restrictions, or to modify them in some way enable the building to blend with the surrounding area. Either way, the consequences of the Town Council's decisions will set a precedent for future development in the Corridor.

If the Town Council decides to maintain the zoning in the Corridor “as-is”, the owner of the Mill Street property has indicated his plans, “by right,” to erect a four-story warehouse for self-storage, with indoor parking and first-floor retail, that stretches the entire block, from the Concorde Lodge to Ayr Hill Avenue. If the Town Council takes this approach, it will set a precedent for future development in the Corridor; i.e., as additional properties change hands, the old, existing buildings (none of which are more than two stories in height) may, like the new Mill Street property, be replaced with 45-foot high, non-descript warehouses, made from brick, metal and anything else permitted by code, eventually lining all of Mill Street and Dominion Road, from Church Street all the way to the Town's Northside property yard.

Alternatively, if the Town Council were to consider modifying the zoning in the Corridor, it would open up a range of possibilities for re-development that could enable the Corridor to blend in with, or complement, the surrounding areas. It would enable the consideration of new options, such as a Town Square, that ties together the front-end of the Corridor with the Town Green, the commercial / limited residential buildings on Church Street, and the park-like attributes of the W&OD Trail, creating a unique identity and sense of place in the heart of town.

This is a very complicated and unsettled matter, with a variety of options to be considered, each with its own set of issues, such as traffic, parking, economics, aesthetics, impact on existing businesses in the Corridor and surrounding residential areas, etc. All of this should be carefully examined and thoughtfully considered in order for the Town to determine the best path forward. Unfortunately, the Town Council has chosen not to take this approach. Instead, its determination in the 2015 Update to the Comprehensive Plan that the Corridor

should remain “as is,” i.e., zoned for limited Industrial use, “despite market pressures to convert to other uses,” was in fact an abdication of its responsibility. Rather than follow the recommendations of its planning staff to consider the range of alternatives, commission studies of key issues, and conduct a public Charrette process to chart a well-thought path forward, the Town Council chose instead to adopt — without further study — the position of a small group of businesses (property owners and business renters) in the Corridor, whose main concern was that if the door were opened to change, they would be forced out over time due to market pressures to raise rents. For the reasons already discussed in this article, the Town's actions won't stop re-development; they will only dictate the manner in which re-development takes place, and perhaps with the worst possible outcome.



There is still time to conduct a thorough, open-minded and forward-looking analysis of the Corridor, taking into account the range of possibilities and associated issues, in order to chart the best path forward for our Town. The citizens of Vienna should insist that the Town Council immediately

take the steps necessary to re-open the *Comprehensive Plan* with respect to the Corridor. The Town Council should establish a Committee comprised of Town officials as well as stakeholders from the residential and business communities, whose mandate is to objectively consider the alternatives, and develop a vision for the Corridor, along with proposed land use plans and zoning regulations (including modifications if appropriate) to implement it. The Committee should have access to the resources necessary to conduct the required studies and analyses, as well as a public Charrette process, to properly fulfill its mandate. Final recommendations should be provided to the Town Council before the end of 2018, and interim guidelines should be developed by the Committee for consideration of any proposed development project in the Corridor prior to that date.

Bruce Kraselsky
President, Mill / Dominion Residents Association
mill.dominion.residents.assn@cox.net

The Mill / Dominion Residents Association (“MDRA”) was formed to ensure that the voices of area residents are heard by the Town Council regarding future plans for the Mill / Dominion Corridor. If you have comments on this article, or are interested in joining the MDRA, please contact us at the above email address.

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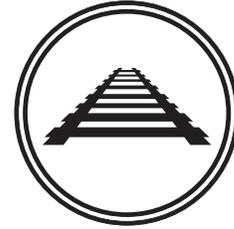
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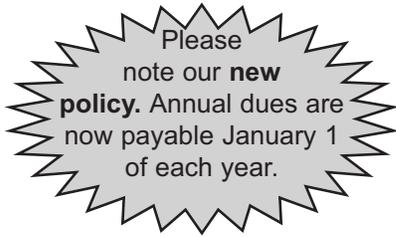
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for our Meetings**



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printing **NEVCAnotes!**

**We are your citizens association, working for a better community.
Please join NEVCA! Show your support by sending your \$10 NOW!**



NEVCA was established in 1995
to help neighbors in the Northeast.
Every household should join.
Numbers count with Town Council.

Next NEVCA MEETING
Thursday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
Vienna Community Center

Membership Application Form

(Dues per household \$10)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

(We send out special notices by e-mail always as a "BCC" to protect your privacy.)

Comments/Suggestions _____

Mail to: NEVCA, P. O. Box 356, Vienna, VA 22183

WWW.NEVCA.ORG

Vienna, VA 22183
P. O. Box 356

