



Mount Vernon Advisor

BOS BRIEF



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon

March 3, 2016

Following are summaries of some hot topics addressed at the March 1, 2016 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Tax Rates for the FY 2017 Budget

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) authorized advertising the FY 2017 Budget and required tax rates, the effective tax rate increase maximum, and the Capital Improvement Program for FY 2017-2021. The real estate tax maximum rate could be up to \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value, which reflects a 4 cent increase over the FY2016 rate. The BOS may lower these rates, and usually do, but higher tax rates cannot be imposed. The approved \$1.13 rate does not fully fund the advertised budgets submitted to the BOS by the county and schools.

In order to provide maximum flexibility for the BOS to preserve the option of fully funding the county and school advertised budgets and, for MV District specifically, to be able to consider the priorities expressed at our Town Meeting and by key civic groups, I made a motion to advertise a 6 cent increase. Additionally, since our FY 2017 Budget Public Hearings will not be held until April 5, 6 and 7, I wanted to make sure that we didn't cut funding for these budgets before people have an opportunity to formally be heard by the BOS. My motion did not pass. For me, the point of the BOS public hearings is to keep our options open beforehand, listen to you and others, balance the costs to the benefits and make the best decision possible. Because funding for police, firefighters, schools and human services comprise three-quarters of Fairfax County's General Fund Budget, they will incur the largest impact. Moving forward, I hope that next year we will be able to advertise a tax rate that allows for a full community discussion.

Board Matter: Transforming North Hill

The North Hill site is part of a 48-acre tract, formerly known as the Woodley Nightingale Mobile Home Park, which has been owned by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA) since 1981. In 1991, the RHA redeveloped a 15-acre portion of the tract for 115 mobile home pad sites, while removing pad sites from the 33-acre North Hill site principally in response to concerns about the stability of marine clay soils on steep slopes.

In the years since then, various proposals for re-use of North Hill have been discussed and by-right development of 11 acres of the land for 67 manufactured homes was being considered. But now, through a proposal received through the Public Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002, there appears to be an opportunity to provide affordable and market rate housing, support the further revitalization of Richmond Highway, and increase future transit use. With proper study and public input, I believe this potential development will complement recent residential projects and support the Embark planning goal to create transit supportive uses near the highway.

On Tuesday, I asked for BOS support to authorize a Comprehensive Plan amendment for the North Hill area, to consider a mix of approximately 278 multifamily units and 195 townhouses, as well as limited community serving uses as may be appropriate. The Embark process will evaluate approaches to:

- Provide housing affordable to a wide range of incomes;
- Mitigate transportation impacts;
- Use building form, height and orientation to create a vibrant and active community;
- Create a large public park accessible to all members of the community as well as private recreational amenities for the new residential community; and
- Address public facilities needs generated by new uses.

For more information on North Hill, please visit [the project website](#).

Snowzilla Summit

At the February 2, 2016 meeting of the BOS, Chairman Bulova asked county staff to invite officials from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to meet with county staff and members of the BOS. Tuesday was that meeting. VDOT presented their facts, figures, and planning methods which helped us understand how they respond to snowstorms. We then exchanged ideas about ways to further improve efficiency and effectiveness of the various teams plowing and clearing during a given storm. Per my Board Matter on February 2nd, county staff were asked to find ways to encourage communities with roads still on bond to be plowed more quickly. Additionally, there was discussion about allowing FCPS students to fulfill their volunteer hour requirements by helping clear FCPS facilities, and abutting sidewalks and crosswalk areas. Finally, I asked that the county and VDOT explore ways to prevent snow from being pushed or dumped onto sidewalks and driveway aprons that had already been cleared. These issues and ideas will be compiled into a summary, with the intention of creating a blueprint for an effective response to future weather events.

Chairman Bulova's office is building a web page that will summarize the Snowzilla Summit and lay out plans for studying and/or implementing suggestions and ideas presented. A link to the page will be placed on the Mount Vernon District website (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon) as soon as it is available.

Accelerating into the Future

This past Saturday, I had the privilege of conducting the annual Mount Vernon Town Meeting for the first time. Gerry Hyland, my predecessor and its initiator twenty-eight years ago, joined me and drove our virtual "bus" as he gave a tour and spoke of the past year's challenges, changes, and accomplishments. Afterward, he passed the "keys to the bus" to me, along with his strong words of encouragement to continue meeting the needs of each member of our community. I then talked about my plans and initiatives for moving the Mount Vernon District forward.

The keys to our continued growth and development are our people; building and fostering relationships within and between communities, organizations, businesses and core constituencies is the foundation for everything we do. Relationships become better through communication and engagement. Our office is committed to both. The annual town meeting, our regular e-mail newsletter, newspaper articles, social media, meeting attendance, etc. are our ways of better connecting and, hopefully, meeting your needs. We look forward to it.

My theme during the town meeting virtual "bus" tour was "Accelerating into the Future". Our planned transportation improvements, which we are calling "Embark", are integral to new development and job

growth. Over the next decades, the Embark process will result in major changes in the Richmond Highway Corridor as we expand the highway to provide more lanes, bus rapid transit and, eventually, extension of the Yellow Line to Beacon Hill, Hybla Valley and, even later, beyond. The first phase of the Embark process is planning-focused, bringing people together to recommend changes to our area's Comprehensive Plan.

These Embark plan changes will result in smart growth transit-oriented development with increased densities and other changes in areas near the highway that are essential to ultimately secure the billions of dollars in public transportation funding necessary for modernization. This process and these changes will also directly support our local economy by bringing in new residents, improving tourism to our historic sites, facilitating the continued expansion of our hospitals and health care services, growing Fort Belvoir and providing other business opportunities.

I heard your voices clearly at Mount Vernon's 29th Annual Town Meeting and your hundreds of e-mails and phone calls about how we can streamline and improve county and school services. Schools and their funding have always been, for this former school board member, my first priority. Quality schools are crucial to our future and will continue to have my full funding commitment. I also support the changes recommended by the County Executive to increase police and firefighter personnel and human services benefiting the district. I urge you to sign-up to speak at the Budget Public Hearings scheduled for April 5, 6 and 7 at the Fairfax County Government Center (call 703-324-3151 or [sign up online](#)). I am working now, so that someday soon, you will be able to testify for those hearings at our local South County Government Center!

Leadership Fairfax

Applications are now being accepted for all programs of Leadership Fairfax. Leadership Fairfax has helped train individuals become outstanding leaders in the community since 1987. If you are interested in being a part of this great experience, please click [HERE](#) for a link to the application; the dates and locations of each information session are listed below:

- Wednesday, April 6, 2016 - 5:30 pm (Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax)
- Thursday, April 14, 2016 - 8:00 am (Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce, 3901 Centerview Dr. Chantilly)