



the BRADDOCK BEACON

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PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR “WESTERN CONNECTOR,” BURKE TRANSIT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OPEN HOUSE ON WEST CAMPUS CONNECTOR SET FOR AUGUST

As we reported in a previous newsletter, the Braddock District will soon receive a significant transportation improvement. Funding has been identified for George Mason University’s proposed “Western Connector.” The exact design of the road has yet to be determined, but the intent of the bypass is to keep eastbound traffic headed toward campus from entering the intersection of Braddock and Route 123. As a result of the bypass, a 10 to 30 percent reduction in congestion is expected at Braddock and Route 123.

While a strong supporter of the connector, Supervisor Cook wanted to ensure that the community was involved as the project is designed and constructed. To meet that goal a small task force of community members has been formed and will be closely involved in the project design. The group includes representatives from:

Braddock District: Fran Ruth (of University Square), Daniel Chen and Betty Angler (of Kelley Drive);

Springfield District: Robert Webb, Patricia Reese and Robert Hayman;

Fairfax City: Gail Wade, Mike Choffel and Randy Green; and

George Mason University: Cathy Wolfe, Josh Cantor, Tom Calhoun, Jim Miller, and Robert Endebrock.

An open house meeting, to which the whole community is invited, is scheduled for August 3, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Fairfax City Hall. There, a presentation on the bypass will be given and community input will be welcomed. We hope to see you there.

TOWN HALL ON FUTURE TRANSIT SERVICE IN BURKE

On Monday, July 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the Commons Community Center, Supervisor Cook will be hosting a meeting to discuss the future of VRE and Transit service in the Burke Area. This meeting is held prior to the VRE Board’s Retreat and will feature presentations from VRE and County Staff as well as Supervisor Cook and Chairman Bulova.

Topics will include VRE plans, future bus service from Burke Centre to Tysons Corner and a potential shuttle to George Mason University.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SITE GOES LIVE

ReadyNova.com is designed to assist residents and businesses in the Northern Virginia region in developing a Family Preparedness Planner or a Business Preparedness Planner, both of which follow basic and accepted emergency management practices.

The Family Preparedness Planner provides an easy to use tool for families in Fairfax County to develop their emergency plan, a family communications plan, and guidelines for developing their emergency survival kit.

The Business Preparedness Planner provides a detailed process for Fairfax County businesses to develop their emergency plan, including continuity of operations, communications plans and to identify the process for return to their facility after a disaster event.



Supervisor John C. Cook

UPCOMING MEETING IN NEW BRADDOCK DISTRICT PRECINCTS

Supervisor Cook will be holding a “Getting to Know You” meeting at **Eagle View Elementary School on July 21 at 7:30 p.m.**, and is looking forward to the opportunity of meeting the newest residents of the Braddock District.

Supervisor Cook and his staff have been reaching out to community association leaders since it was announced that the Eagle View and Monument precincts would become part of the Braddock District as a result of the recent redistricting. Supervisor Cook hopes that many of you will be able to attend and looks forward to hearing your thoughts and concerns.

BRADDOCK DISTRICT NOW ON FACEBOOK

Be sure to stay up to date on the Braddock District. See: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Burke-VA/Office-of-Braddock-Supervisor-John-C-Cook/113003565389251?ref=sgm>

COUNTY AWAITS CONSULTANT STUDY OF PENSION PLAN OPTIONS

This Fall the Board of Supervisors and County staff will receive a consultant's report outlining options for addressing the County's \$1.7 billion unfunded pension liability, and advice regarding how to put our retirement plans on a more firm, long-term, financial footing. Public pension plans are under increasing scrutiny across the country – the combined effect of years of underfunding by some governments (though not Fairfax), a retiree population that is living longer, and declining rosters of current employees to pay the bill - and I eagerly await the consultant's report.

Fairfax County has three retirement systems: one for police, one for firefighters, and one for general employees. Most teachers are part of the Virginia Retirement System (a state entity). Fairfax's plans are among the best managed and highly funded in the nation. However, the recent recession took its toll on the investment portfolios that keep the plans afloat, and we now have an unfunded liability that will not fix itself.

As recently as ten years ago our plans were funded at over 90 percent. Today, they are funded under 80 percent. In each of the last two years, the Board of Supervisors spent \$20 million and \$15 million respectively as part of its annual "Carryover Package" just to try to reduce the losses in the Plans. In each year these were the largest single carryover items, and these additional expenditures exceeded all the combined cuts in the Park Authority and Library Board budgets over the last two years.

Recognizing that our current Plans are unsustainable in the long run without adjustment, last year I urged my colleagues to act, and they agreed. The County commissioned a retirement study with the benefits consulting firm Aon Consulting. This study is placing extra emphasis on the defined benefits plan and the role retirement plans play in the county's overall compensation package, but has multiple objectives, including:

1)Assisting the county in the review of its retirement benefits philosophy and the role of retirement benefits as part of a total

compensation package.

2)The benefits adequacy of current design (i.e., what level of benefit is delivered through each of the three pension plans using several scenarios based upon participant demographics.)

3)Analysis of the differences between defined contribution and defined benefit models for public sector retirement plans. The study will also look at several types of hybrid designs.

4)Analysis of the impact of Virginia state law on our offerings.

5)Benchmarking against other jurisdictions, including those of similar size and demographics as well as those with whom we compete for talent.

6)Review of other benefit features currently found in our programs such as social security supplements, cost of living adjustment provisions and the county's Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) as well as consideration of other potential benefit options.

7)Review of retiree medical trends and design as part of a total retirement model. Recognizing that the access to and affordability of medical care is a significant driver in retirement security, AON will analyze our current plan design and delivery mechanism in light of the current economic and regulatory environment.

Done in tandem with a study being completed by the county's Retirement Agency, these two exercises can help guide the County to necessary, long term adjustments in its retirement programs. I hope the Board of Supervisors will have the courage to face this critical issue. We must keep our current commitments to our current retirees and employees. Equally important, we must not make commitments to new employees that we cannot keep. Now is the time to adjust our plans for incoming employees in a way to put our plans as a whole on a sound financial footing.



SUPERVISOR COOK ANNOUNCES SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION IN FRONT OF TERRA CENTRE SCHOOL TO BEGIN SOON

Supervisor Cook announces that Fairfax County will soon begin building a sidewalk from the corner of Pond Spice Lane to Terra Centre Elementary School in Burke. Construction is set to begin within the next few weeks, months of ahead of schedule. Cook hopes the sidewalk will be one step among many to improve pedestrian safety and access along the parkway.

This past spring, he set up the Burke Centre Parkway (BCP) Pedestrian and Motorist Safety Task Force to address growing concern among residents of Burke that the BCP was not safe to cross, especially in front of Terra Centre. The Task Force includes members of the Burke Centre Conservancy, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), Burke Walks Safe and Green, the Terra Centre Parent Teacher Association, and staff from the Virginia and Fairfax County Departments of Transportation. A report from the Task Force is due back to Mr. Cook in August.

"Since I was elected, this has been one of my two spot improvement priorities, and I believe it will better allow parents to walk their children to school. It supports the work of the Task Force to create safety improvements for pedestrians and motorists along the Parkway, and is a step in the right direction," stated Cook, who submitted the sidewalk improvement in 2009 as part of the County's Spot Transportation Projects list.

In May, the Board of Supervisors voted to endorse a Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) application, submitted jointly by Task Force representatives from FCPS, the County, parents at Terra Centre Elementary School and the Conservancy. The application has been submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation for review by the Commonwealth Transportation Board for possible funding in fiscal year 2012.

If approved, the \$400,000 grant request will improve sidewalks along the north side of the Parkway from Burke Commons Road all

Please See Sidewalk on Page 7

SUPERVISOR COOK IN THE COMMUNITY

On June 1st, Supervisor Cook, along with Burke Conservancy Executive Director Patrick Gloyd and Conservancy Board President Denis Gulakowski, toured the Lake Barton area in order to see first-hand the dredging and dam restoration project.

On June 3rd, Supervisor Cook was present for a meeting of the Mason Fairfax Campus Advisory Board and then went to the Bonnie Brae Elementary School Fun Fair, the Long Branch Civic Association Annual Meeting and then to Lake Accotink and Royal Lake to kick off the 2011 Braddock Nights concert season.

On June 4th, Supervisor Cook attended two neighborhood events. First was the Ravensworth/Bristow Block Party and then off to the George Mason Forest HOA Picnic and Potluck.

On June 6th, Supervisor Cook attended the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce's 33rd Annual Valor Awards Ceremony at the McLean Hilton. The ceremony honored Fairfax County Police and Fire and Rescue members for their bravery and dedication.

On June 7th, Supervisor Cook attended a reception which honored the Lord and Lady Fairfax recipients for 2011. The Braddock award winners this year were Charlie and Dottie Dane.

On June 9th, Supervisor Cook hosted a ceremony in Braddock Hall that honored the graduates from Robinson Secondary School who were enlisting in the Armed Forces. This event was attended by a full house and we plan on making this a County-wide recognition in the future. Later that evening he attended a meeting at Trinity Christian School to discuss the school's land use application.

On June 11th, Supervisor Cook was an honored guest at the Trinity Christian School Commencement Ceremony and then stopped by the Government Center to attend some of the Celebrate Fairfax events. Later in the afternoon he stopped by the Bonnie Brae/Woodglen Lake Day picnic.

On June 12th, Supervisor Cook attended the Danbury Pool for the Danbury Forest Community Association Annual Meeting.

On June 13th, Supervisor Cook hosted a meeting at Braddock Hall about the proposed traffic signal on Wakefield Chapel near NVCC.

On June 16th, Supervisor Cook attended two graduation ceremonies, first, Robinson Secondary School's at the Patriot Center and then the Woodson High School Commencement at Robinson Secondary School. In between these two events, he was present for a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new and improved pedestrian bridge at Wakefield Park.



On June 22nd, after the Board of Supervisor's meeting, Supervisor Cook attended the Lake Braddock Secondary School Commencement Ceremony at the Patriot Center.

COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO MEET ON MONTICELLO PARK MASTER PLAN

Following the April Public Information meeting to master plan Monticello Park, representatives from communities near the park were asked to participate in a working group that would discuss options for the park. The first meeting was held June 23 at Braddock Hall. Rough draft concepts with potential uses were developed to be shared with each representative's community members and discussed again at the second meeting on July 6.

At that meeting, FCPA representatives reviewed three conceptual drawings and attendees provided their input. Attendees discussed development options ranging from leaving the park undeveloped to planning for off leash dog areas, a playground/tot-lot, community garden plots, unsheltered picnic areas, micro-fields, open play areas, a skate spot and parking area. Discussions also included such issues as storm water run-off, funding for specific projects, and care and maintenance of the park.

Some attendees suggested clearing a significant swath of forest across Guinea Road at Herzell Woods Park to make way for the OLDA and parking lot area so that Monticello Park could remain

undeveloped. One key point of agreement was to eliminate the U-10 Playing Field thereby reducing the number of required parking spaces and re-designating the area as an Open Play Area that is consistent with the current use of the park. A revised set of drawings will be available soon for public comment via the FCPA website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/monticello.htm>. so that residents can provide their comments on the conceptual drawing(s). The public input process for the Monticello Park master plan is still ongoing and your ideas and suggestions are very welcome and another working group meeting will be scheduled for mid-late August.

The new drawings will be posted When you have had a chance to review them please forward any comments to Andy Galusha of the FCPA at Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov. Or, contact your Braddock District Representative to the FCPA, Anthony Vellucci at ajvellucci@gmail.com.

This article was provided by Anthony Vellucci, the Braddock District Representative to the Park Authority.

TRINITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL JULY 28 PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED

A public hearing before the Planning Commission has now been scheduled for July 28 at 8:15 p.m. to hear testimony on a Special Exception Amendment request (SEA 96-B-010-02) by Trinity Christian School to modify some of its operational development conditions to allow use of its buildings and fields when school is not in session. The school is located at 11204 Braddock Road. Of particular concern to the school is a condition that states that “the school buildings and outdoor playing fields shall not be leased, rented or otherwise made available to groups not affiliated with the school.” This precludes the school from making its facilities available for evening classes, scout troops, community sports leagues and church groups.

On June 9, Supervisor Cook hosted a Community Information Meeting at the School to hear concerns from nearby residents and to allow the school to answer questions regarding this proposal. Staff is currently working with Planning Commissioner Suzanne Harsel to develop conditions that would preclude lighting on the fields, restrict the use of the public address systems to three times per year, restrict the maximum number of individuals at an event to 350, restrict the hours for evening events and limit outdoor activities to between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. One indoor overnight event per year is currently proposed and church use with a capped attendance would be allowed between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on Sundays.

Questions were also raised about the queuing that occurs on Braddock Road when school begins and ends. Although the school is controlled by a traffic signal at the School Driveway, parents attempting to access the campus frequently are backed up into the through lanes of Braddock Road. The school was requested to look at options for eliminating this backup, including better stacking on the campus and/or increasing its carpool use which is currently mandated to be a minimum of 40 percent of enrollment. To register to speak before the Planning Commission call 703-324-2865 or register on line at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning/speaker.htm. To submit testimony for the record, e-mail PlanCom@fairfaxcounty.gov

SECOND COFFEE CONNECTIONS SCHEDULED

As part of his ongoing Community Engagement Initiative, Supervisor Cook hosted “Coffee Connections,” a social opportunity for residents with special needs to learn about events that they can be a part of within the larger community. Our first “Coffee Connections” featured a member of the Fairfax County Park Authority who discussed opportunities related to the upcoming Braddock Night’s concert series. As you may recall, this past fall Supervisor Cook hosted a Town Hall which focused on improving connections between our neighbors with disabilities and the community at large.

The second “Coffee Connections” will take place on July 15 at 7 p.m. in the Kings Park Library. Supervisor Cook would especially like to thank Braddock District residents Donna Goldbranson and Mark O’Meara for their generous support. For more information please contact Evan Braff at 703.324.5650 or Lindsey Smith at 703-425-9300.

COMMONWEALTH SWIM CLUB PUBLIC HEARING JULY 20 APPLICATIONS 2232-B08-7; SE-2009- BR-020 AND SPA 79-A-075-03

Public Hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals are currently scheduled for July 20 and August 3, respectively for a proposed 120 foot telecommunications tower on property owned by the Commonwealth Swim Club located at 9800 Commonwealth Boulevard. The application, which would ultimately allow for usage by three separate carriers, has been submitted by T-Mobile Northeast. The pole, disguised as a pine tree, will be placed in the rear parking lot of the club, adjacent to the tennis courts which are accessed via Walport Lane.

A second community information meeting was held on the status of this application on April 11, to show updated maps, and to provide current information on the exact placement of the pole. At the request of staff, the original location was revised to reduce any environmental impacts to the adjacent Resource Protection Area and to review the visual impacts of the pole based on a 2009 balloon flying. The pole has been reduced in height from 150 feet to 120 feet.

On or about July 8, the staff from the Department of Planning and Zoning will publish two separate reports which will provide their recommendations on this application. Hard copies of these reports will also be available in the Braddock office within several days of publication. The reports can also be accessed at these addresses:

For the 2232 Report: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/2232/staffreports/>

For the Special Exception: <http://ldsnet.fairfaxcounty.gov/ldsnet/Zaps.aspx>; then enter SE-2009 –BR-020 into the appropriate boxes. Click the link to the application and then the link to “staff reports” on the left.

To testify before the Planning Commission call 703-324-2865 or sign up on line at www.fairfaxcounty.com/planning/speaker/htm before 3:00 pm on the date of the hearing. You will have five minutes to speak. Planning Commission meetings begin at 8:15 pm. You can also email your thoughts on this application to Braddock District Planning Commissioner Suzanne Harsel at PlanCom@fairfaxcounty.gov and she will submit your letter into the formal record of this hearing. Please copy Supervisor Cook at Braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov.

To testify before the Board of Zoning Appeals call 703-324-1280 or email clerktozba@fairfaxcounty.gov. The BZA meets at 9:00 am. A hearing before the BZA is required because the swim club operates under a Special Permit originally granted in 1975. As part of this hearing, the Club has agreed to a development condition that caps its future membership at 350 members, as opposed to the current maximum of 425.

START OF GUINEA ROAD BRIDGE PROJECT DELAYED

Since the Community Information Meeting held on June 3 to discuss this emergency bridge replacement project, a number of changes in the design have been made by the VDOT project team. The project was originally scheduled to begin in July.

As discussed in the meeting, plans have been finalized to encase and protect the sanitary sewer line that runs parallel to the east side of Guinea Road. VDOT has also determined that, for safety reasons, it will extend the sidewalk on both sides of the bridge for several hundred feet within the existing right-of-way. Finally, to preclude a collapse of the two existing impaired culverts due to the continuing presence of heavy equipment on the bridge itself, the contract has been modified to include installation of a temporary culvert. This pre-construction work will be completed concurrently with the sanitary sewer encasement, and may necessitate a one-time weekend closure of the road. Formal bids are due on July 20 and the start of this project has now slipped to August. Further updates will follow next month.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT CHALLENGES NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME

On August 2, neighborhoods across America will celebrate National Night Out to show that they are taking a stand against crime. Between 5:30 and 10:00 p.m., neighbors, families and friends in communities all over the United States are encouraged to gather outside and spend an evening together.

Events can range from the simple block party or cook-out to rallies with games and activities and visits from the police and other local officials. It can be just the people in your cul-de-sac or the whole HOA. The goal of the event is to promote efforts to prevent crime and drug use in our neighborhoods. It also is a great opportunity to show off community spirit and strengthen bonds with the local police.

The best means for you to be involved with the community is to simply come out and have a good time with neighbors and friends. If your community has established a Night Out Event, then attend and be

part of the fun. If you do not know of any events being held, then volunteer to organize an event for your neighborhood. Setting up an event can be easy if you ask someone to help. You can call or email a crime prevention officer at your district police station and they would be happy to provide you with information on how to get started. If you'd like Supervisor Cook to stop by your event, give our office a call at 703-425-9300.

In the Braddock District, with the busy lifestyles that so many of us embrace, what better excuse do we have to knock on the door of someone we've only seen as we come and go to work and ask them to come out and get to know their neighbors?



BEST OF BRADDOCK CELEBRATION JULY 13

Every year the Braddock District Council and the Supervisor's office celebrate and recognize those citizens, organizations and businesses of the Braddock District whose excellent performance or contributions to the welfare, beauty, or strength of Braddock District deserve special recognition.

Supervisor Cook invites you to join him at the Braddock Picnic on Wednesday, July 13 starting at 6 p.m. at the Kings Park Library/Braddock Office where we will be honoring our Best of Braddock award winners of 2011.

This year's honorees are: Citizens of the Year—Marie and Henry Cullerton, Kings Park Civic Association; Young Persons of the Year — Jessica Aviles and Alexander Emmons, both from

Kings Park West; Most "Can-Do" Local Employee – Ned Barnes of the Pinn Center; Most "Can-Do" Federal Employee – Clayton Redfern, USPS; Commercial Beautification – Rick Wolff; Neighborhood Enhancement by an Individual – Theresa Kurtz, Burke Cove; Neighborhood Enhancement by an Organization or Group – Kings Park West Civic Association, with special recognition to Tony Vellucci; Organization Making a Difference – Ravensworth Farm Civic Association; and Special Achievement Award – Timothy Cho, Robinson Secondary School.

Come out and congratulate your neighbors for what they've done to make the Braddock District a better place.

ADAPTIVE TRAFFIC SIGNALS COMING TO BRADDOCK ROAD

VDOT is in the process of implementing a new traffic signal control technology called Insync adaptive traffic signal controls on Braddock Road (Rt. 123 to Roberts) near GMU. Currently VDOT uses time of day traffic signal timing, but this new technology changes traffic signal timings based on traffic demand and fluctuations. After having been implemented successfully in many parts of the country VDOT has begun rolling it out throughout the state, including Warrenton last month, to test different conditions so that they can determine where it yields the most benefit.

It is being implemented near Mason on a pilot basis to see if this technology addresses the traffic fluctuations associated with class schedules and other events at the University.

VDOT's current plan is to introduce this technology during the weekend of July 30th. Even though they do not anticipate major complications, the system may need some adjustments during the first week or two. If too many issues are created the old system can be operational again within a day.

FAIR LAKES PARKWAY DETOUR BEGINS EARLY JULY: THROUGH TRAFFIC AT FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKWAY TO USE FAIR LAKES CIRCLE

During the first week of July, a six-month detour begins for through traffic on Fair Lakes Parkway at Fairfax County Parkway, as part of the ongoing interchange construction at this location.

The first phase of the detour will prohibit Fair Lakes Parkway through traffic at the Fairfax County Parkway. Motorists will be directed from Fair Lakes Parkway to Fair Lakes Circle and back to Fair Lakes Parkway.

Motorists will continue to have access to and from the Fairfax County Parkway during this phase of the detour, which will be in place through the fall 2011. Electronic message signs will be in place to direct drivers through the detour. It is expected to add about five to ten minutes to trips through the area.

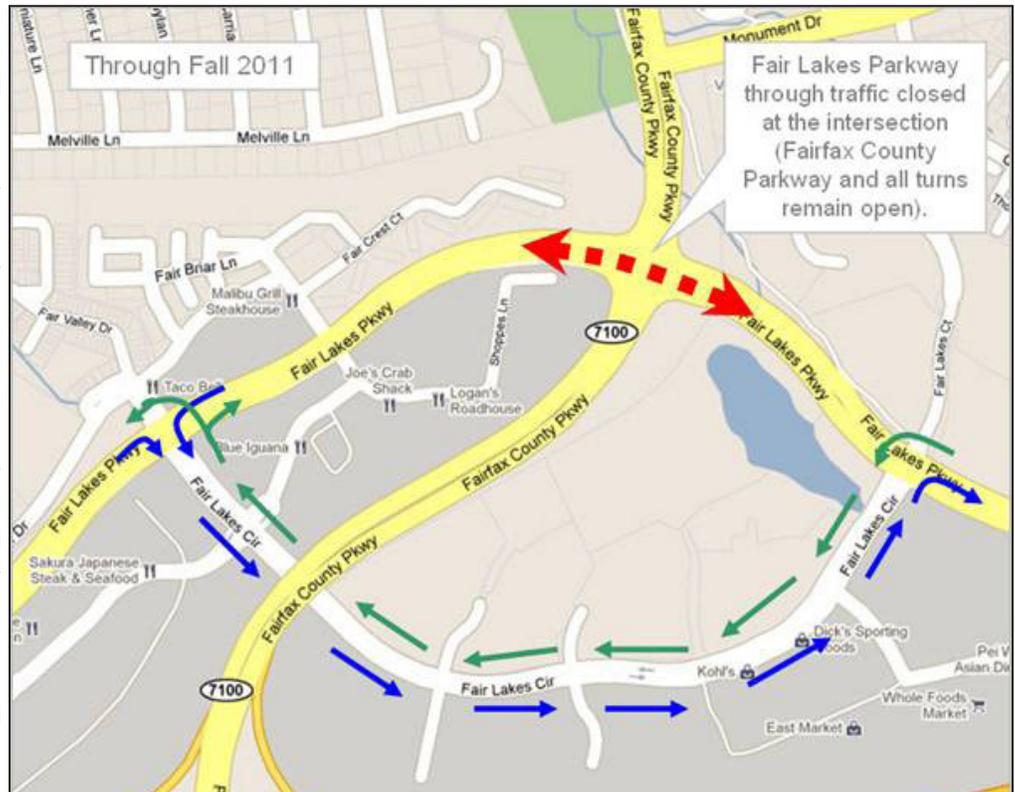
The next phases of the detour, for traffic heading from Monument Drive to westbound Fair Lakes Parkway and left turns from Fair Lakes Parkway to Fairfax County Parkway, are scheduled for this fall, and will also be announced in advance.

In addition to the detour, the speed limit on Fair Lakes Parkway will be reduced from 45 mph to 35 mph.

The new \$69.5 million interchange at Fairfax County Parkway and Fair Lakes Parkway will improve pedestrian and cyclist access, widen more than three miles of the Fairfax County Parkway, and improve traffic flow by separating local and Parkway traffic through this busy area. The entire project is

scheduled for completion in 2013.

More details on this project are available at: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/fairfax_county_parkway-fair_lakes.asp.



LAKE BARTON DAM REHABILITATION PROJECT NOW LARGELY FINISHED

The \$2.25 million Lake Barton dam rehabilitation and dredging project is now substantially complete. Based on a recent bathymetric survey, approximately 30,000 cubic yards of sediment were removed from the lake by the contractor, Lake Services, Inc., fully restoring Lake Barton to its original capacity with a life of approximately 75 years. Installation of shoreline stabilization, fish habitat structures and other habitat restoration is also complete. Turtles and herons are already visible at the newly restored lake. A major technical improvement completed as part of this project was the installation of an in-lake forebay. A forebay is a smaller area into which future sediment deposits can be trapped as it enters the lake and where the county will focus its dredging in the future.

Lake Services is now in the process of demobilizing and the barges are being removed in early July. The access road, trail and boat ramp will be restored over the next 8 weeks. The final phases of the contract which remain to be completed include replacing the paved access road and installing the trail. Final landscaping, including tree planting, will be completed this fall.



SIDEWALK WILL CONNECT POND SPICE AND THE BURKE CENTRE PARKWAY TO THE SCHOOL

Sidewalk Continued from Page 2

along the front of the shopping center. It will also improve the un-signalized crosswalk at Marshall Pond Road/Schoolhouse Woods Road by widening the concrete median and narrowing the travel lanes to better facilitate pedestrian crossing. The application is a test case for infrastructure improvements that could serve as a model for future County SRTS requests.

"I applaud the efforts of the Task Force to date, especially those of Bill Harrell its chair and Mr. Andrew Lentz, who spear-headed the application. This is a great example of government working as facilitator to support a community-lead initiative," stated Cook.

ZION DRIVE CONSTRUCTION ZONE CLOSED TO PEDESTRIANS

In the two weeks or so since a portion of Zion Drive has been closed, the contractors and County staff have noticed that there is still a significant amount of pedestrian traffic within the construction zone.

Proper notices and signs (sidewalk close signs) have been posted, and our office has been asked to help get the message out as well.

For your own safety, and that of the construction workers, it is important to remember that the construction zone is closed.

JULY ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

Saturday, July 9 - Build Your Own Composter Workshop

Time: 2pm - 5pm - Location: ReBuild Warehouse, Springfield VA

Are you interested in turning your household kitchen and yard scraps into... gold? At this workshop you will build your own 55 gallon tumbler style composter out of recycled lumber and pickle barrels. Take the composter home, fill it with scraps, and watch as that material turns into humus, the black gold prized by gardeners, farmers and homeowners alike! The cost the workshop is \$75 and buys all materials to make the composter. Only a few spots are left! Please RSVP to Dan Schwartz.

Saturday, July 9 - Green Breakfast: Offshore Wind Energy

Time: 8:30am - 10am - Location: Brion's Grille, Fairfax, VA

Enjoy a hot breakfast buffet and hear Annette Ramos of the Sierra Club speak about offshore wind energy in the state. As interest in alternative energy grows, development of wind farms is an increasingly viable option. The East Coast - particularly Virginia - has excellent conditions for wind power, perhaps enough to power 700,000 homes. This lecture will explore the possibilities and barriers to wind power in Virginia. No need to RSVP, just show up! The cost of the buffet is \$10, tax and tip included. Cash is preferred.

Thursday, July 14 - Monitoring Workshop: Accotink Creek

Time: 5:30pm - 7:30pm - Location: Accotink Creek

Come out and help count the critters in this big, beautiful stream as it winds its way past the popular Cross County Trail. To RSVP, please contact Dan Schwartz.

Wednesday, July 20, 2011 - Night Creek Walk

Time: 8pm - Location: Ellanor C Lawrence Park, Chantilly

Explore Big Rocky Run stream at night! When the park shuts down, nocturnal animals come out. Bring a flashlight and wear good hiking shoes for this hike to locate and identify nocturnal critters. RSVP online.

The Park Authority's Summer Workshops

The Park Authority has dozens of nature and history themed workshops throughout the spring and summer, ranging from bird counts to hand-cranked ice cream making. To see a list of what's coming up, check out the Parktakes catalogue online.

FREE SUMMER SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOPS FROM GEORGE MASON UNIVERISTY

Energy Efficiency at Home

Learn how to save 20 percent or more on energy bills with a very modest investment! This workshop will cover topics on how to make cost-effective energy saving improvements to your home and other small to mid-size buildings. The class will cover energy audits; plan reviews, and energy modeling to help homeowners reduce energy use in their homes. The workshop attendees will leave this course with a list of companies offering energy-auditing services and an energy reduction resource list for future reference.

Workshop 1: Wednesday, July 13, 6:00 PM-7:30 PM.

Workshop 2: Saturday, August 6, 10:00 AM-11:30 AM.

Location: Green Acres, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA. Room 113

Find more information: <http://msi.gmu.edu/energyefficiencyathome.html>

Waste Minimization Workshop

Packaging accounts for 64 million tons by weight, or 33 percent of all our garbage. Recycling helps, but reducing and reusing is even better! So come and learn how waste reduction techniques like smart purchasing decisions, reducing, reusing, and recycling waste can help save natural resources, energy, disposal space and cost, and minimize pollution risks.

Workshop: Saturday, July 16, 10:00-11:30 AM.

Location: Green Acres, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA. Room 113

Find more information: <http://msi.gmu.edu/wasteminimization.html>

Register: <http://msi.gmu.edu/registration.html>

IT'S SUMMER COOKOUT AND PARTY SEASON

So you'd like to invite friends over, maybe have a cookout or just enjoy the afternoon or evening out of doors. Maybe the neighborhood pool is having a party. It's a great idea and great way to build community. There are few things you might want to remember in order to maintain that good relationship that you have with the neighbors.

Be aware of the Fairfax County noise ordinance. Section 108-4 of the County Code limits excessive noise between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. What is normal for one person may be excessive for another, so please be considerate of your neighbors.

Be aware of your surroundings when cooking on an open-flame grill. Make sure that any flammable material is at least 15 feet away, and as a precaution, always have an extinguisher available.

Many of us enjoy an open flame recreational fire all year



round. It's important to have a cleared space surrounding your fire pit, and remember to use clean wood. Burning of trash, paper or other combustibles in a recreational fire is not permitted.

Be aware of the parking situation in your neighborhood. If

you are inviting a number of people who would be driving to your party, it's a good idea to make sure there is enough parking available. Let your neighbors know if it might cause a problem in the neighborhood.

If the teenagers who live in your home are having a party, here are few more tips.

- Try to avoid the "open" party by checking the guest list and not using email or Facebook to send the invitations.

- Make it clear no alcohol or other drugs will be tolerated. Provide plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages. And if anyone arrives with alcohol or under the influence, call their parents and do not let them drive away.

If needed, don't be afraid to call the police. Remember, it's illegal to serve minors, or to knowingly allow a minor to have, alcohol on your property.

These tips and others can be found in the West Springfield Police District's June 27 News Bulletin at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/stations/westspringfield/wir.pdf>.

CAR SEAT CHECKS IN FULL FORCE AT WEST SPRINGFIELD POLICE STATION

West Springfield Police will be holding these events two times each month and the dates for July are Thursday the 14th and the 21st, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. **These are by appointment only**, so please call the main station number, 703-644-7377, and at the recording press "0" (zero), and ask the Police Communications Aide to schedule your time. The August and September dates have yet to be scheduled so be sure to check the West Springfield Station website - <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/stations/westspringfield/> - or weekly e-mail blast for upcoming times.

COOLING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

Fairfax County residents who need help to keep their homes cool this summer and prevent a health emergency resulting from extreme heat may be able to get assistance from two programs locally administered by the county's Department of Family Services.

The Cooling Assistance Program, a federally funded program, helps eligible low-income households with at least one person considered especially vulnerable to heat: a child under age six, a disabled individual, or an adult age 60 or older. Cooling assistance can be used to help with: payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment, payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment, repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump, purchase of a whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans, purchase and installation of one window unit air conditioner for households where there is no unit or where the unit must be replaced. Applications for the Cooling Assistance Program will be accepted from June 15 through August 15.

For more information or an application form, visit <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/index.cgi>. Then complete the application and fax it along with a copy of your current electric bill and a pay stub to 703-324-8242. You can also mail it along with the other documentation to: Fairfax County Department of Family Service - Pennino Building c/o Energy Assistance, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 232 Fairfax, VA 22035

The Fan Care program is another way to help older Fairfax area residents stay safe in the summer heat. This electric fan distribution program, sponsored by Dominion Virginia Power in partnership with the Virginia Department for the Aging, annually provides about 200 free fans and/or window air conditioners to eligible senior adults in the Fairfax area.

To qualify for Fan Care, a person must be at least 60 years old, need a fan to prevent heat-related health problems and meet income eligibility requirements. Not everyone in the home needs to be an older adult to qualify for a fan, but all incomes must be counted. There is a limit of one fan per household. The Fan Care program begins on June 1 and runs through the end of September. To request an application, call the Fairfax County's Department of Family Services – Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at 703-324-7694, TTY 703-449-1186.