



Mount Vernon Advisor



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon

March 2016

Dear Friends,

Daylight dawns earlier, snows melt from memory, cherry blossoms bloom, robins warble and Spring has sprung in Mount Vernon! I am pleased to announce two new staff members to help me serve you better; Allison Miessler and Jennifer Golden.

Allison Miessler will join our team as a transportation and human services aide on March 28th. Allison is a graduate of VCU and the Sorensen Institute's Emerging Leaders Program and has experience as an aide to representatives in the General Assembly.

Jennifer Golden, our new Communications Director, will be joining us April 11. Jennifer has a Masters in International Communications from Macquarie University, a Bachelor's in Broadcast Journalism and over a decade of managerial experience in International Relations and communications. Jennifer will be maintaining our existing communication channels and initiating new ones that will better inform and empower our residents and neighborhoods, developing closer ties within and between our communities.

Also, with Spring comes the tough decisions for the new County FY2017 budget. I/We need your help in guiding those decisions. As noted below, I would appreciate your testifying at our public hearing on April 5th, 6th or 7th.

So as we emerge from our hibernation and shed our winter coat, I continue to look forward to serving you on the Board of Supervisors. It is an honor and privilege.

Respectfully yours in public service,

Dan Storck
Supervisor, Mount Vernon District
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

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Stay Connected

Mount Vernon Governmental Center
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Office Hours

Monday -Wednesday, Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Second Saturday Each Month (except August)
Lorton Library: 9 a.m. - Noon
MV Dist. Office: 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Walk-ins and by appointment

FY 2017 Budget Public Hearings

The Board of Supervisors will hold three days of public hearings on the Advertised Fiscal Year 2017 Budget. They will be April 5th at 4:00 p.m., April 6th and April 7th at 1:00 p.m. I encourage you to send me your thoughts on the budget by emailing me at mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov or testifying before the Board by contacting the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors at 703-324-3151. The Board of Supervisors set an advertised tax rate at \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value, a 4 cent increase. The Board of Supervisors can adopt a lower rate than this, but not a higher one. The General Assembly has adjourned and their approved biannual budget has the Commonwealth increasing their contribution to Fairfax County Public Schools by \$21 million, which is almost 1 cent on the Fairfax County Real Estate Tax Rate. Even with this increase, the School Board reports there are still unmet needs like keeping teacher compensation competitive, reducing class sizes and capping maximum elementary school classes below 30 students. For more information, please look at the [Fairfax County Government Budget](#) and [Fairfax County School's Budget](#) pages.

This underscores the need for Fairfax County Government to diversify its tax base. The Real Estate Tax rate makes up about 65% of our revenues. The real estate tax is regressive and is not an accurate reflection of a taxpayer's ability to pay the tax. The County Executive has informed the Board during our Lines of Business Review meetings that Fairfax County has the authority to levy other taxes like an entertainment tax on ticket sales, which could bring in \$6 million a year; a probate tax on wills, which could generate \$300,000 a year; and a [meals tax](#), which could bring in \$90 million a year.

Update on General Assembly Activities

The 2016 General Assembly adjourned on Friday, March 11. This session had both its roses and its thorns for Fairfax County. The General Assembly passed a new 2016-2018 biennium budget, which contains good news for Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). The budget partially restores \$5.6 million in Cost of Competing Adjustment (COCA) for K-12 support staff in FY 2017 and \$5.8 million in FY 2018. COCA is an additional factor in the state K-12 funding formula that recognizes the higher salaries required in high-cost areas of the Commonwealth to attract and retain highly qualified staff.

For Fairfax County, we are projecting nearly \$21 million – almost a penny on the tax rate – in anticipated additional state funding for Fairfax County Public Schools in FY 2017. Unfortunately, the General Assembly did consider a number of bills that diminish the County's land use authority. The most consequential of these bills, related to proffers, has already been signed into law by Governor McAuliffe. That legislation includes numerous exemptions from the new requirements that will be especially helpful for Fairfax County, however it does negatively impact our ability to obtain proffers for new development, which is funding set aside to lessen the impact of development of schools, roads, parks and other infrastructure. This law will require taxpayers to shoulder more of the burden of development costs and strips some authority of local government to deny land use cases. It is a law that needs to be amended or repealed in future sessions.

In addition, legislation governing short-term rentals in residential areas (such as Airbnb) would have diminished local land use authority as introduced, but after significant negotiation and effort, the legislation includes a study of the issue and a requirement that any related legislation be enacted by the 2017 GA.

Next, HB883, a bill that removes the requirement for a public hearing before a local planning commission where telecommunications towers are permitted by right, which is on industrially zoned land in Fairfax

County. The County obtained an exemption in the bill for Planning District 8 (which is Northern Virginia), to allow us to maintain our process for public input on these towers. That process has worked well for the County and the community. Unfortunately, the exemption for Planning District 8 was removed from the bill on the Senate floor at the very end of the session by a member of our delegation – as a result, no public hearing is now required for telecommunications facilities on industrially zoned land. Please read the [final report on General Assembly activities](#) for more information.

North Hill Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update

On Tuesday, March 1st, I introduced a motion to amend the Comprehensive Plan to permit new development at the North Hill site. This is an exciting development opportunity that allows us to provide a mix of affordable, workforce and market rate housing while accomplishing the goals of EMBARK Richmond Highway and provide acreage for a public park.

The Comprehensive Plan amendment, which is the first step in the redevelopment of the site followed by a rezoning application, would permit the construction of 278 multi-family rental units in six separate, high quality, urban designed buildings with structured parking; dedicate 10 percent of the units for households with an annual income at or below 30 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), 20 percent of the units for households with an annual income at or below 50 percent of the AMI, and have the remaining units for households with an annual income at or below 60 percent of the AMI. (Washington AMI for a family of four is \$109,200.) There will be a **community meeting** about the development at **Walt Whitman Middle School's Lecture Hall on April 27th from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.** More information about the project can be found [here](#).

Fairfax Water Performs Spring Flushing of Lines

Each spring, Fairfax Water flushes its water mains by opening fire hydrants and allowing them to flow freely for a short period of time. Fairfax Water will switch their water treatment method from using combined chlorine (chloramines) to free chlorine, which reacts with sediments suspended during flushing. As a result, your water may have a more noticeable chlorine smell and taste for a few weeks as the free chlorine washes its way through the system. These conditions are not harmful and should not last long. If you are especially sensitive to the taste and odor of chlorine, try keeping an open container of drinking water in your refrigerator, but remember – drinking water has a shelf life! Change out the water in your refrigerated container weekly.

If you have questions about this program or the work being conducted in your area, call Fairfax Water any time of the day or night at 703-698-5613, TTY 711.

Potholes

They are a way of life on the roads as temperatures change in the winter and early spring months. With the blizzard behind us, but warmer temperatures right now, [please report potholes you encounter!](#)

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains most primary and secondary roads in the county and fixes potholes. You can [look up who maintains every road](#) in the county. VDOT's new online reporting tool, my.vdot.virginia.gov, makes it easier to pinpoint exactly where you see a pothole. You can also report potholes directly from your mobile device and include images (**but NOT while driving!). You can also contact VDOT by calling them at 703-383-VDOT (8368).

Zika Virus

Zika virus disease (Zika) is a viral disease spread to people through bites of infected mosquitoes. Mosquitoes become infected by feeding on infected persons. Zika virus is transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* (Yellow fever mosquito). *Aedes albopictus* (Asian tiger mosquito) can also spread the virus. Both of these mosquitoes can also transmit dengue and chikungunya viruses. Outbreaks of Zika have occurred in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands, Central America, South America, the Caribbean and Mexico. For a map, see <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>. Because the mosquitoes that spread the virus are found around the world, it is likely that outbreaks will spread to new countries.

Zika virus is mainly spread by mosquitoes. Anyone traveling to an area where Zika virus is found can become infected. Infections have also been reported in travelers returning to the U.S. from affected areas. Those who do not travel to affected areas are not currently at risk of becoming infected with Zika virus from local mosquitoes because local spread in the continental U.S. by mosquitoes has not been reported.

The effect of Zika during pregnancy is being studied. Out of an abundance of caution, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises that pregnant women consider postponing travel to countries with ongoing Zika virus transmission. For more information about Zika, please find more information on our [Fairfax County Zika Virus Website](#).

Boards, Authorities and Commissions

The Board of Supervisors has several board, authority, commission or committees (BAC) that provide an excellent opportunity for civic education and engagement. Each Board member has a representative on the committees and the list below are currently vacant for the Mount Vernon District:

- Affordable Dwelling Unit Advisory Board
- Airport Advisory Committee
- Child Care Advisory Council
- Community Action Advisory Board
- History Commission
- Oversight Committee on Drinking and Driving
- Police Officers Retirement System Board of Trustees

Volunteering on these committees increases citizen participation in our District. If you are interested in serving on a county board, authority, commission, or committee (BAC), please provide a current résumé to Donna.Slaymaker@fairfaxcounty.gov.

For more information, please download the [brochure](#) for a brief guide to BACs. Please note that certain members of BACs must file [financial disclosure statements](#) upon appointment, and annually thereafter.

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mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov

Please share this *Mount Vernon Advisor* with your friends and
neighbors!
