

Quality of Life Committee
Seven Corners Special Study

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

In attendance:

Kay Cooper
Carol Turner
Nancy Vorona

Staff:

Mike Congleton
Jay Rauschenbach
Susan Epstein

Guest representatives from VDOT:

Lauren Mollerup
Andy Beacher

VDOT Discussion

First topic: Update on VDOT-Fairfax County agreement about illegal signs and litter.

- Lauren provided details about the ongoing discussions to establish an agreement between VDOT and Fairfax County; details included current and future respective responsibilities, timetable for implementation, and anticipated results.
- Emphasized that litter is not a major priority for VDOT – in regards to policy and available resources – so the agreement would allow Fairfax County to address the issue more efficiently and proactively. The few cases that VDOT does respond to come from the Governor's Office.
- Mike further explained that Fairfax County would work with the Sheriff's Office to enforce the new agreement, though there will be a lengthy administrative process to figure out internal operations to get the program up and running.
- Committee cited the significant amount of litter on the sides of Route 50 – road and hillsides, especially under and just east of the Route 7 overpass.

Committee asked for clarification between illegal signs and litter.

- Illegal signs – subject to fines; volunteers can remove when in VDOT right of way and the volunteer(s) have an Adopt-a-Highway permit for that stretch of road; volunteers are not permitted to help remove when not in VDOT right-of-way
- Litter – best addressed through volunteered-based adopt-a-highway programs.

Kay suggested that education is a large component to solving the illegal sign/litter problem.

- Mike agreed, but unfortunately there isn't a strong contingency in Seven Corners to provide outreach and education – like a Chamber of Commerce or the like. There may be some

opportunities however, such as through the Baileys Crossroads Revitalization Corp. and/or the local Rotary Club.

- Lauren indicated that she is seeking updates to the VDOT flyer about signage.
- Once the new agreement goes into effect with VDOT, Fairfax County will regulate the major streets that VDOT used to manage; however, to improve local streets, adopt-a-highway programs may be the most efficient.
- Distinguished that signs become illegal when they are advertising.
- Mike indicated that sign spinners in the VDOT right of way are not legal and may be reported via non-emergency police. Committee stated they are often at the intersection of Patrick Henry Drive and Route 50.

Next topic: infrastructure.

- VDOT works on a 6-year plan with limited funding.
- The 6-year plan is a rolling plan and is addressed every year; includes public hearing.
- The 6-year plan mostly includes large/major site- and corridor-specific projects; smaller-scale projects are difficult to achieve funding.
- There are no projects currently listed for Seven Corners.

Committee asked how VDOT prioritizes projects.

- Lauren explained the newly developed VDOT rating system based on a 0-100 point scale.
- Primary roads are rated every year, whereas only 20% of secondary roads are rated every year; this coming year will complete ratings for all secondary roads.
- Mike suggested the committee recommend that the county provide additional funds for secondary road maintenance; committee agreed.

Next topic: panhandlers.

- Committee discussed with VDOT and staff about panhandler issues and possible remedies.
- Mike suggested that the committee make a formal recommendation to the task force that police step up patrol for panhandlers; committee agreed.

Next topic: pedestrian bridge

- VDOT is responsible for bridge maintenance; acknowledged that the lights often don't work and there's usually litter and defacement, and the ramps freeze over.
- Currently looking at short- and long-term solutions, particularly partnerships between VDOT and Fairfax County.
- Have fixed the fencing and have worked with police department to increase patrol.

Bus stops/shelters

- Bus stops/shelters are often in VDOT right-of-way, but are maintained by Fairfax County; related back to panhandlers, who enforces?
- VDOT and Fairfax County are working on an agreement to reconcile responsibilities.

Other

- Committee asked about numbers and positioning of signs for reasons of clarity and aesthetics. Nancy to send Lauren photos of Patrick Henry Dr. / Route 7 intersection and possibly other areas relating to this topic.
- Lauren indicated that she would review issues and report / return after investigating with VDOT associates.

VDOT representatives left and the committee moved to more **general discussions**.

- Committee and staff discussed future plans for Willston Center; no formal commitments have been made yet. A Committee member had heard it may be converted to a school; Mike will investigate and report at the next meeting.
- Exxon Station is illegally renting U-Haul equipment; Susan is working on case.
- For next month's meeting, Mike will prepare draft recommendations for the committee to review.
- Mike committed to having a Sign Enforcement 101 class