

STRATFORD LANDING CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County

From the President

Happy meteorological spring! Soon we will set our clocks forward an hour for Daylights Savings Time, the Osprey will return and their call will join the other signs of spring, and I hope we will all feel a little better spending more time enjoying the outdoors and seeing our neighbors.

The skeleton crew of the SLCA continues to meet monthly via Zoom. We are going to apply for a grant from the Audubon At Home program and hope that will help us update the landscaping around at least two (2) of our entrance signs.

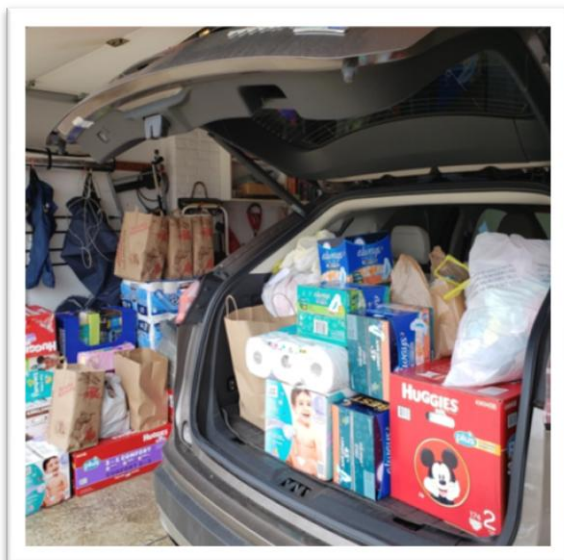
We have launched a community history project on our website and hope that you will find it interesting. We welcome input from those of you who have stories and photographs from "back in the day."

Still Collecting Diapers and Personal Care Items

Thank you to everyone who donated items for the collection I take over to families in the Buckman Loop for distribution. There is now a weekly food distribution where I take the donations I collect so, if you are interested in supporting this effort, please feel free to drop off your items on the bench of my front porch anytime. Diapers are still the most needed item (size 3, 4, 5, 6) as well as personal care items like soap, feminine hygiene pads, toothpaste, toothbrushes and T.P.

Thank you!

Kathy Lehner
8810 Stockton Pkwy.



SLCA Springtime Activities

The SLCA Recreation Committee has made the difficult decision not to host a community egg hunt again this year due to health and safety concerns amid the ongoing pandemic. However, we would still like to mark the beginning of a new, hopeful spring season and try to bring joy to children.

As a neighborhood association, we recognize that this past year has been especially difficult for so many families in our community. We hope that if you are in a position to help, you will consider joining an SLCA effort to bring some springtime joy to children in need.

Rather than donate eggs for a neighborhood hunt, please join our efforts and donate items to assemble small gift bags to assist children of families receiving assistance from United Community. Please donate filled Easter Eggs or bags of individually wrapped candy or small, party favor type gifts including very small bubbles, play dough, erasers, pencils, etc. Donations can be dropped in the pink bin on the porch at 2402 Wittington Blvd. before Friday, March 26th. Please contact emily_mcasey@yahoo.com with your questions. Thank you for your consideration. We wish you and your families good health and a happy spring.



Get Involved

We are in need of additional volunteers. Please consider joining us!

The time commitment is 1 or 2 meetings a month. If you volunteer to be a delegate to a MVCCA committee you need to be available for the MVCCA committee meeting one evening the first week of the month and the monthly SLCA board meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. If you have to skip a board meeting you can provide a report from the MVCCA meeting you attended the week before.

We need:

SLCA Secretary

Record the minutes of our monthly board meetings and present them for approval and prepare meeting agenda.

SLCA Communications

Help with communication to the membership, including email blasts and the newsletter. The secretary and communications positions can be one volunteer.

Delegate – MVCCA, Budget and Finance Committee

This dormant committee is up and running again. If you want to get involved in the County budget planning this is your opportunity.

Delegate – MVCCA, Public Safety Committee

The committee is developing a work plan with the following topics: speeding in neighborhoods, police staffing and reform, and pedestrian safety.

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

We have a list from our previous coordinator so you won't be starting from scratch but you can build this important program in a way that works for your schedule.

MVCCA General Council Report

(January 27, 2021)

The hot topic of discussion with Supervisor Dan Storck was the Fairfax County's Zoning Ordinance Modernization Project (zMOD). In brief, the County launched the zMOD project in 2017 to update the 30+ year-old zoning ordinance. Generally speaking, when the project was launched there was universal support for the County to make the zoning ordinance more user-friendly, however, the MVCCA is concerned that there is new language in the updated ordinance that fundamentally changes some of the regulations and could impact single-family home communities. Supervisor Storck was clear that he felt the process has been open and that there have not been any substantive changes to the zoning regulations.

If you want to learn more about zMOD here is a link to the County website:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zmod>

Here is the link to the MVCCA website to read more. Once there, you can explore the issue by clicking on the Current Issue of the Record as well as the Planning and Zoning tab.

<http://www.mvcca.org/>

The MVCCA created a survey for distribution to its member organizations and I am including it here.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FFXZMOD>

Fuel Spill Update

Christopher Morgan is a resident of Stratford Landing and is the Chair of the Environmental & Recreation Committee of the MVCCA.

As many in the neighborhood are aware, Fairfax County is currently performing three capital sewer water construction projects within the neighborhood. These include the installation of two different types of sewage pipe under Little Hunting Creek and infrastructure projects within the pumping station at the intersection of Stockton Pkwy and Londonderry Rd. Directly related to those construction projects, a fuel spill

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Yard Waste Pick-Up

The County will not pick-up yard waste or grass clippings that are in plastic bags any longer. Please use a bin or the large paper bags. Thank you!



66th Anniversary Storewide Sale

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Fuel Spill Update, *continued from page 2*

recently occurred within the neighborhood and into Little Hunting Creek. This is what occurred, what the response was, and what we should expect in the future.

On Friday, December 18th, 2020 a little before 10pm, a fuel filter blockage in a diesel generator caused a fuel spill at the pumping station at Londonderry and Stockton. This could be categorized as an equipment failure. At that time, there were security personnel on-site who noticed and reacted to the spill.

Based on the size of the tanks, it is believed that approximately 50-gals of diesel #2 spilled into the planned containment zone immediately surrounding the generators. The containment zone was previously established to trap any such spills at the construction site and the system worked as expected to contain the fuel.

That night and the following day, Saturday, December 19th, there was light rain. Sometime that morning, a sump pump located within the containment zone activated and discharged water and the spilled fuel which had accumulated in the sump outside of the containment zone. This discharge went outside the county-owned property at the pumping station and flowed into the adjacent property owned by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT), a non-profit conservation organization. The placement of the sump pump discharge was erroneous -- it should not have been able to discharge outside the containment zone. The fuel entered Little Hunting Creek via a small tributary.

When this occurred, the personnel on-site did notify the fire department who has authority over such spills. They did also notify a staff member in the District Supervisor's office but received an out-of-office reply. They did not notify the public, any citizen groups (MVCCA, SLCA, Wessynton CA, etc), or the landowners. At this point, clean-up activities were initiated by the contractor and specialized sub-contractors hired by the county.

These clean-up activities included:

- Absorbent mops were deployed to the creek.
- The sump pump discharge was corrected.
- Maintenance checks were performed on all similar fuel filters in use.

It's important to understand, though, that at this point no residents of Stratford Landing were made aware of the fuel spill. As the NVCT property is essentially a park open to the public during daylight hours, it remained open and available. It was not until the following day when a neighbor walking his dog noticed the absorbent booms

and contacted other neighbors did this incident surface.

Because I had contacts at the Fairfax County Wastewater Design and Construction Division related to one of the other sewer projects, I reached out via email requesting information on why the area smelled of chemicals and the placement of the absorbent booms. I met on-site with two county representatives on Monday, the 21st. Two other neighbors whom are great friends of Little Hunting Creek also attended. I questioned what had happened and made a few requests.

Firstly, I requested that they install visible warning signs around the affected site so that members of the public would be made aware of the spill. We obviously didn't want children or immunocompromised individuals near the fuel. They then did install orange fencing and put up a sign.

I requested that the county designate a main point of contact in order to relay updates, and to include both the MVCCA and Supervisor's Office staff for coordination. They obliged this request as well.

I also requested that in general, it should be emphasized to the site crews that they are working in a residential area. In addition to this incident, there have been less-minor issues with parking, traffic, and noise.

As part of the clean-up efforts, Fairfax County also involved the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the U.S. National Response Center, the latter only after the recommendation of two neighbors familiar with maritime operations. In addition to the absorbent booms, soil was removed, and wood mulch was applied to the trailhead. Only a few days later, fish were observed in the tributary to the creek and the chemical odor subsided.

This fuel spill incident was unfortunate, though luckily will likely have a low impact on the environmental quality of both the NVCT land and Little Hunting Creek. It's very probable that recreational boaters have spilled diesel fuel in the creek over the years without any sort of clean-up effort, and people littering trash still continues to plague the shores.

Currently, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizen's Association is working on recommendations on how the county should respond to similar incidents in the future. These recommendations will include an emphasis on site security, visible notification of the incident to the public, electronic notifications via 3rd-party platforms, and notification to property owners, and public diagrams explaining the response process and responsible agency or department. Hopefully another fuel spill does not occur either here or elsewhere in the county, but if it does we will be holding our officials to a high standard for corrective actions.

Transportation Report

SLCA has been actively engaged in Transportation issues with the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Association (MVCCA). SLCA now meets (by Zoom meeting) monthly to consider Virginia and Fairfax County Department of Transportation (VDOT & FCDOT) plans and initiatives. Most, if not all, items directly affect the SLCA community. Some, Like the George Washington National Parkway even have national interest.

Current SLCA (working) Transportation items include:



- (1) Patrolling of Jeff Todd Way,
- (2) George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) Safety Survey,
- (3) Richmond Highway (Route 1 widening),
- (4) Northern Gateway development and proposed traffic rerouting,
- (5) Richmond Highway proposed speed limit reduction,
- (6) Fairfax Connector (Bus Route 11Y) reinstatement
- (7) National Airport's arrival/departure routes for the south sector (noise reduction), and
- (8) Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) routes and bus stop design.

The MVCCA Transportation Committee acts much like a clearing house in representing communities' concerns by drafting resolutions (for or against) proposed Fairfax County Transportation Plans. Often this is accomplished in concert with other MVCCA Committees such as Safety and/or Planning and Zoning – which also contain SLCA representation.

Although most transportation issues are of interest to our area, the National Park Service's (NPS) George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) Safety Survey looms large. Several residents have recently commented on the speeding and reckless driving that exists on the Parkway. Moreover, these occurrences seem to be on the rise.

George Washington Memorial Parkway Safety Survey

The southern section of the George Washington Memorial Parkway opened in 1932. This section (from Old Town Alexandria to the Mount Vernon Estate) serves over 17,000 vehicles daily (a pre-pandemic figure) and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Speeding, reckless driving and serious (fatal) accidents, however, are becoming more prevalent on the Parkway.

In 2019, The National Park Service (NPS) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted a public safety survey on the southern section of the GWMP. The study focused on intersections between the City of Alexandria and the Mount Vernon Estate. The NPS and FHWA compiled safety concerns from all parties. The study's goal is to develop recommendations to improve safety which could be implemented using existing funds while preserving the Parkway's historic appearance.



Although now closed, the Survey was opened to the public for input. Some submitted items included:

- (1) Increased patrolling by Park Police,
- (2) The use of speed cameras,
- (3) Modifying posted speed limits,
- (4) Revamping "Study" intersections, making some "entrance-only" or "exit-only" access to the Parkway.
- (5) Airborne patrolling,
- (6) Speed control devices (such as rumble strips or speed bumps)
- (7) Additional signs and,
- (8) Safety pedestrian crossings.

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Below is a link that provides you some historical background on the Survey:

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/learn/management/south-parkway-safety-study.htm>

Update: Due to the Corona Virus Pandemic, the Parkway Safety Survey and the NPS recommendations that stemmed from it, was placed on hold.

Unlike dealing with VDOT or FCDOT, a factor to keep in mind is that the GWMP is not a normal state highway but in fact, a National Park thoroughfare. It's treated much the same way as other National Parks are (such as Yellowstone or Yosemite). Change can be slow and has to meet federal guidelines for National Parks. Additionally, preserving the beauty of the GWMP is a major consideration of any proposed change.

Although delayed in completion, SLCA was advised by the MVCCA Transportation Committee to anticipate a briefing on preliminary GWMP survey results in March or April 2021. Certainly this will be of major interest to the SLCA membership as well as other Associations along the Parkway.

Once the Survey is published, it's expected that the public will be allowed to comment on Survey results via open hearings before final decisions are made.

Note: Should members have questions, concerns or comments on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, or any other transportation item for that matter, you are welcome to contact our SLCA transportation representative, directly, at the e-mail address published at the back of this newsletter.

SLCA Historical Archives

We live in a remarkable community and now we are digging into the past to find out just how extraordinary our neighborhood really is! The Stratford Landing Citizens Association (SLCA) is in the process of creating an historical archive based upon the records and 'fun facts' we've discovered about our neighborhood and the surrounding area. We are posting this information on our SLCA website <https://www.stratford-landing.org/> under the "History" button.

Many of us are already familiar with the history of our neighborhood stretching back to 1760 when George Washington purchased the land upon which our houses are built from William Clifton for 1210 pounds sterling and which became Washington's 'River Farm'. However, the area that is currently Stratford Landing was originally occupied by the Doeg (also called Dogue, Taux, Tauxenet)

people well before the arrival of the English. The Doeg most likely spoke Piscataway, a dialect of Algonquin. Captain John Smith even made a brief appearance in our historical archives as he sailed past our neighborhood in the summer of 1608 stopping at the Doeg villages along his way to the rapids above current-day Washington, D.C.

The Stratford Landing community, as we know it today, began in 1956 - created by Long Island builders Ernest C. Beck and Walter Beck. Sales were handled by The Stratford Realty Company and it was said of the Beck brothers that they had a "floating sales office" that carried prospects along Little Hunting Creek to tour the properties. A Washington Post article from the period noted that the "Colonial style ranches and split levels" were selling for \$20,000 to \$25,000 and that Little Hunting Creek "has been a good fishing ground since the days of George Washington, who personally wrote of the good fishing to his friend, Arthur Young, in England."

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The Post article goes on to quote from President Washington’s letter to his friend writing, “this river is well supplied with various kinds of fish at all seasons of the year and in the spring” and noting that the land (upon which Stratford Landing is built) “afforded pleasant sites for houses on the river.” Clearly the charms of our unique waterside community were evident even going back hundreds of years!

The beauty of our waterways and abundant wildlife have long been a source of pride and enjoyment, but our history is rich as well and SLCA is excited about this new historical archive initiative which promises to unearth even more treasures. We will be spotlighting this project in periodic postings on our Stratford Landing Facebook page as well as in our newsletter so stay tuned for more ‘fun facts’ about our wonderful community!

And, please feel free to share any information you – or someone you know – might have regarding the history of our Stratford Landing neighborhood. We especially welcome any stories, pictures, or documents about the “early days” of our community as it developed from the original houses and streets to what it is today. You can contact us at StratfordLandingCitizensAssoc@Gmail.com to share your historical perspective and be a part of this exciting new initiative!



A beautiful photo of the woods and creek behind Fort Hunt Elementary School.

Fairfax County Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination

Fairfax County Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination released three online public surveys to gather the input and feedback of county residents and stakeholders on issues pertaining to the development of the CECAP. They are available here:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/cecap-public-surveys>

Historic Overlay District for River Farm

The County is considering the creation of a Historic Overlay District (HOD) for the Wellington at River Farm property. The public is invited to join County staff for a virtual Community Meeting on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. More information can be found at:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/plan-amendments/river-farm-hod>

 Follow Stratford Landing Citizens Association on Facebook to get more neighborhood news!
[Facebook.com/StratfordLandingCitizensAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/StratfordLandingCitizensAssociation)



March 20 - April 11, 2021 | <https://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org>

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