

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 2

Occoquan Watershed Coalition May 1995

Your Property Values and Indeed Your Home are Threatened

Get Involved Now !!!

If you live on or near any one of 23 road systems in the Fairfax Station/Clifton areas to include Yates Ford, Henderson, Clifton, Wolf Run Shoals, Hampton, Chapel, Maple Branch, etc. -- you have reason to be extremely concerned. Prince William County has arrogantly suggested that one or more of your "rural, scenic by-ways" become a parkway-to-parkway, limited-access, four lane highway complete with sound barriers. This connector will prove to be inadequate and will grow to 6 lanes very quickly.

If this happens, approximately 60,000 additional cars and trucks from Prince William and other southern Counties will be added to the Fairfax County Parkway daily. Just imagine the ever growing gridlock and the impact upon the Fairfax Station/Clifton areas as well as all of Fairfax County. The Occoquan Watershed Coalition needs your help. Since December, OWC volunteers have worked hundreds of hours; attended over 90 meetings; written and sent over 950 letters, faxes, and memos on behalf of the Coalition membership who do not want a new major road system

arbitrarily dumping traffic onto your Parkway. The groundwork has been laid but we need a transfusion. We need your attention, help, support, and talent. This is serious business and the fight cannot be fought and won unless we mobilize.

What Can You Do?

Get personally involved ! Come to the OWC General Membership Meeting at 7:30PM on May 24, at the Community Meeting Hall in Clifton. Get up to date. We will have detailed information as to what's happening and where we together as a Coalition are headed! Light refreshments will be provided.

Bring your friends and neighbors. If you are an Assn. President be certain you get this information to your residents and be positive you or your representatives attend the OWC meeting on the 24th. Meet and join the people who have been working very hard to protect our collective interests. Please offer your assistance in any of the following areas:

- Telephone/Fax Trees
- Distributing Materials
- Committee Membership
- Edit/Publish Newsletter (Qtrly)
- Hold Fund Raisers
- Organize carpools to attend important meetings
- Letter writing campaigns
- Admin/clerical/copying
- Graphics/printing/mailing
- As well as other areas

Action Highlights - We have been busy!!

As you know the Coalition was organized on Dec. 7, 1994. Your Board of Directors have met three times since then. We have concluded that we need more broad-based support and individual involvement as the issues are complex and encompassing. - You really are needed!!!

. . . . The January 25, 1995 Policy Letter - Where We Stand !

Early-on major coalition effort focused on an in-depth analysis of the VA Dept of Transportation (VDOT) DRAFT Request for Proposal (RFP) for the upcoming Western Fairfax Transportation Study. VDOT's RFP proposed a new central crossing most likely to be a PWC Parkway-to FFC Parkway Connector intended to meet local inter-county commuter needs. In reality this new crossing would provide the linkage that would create a defacto Western Bypass through Clifton and Fairfax Station - into the center of Fairfax County. Working closely together the Coalition and the Springfield District Council developed a detailed letter, mailed on January 25 to 68 elected and appointed officials and key organizations,

outlining major problems with VDOT's RFP. Many Coalition members participated to include Al Akers, Sandy Bittner, Jerry Little, Bill Cole, Mike Thompson and David Schnare - - - close-knit teamwork is our cornerstone! The January 25 policy statement is a dynamic document subject to change as we better understand the traffic challenges facing us.

.... Henderson Road - a Rural Road! Let's Keep It That Way!!!!

In the spring of 1994 Jerry Little alerted the Clifton-Fairfax Station communities and filed a nomination to amend the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan to "widen and improve" Henderson between Ox Road and Old Yates Ford Road. Nobody knows how this notation to the County plan came about. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved his amendment on Nov. 22, 1994. This was significant, as it returned Henderson Rd to its rural status, thus preempting efforts to arbitrarily develop this road into a major commuter artery with the high chance of additional lanes being added This threat has not died.

.... Route 123 - A Citizens's Task Force should have been formed!

Reaching out to nearby communities, your Coalition in March took a forceful position regarding VDOT's proposed alignments to Route 123. In a letter to Virginia's Secretary of Transportation, OWC supported Hampton East Homeowner

Association's position, recommending that in the future a "Citizen's Task Force" be included in the planning and construction phases for major highway projects.

.... We Get Together - An Interim Citizen's Working Group is formed!

On Mar 27, on the initiative of the Transportation Advisory Commission, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors set up a short-term Task Force/Citizens Working Group. The working group is to review the 23 transportation alternatives presented by VDOT to the Fairfax/Prince William County Joint Subcommittee. The group was also tasked to look at the public participation process and how it might best work for this upcoming Western Fairfax Transportation Study. The Coalition is well represented and will work positively over the next 90 days to explore any reasonable options.

.... The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) - Where Road Dollars are Disbursed!

On Mar 30 the Coalition priorities for primary roads only were presented to the CTB's annual pre-allocation hearing for Northern Virginia highway systems. The CTB, chaired by the VA Secretary for Transportation, is a powerful committee. No real monies are allocated without their approval. Your Coalition proposed the following:

I -- Top Priorities --

- ➡ VA 28/29 Intersection - Complete environmental study and accelerate construction.
- ➡ VA 28 Improvements - Place construction work on a fast track.
- ➡ Increase capacity of I-95 and VA 123 Corridors - Extend new lanes on I-95 to Exit 158 at the PWC Pkwy. Widen VA 123 to 6 lanes between Hooes Rd and the south side of the Occoquan Bridge.

II -- Additional Priorities --

- ➡ Upgrade the I-95,I-395,I-495 Interchange - Recommend funds for engineering and environmental documentation be provided for conventional access to the Franconia/Springfield Parkway.
- ➡ Construct -four lane VA 234 Bypass in Prince William County.
- ➡ "Western Fairfax Transportation Study" - Study is biased toward a central PWC to FFC parkway-to-parkway connection. Additional funding is needed to consider all feasible alternatives - not just an engineering feasibility study. A Major Investment Study is required.

.... Through Truck Traffic - Incompatible with Rural Roads!

In an April 28 letter to the VA Secretary of Transportation the OWC took a strong position to

prohibit through truck traffic on Old Yates Ford Rd from the PWC line to Henderson Rd and Henderson from Old Yates Ford to Route 123. The Coalition strongly endorsed the comments and recommendations provided separately by Clifton Mayor Jim Chesley and Supervisor Elaine McConnell and other officials. We need your support in the form of letters to pull this off! Send to: Secretary Robert F. Martinez, Commonwealth of Virginia, 9th St Office Bldg, Richmond, VA 23219.

... Occoquan Oversight Committee

The Occoquan Oversight Cmte has convened and been organized into three subcommittees - Legal, Engineering, and Environmental. Essentially the Legal Subcommittee will concentrate on identifying federal, state and local restrictions and laws regarding infringements on parklands, watersheds, and wetlands. The Engineering Subcommittee will research, investigate, and check out the impact of proposed construction over water supply reservoirs to include Fairfax County areas designated as the "Private Open Space" part of the Environmental Quality Corridor. The Environmental Subcommittee will monitor the environmental aspects of actions impacting on the Occoquan Watershed area and prepare committee positions relative thereto.

Any member of OWC who feels qualified to serve on any of the above subcommittees, please contact Bill Cole, Al Akers or Jerry Little. **by Jim Johnson**

... Foot Recon of Bull Run!

On Feb 11, believing that the best way to determine any possible crossing sites is to recon the area in question by foot, a small and hearty contingent of the Coalition traversed the Bull Run starting at Route 28 and moving east to the railroad. This seven mile reconnaissance has been invaluable in gaining a better understanding of possible corridor options to solve our developing commuter problems.

... Gypsy Moth -- the Scourge of the Watershed!

On February 21, Presidents of local Homeowner Associations met at the invitation of Mike Thompson, Chairman of the Springfield District Council, with a representative of the National Gypsy Moth Management Group. This meeting was held to discuss what can be done by combining communities not covered by the County spray program. This is an example of how your Coalition is interacting positively with other umbrella organizations to help solve mutual problems by working together.

... Recon of Occoquan - by Land and by Sea!

On Feb. 25 seven members of the OWC went on a water and land

reconnaissance of the Occoquan River. The objective was to observe first-hand the impact of the extensive developments along the PWC edge of the river. It appeared from cursory examination that PWC was utilizing state-of-the-art environmental techniques. It remains unclear, however, what long-term impact there will be on the river and water quality (some 500,000 local people depend on this water supply) once this high density development is complete and fully occupied.

... Learning from Others - Meetings with Other Associations!

A group from OWC met with the Federation of Lorton Communities' leadership on Mar. 26 to discuss their unique problems and solutions to the process involving the Lorton Facility and its impact on us. We were impressed that the Federation had been able to unite local communities into a strong, positive and creative force. On April 11 the Coalition was represented at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Lorton Federation Board. Now we understand each other better.

Though transportation issues have consumed most of our time, we have been actively involved in other matters. The need to reach out to other associations quickly became clear to us. Positive and productive time was spent developing relationships and affiliations with the Springfield District Council, Town of Clifton, Western Fairfax Citizens Assn (Centreville), Lorton Federation of

Communities, South Run Coalition
and the Lakeridge
Occoquan Civic Assn (LOCA).

. . . . Renowned Artist
Assists OWC !

Ed Bierly is an internationally recognized major wildlife artist and a long-time resident in the OWC area. His paintings have been exhibited at the New York Natural History Museum, The Smithsonian Institution, The Royal Ontario Museum and the National Audubon Society. He is a three-time winner of the national competition for the Federal Duck Stamp design and a member of the Society of Animal Artists. Ed has graciously volunteered to create some original art work for OWC.

General Membership Meeting
7:30PM, May 24, 1995
Clifton Community Hall

It is important that you attend. Each association should be well represented. Please mark your calendar and plan to be there. We are inviting, Senator Warren Barry, Delegate Jay O'Brien, Delegate David Albo, Chairman Kate Hanley, and Supervisor Elaine McConnell and others.

A question and answer time is scheduled along with a social period where we can meet, greet, and get to know one another. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Questions/Additional
Information - Call 764-1300!!**