

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 4

Occoquan Watershed Coalition October 1995

10600 Sandy Run Trail, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 | 703-764-1300 | Fax 703-764-3762

OWC Actions Continue

Your Board and its committees continue to actively pursue a number of matters. Obviously, transportation issues have taken up most of our time. You have probably read articles in the CenterView, Connection, or Times newspapers about our involvement and positions on various subjects. Most of what you have read about us is accurate but there have been distortions too. We deliberately decided not to respond to certain letters to the editor you may have seen in the local newspapers. We have elected instead to give no further attention to the writer of these letters as there are representatives of the Sully District and the communities therein who are in positions of public responsibility, who have valuable information to share, and/or who have demonstrated both intellectual discipline and forthright honesty.

Citizens Working Group Results

In our May, 1995 newsletter mention was made concerning the formation of a Citizens Working Group (CWG) composed of selected citizens from the Mt. Vernon, Springfield, and Sully Districts. The CWG was established on March 27, 1995 at the direction of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to review the issues involved in the proposed Western Fairfax Transportation Study.

Significantly, Fairfax County ranks No. 1 out of 3141 counties (1990 census) for percentage of workers in executive, administrative, and management occupations. The individual and collective talents, skills, and experience of the members of the CWG across all three jurisdictions was clearly evident -- many of whom are highly professional men and women currently working as statisticians, engineers, lawyers, consultants, environmentalists, builders, and company presidents, and included one member of the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Transportation Research and Development under the auspices of the White House.

The Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) members from these three districts co-chaired six meetings which were conducted over a 90 day period. The TAC member from the Sully District, Dick Frank, served as facilitator. Several participants were from umbrella organizations, such as the Fairfax County Federation of Citizen Associations and the League of Women Voters. Most, however, were representatives of communities which would be impacted by one or more of the approximately twenty routes that citizens and County staff had recommended for inclusion in the Western Fairfax Transportation Study.

Springfield District residents constituted about half of the 50 CWG membership as all but three of the

proposed routes are in this district. This representation was agreed to by the respective TAC co-chairs. Because of the composition of the CWG, the members agreed that voting was inappropriate and the group operated on the basis of consensus. If in the course of CWG discussions objection was raised, then that issue or position was either fully resolved or discarded. Despite a constrained time frame, volatile subject matter, and a demanding format to attain agreement, there was a broad-based citizen consensus on many tough, intractable issues.

In summary, the decisions reached represent total consensus by all members of the CWG with no minority report filed. In a real sense the citizens most impacted by a potential crossing of the Occoquan have clearly spoken. The CWG report included agreed upon Principles, Rationale, Strategy, and Measures of Effectiveness. which will guide in formulating the consultant study.

Trends, page 194 of the Adopted Budget Plan of Fairfax County.

Virginia, FY1996, dtd Feb 27, 1995

Recent Transportation Action by Fairfax

County Board of Supervisors

On September 18, 1995, Supervisor McConnell, a member of the Fairfax/Prince William Joint Sub-Committee for the Western Fairfax Transportation Study, gave the Fairfax County Board a brief synopsis of some related transportation events that have transpired over the past few years. She stressed the need for improvements in the study parameters and referenced a list of recommendations she had provided the subcommittee on Nov 16, 1994 that she felt needed to be included and considered in the final draft of the proposed study. She mentioned the efforts and recommendations of the Citizens Working Group. She informed the Board of unilateral actions by Prince William County to build a four lane connector from their parkway to the Yates Ford bridge area. She also referred to a recent (8/23/95) PWC planning document which referenced the planned construction of a Ridgefield Parkway from the PWC Parkway across the Occoquan River connecting to Fairfax County. This action, with or without input from Fairfax County, in an area that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has made great strides to protect. **For these reasons she said it is vital that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors establish guidelines so that the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, County staffs, Virginia Dept of Transportation, and citizens of both Fairfax and Prince William Counties have a clear understanding of our position.** Following her synopsis and

certain amendments by other Fairfax County Supervisors, the following recommendations were unanimously approved:

- Fairfax County supports a regional (bi-County) response that addresses the needs and concerns of people on both sides of the Occoquan;
- Fairfax County recognizes that it is critical to protect the Occoquan reservoir, the County's source of drinking water;
- Fairfax County supports prompt action to study and address transportation needs, using the Principles and their supporting rationale and the Measures of Effectiveness proposed by the Citizens' Working Group;
- Fairfax County supports actions that will maintain flow on the Fairfax County Parkway;
- Fairfax County supports active bi-County citizen involvement throughout the process, including prompt formation of a joint Prince William-Fairfax Citizens' Task Force;
- Fairfax County opposes unilateral actions, such as development of a four lane road from the Prince William Parkway to the Yates Ford Road bridge area, by any jurisdiction before the completion of a transportation study and consideration of a plan of action; and
- Fairfax County supports inclusion of mass transit options

in the study and proposed plan of action.

Springfield District Council

The Springfield District Council is an umbrella group of Homeowner/Civic Associations representing the Springfield magisterial district. The OWC and its members have a history of being active members of the SDC. Both the SDC and OWC are affiliated with the county-wide Federation of Civic Associations.

The SDC was successful in pushing for spot-improvements on Old Keene Mill Road and expanding the I-95/395/495 Improvement Study area to include more of the impacted area west of I-95 and the Parkway intersection with I-95. The SDC has been successful in presenting community re-zoning concerns to the County for resolution. Much of the SDC success has been due to its long-standing relationship with our Supervisor and other local and state elected officials.

The interests of the SDC and OWC in the District are interrelated. Transportation concerns, such as the recent Occoquan River crossing study, are examples of why we need to work together. A new road through the Occoquan Basin has traffic implications which will reverberate throughout the District.

New concerns within the District are land use issues such as the Ft. Belvoir Proving Ground and

Lorton Prison site, which are federally owned or controlled land in our neighboring Lee and Mt. Vernon Districts. I hope the SDC will continue to be of service to the OWC.

by **Mike Shannon, Chairman**
Springfield District Council

Moving Traffic from PWC: A Springfield District and Fairfax County Perspective

Today, Springfield is taking a huge "hit" in relieving the transportation headache in our County including taking a tremendous amount of traffic from Prince William County. The Fairfax County Parkway and the widening of Route 123 from two lanes to four lanes (and eventually to six lanes) will produce six to eight additional road lanes cutting through the western part of Springfield District with over 60 new lane miles of roads.

With the completion of the new Fairfax County Parkway, over 20 additional lane miles will be added to our roads with the widening of Rolling, Lee chapel, Burke Center Parkway, Braddock, etc., to "feed" traffic into this new cross county roadway.

At least 81.7 new lane miles of roads are in place or in the works over the next few years in the Springfield District without the expansion of Route 123 to its full 6 lane capacity. That's as far as it is from the Clifton Community Center to Kings' Dominion!

So Springfield is doing more than its fair share to reduce traffic problems in Fairfax County.

In Sully District the widening of Route 28 to six lanes is already planned. They should move quickly to complete this expansion as Supervisor Elaine McConnell has done with Route 123 in Springfield.

What is clearly missing in improving the Northern Virginia transportation problem is a willingness on the part of Prince William County to build its roads to properly meet Route 28 in the west. Prince William seems unwilling to look at its own side of the river to solve its problem. Instead, it wants to pour 60,000 or more cars a day in the middle of Fairfax County at Butts Corner (Route 123 and the Fairfax County Parkway) and turn its back saying, "Our job's done. Now you take care of it from here." Those 60,000 cars are equal to the number that travel Braddock Road at the Beltway each morning. This is simply unacceptable.

Prince William should complete its own Parkway to connect to Route 28 and Route 28 should be expanded as originally planned. That, along with the widening of Route 123 will do a lot to resolve the traffic problem between our two counties.

We do not need to cut through the environmentally sensitive Occoquan Watershed because Prince William will not take the logical transportation moves necessary in its own County. And our Supervisors should stand up and clearly state this to our Prince William County neighbors.

Fairfax County is doing a lot to relieve the traffic headaches in our area. Springfield District is doing more than our fair share to help solve the transportation

crisis. A "central crossing" through the watershed pouring 60,000 additional cars onto our Parkway every morning will be two and a half times more traffic than was planned for it to take when designed and approved. Its time for our Supervisors to explain clearly to Prince William that we will work with them only if they channel their commuters to the corridors already established and available to them -- Routes 123, 95, and 28!

by **Michael Thompson**
(Former Chairman, Springfield District Council)

Please Inform OWC of Your New President

We can communicate more efficiently with you if our address lists are up to date and include the names of your current president or representative. Please call or send us a note on your changes!

Gypsy Moth Infestation is Down

Fairfax County's Gypsy Moth office reports that recent egg mass surveys by their office throughout the County have revealed a surprisingly low infestation. The spray program this year was evidently very successful. Individual homeowner reports on egg mass surveys should have been sent in by October 1st. In that there are still some pockets of infestation, the Gypsy Moth office said they will accept late surveys from owners noting heavy infestation. Though some spraying is planned for 1996, it is much less than this year. Two areas in Springfield are planned for spraying; one near Lorton and the other near Yates Ford Rd & Kincheloe. To conduct a survey, lay out a 36 ft diameter circle in

your worst area of infestation. Count all the egg masses you can find and multiply that number by 40. This will give you the equivalent number of egg masses per acre and that is the number you need to report. If you come up with a count of 250/per acre or more you should report this to the Fairfax County Gypsy Moth Office at 324-5304. The Gypsy Moth office will then conduct an on site confirmation inspection and if treatment is required, it will be scheduled.

Additional Hearing Planned on Route 123 Alignment Options

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors directed the staff to schedule an additional public hearing concerning the widening of Route 123 and its alignment. The proposed project involves widening Route 123 to four lanes, divided on a six-lane right of way. This is the last segment to be widened and is generally located between the Occoquan River and a point south of Burke Lake Road. There are up to five alternative road alignments being considered. The Board has directed the staff to request VDOT hold an additional public hearing, amend their procedures to allow more public participation, and invite members of the Board of Supervisors to attend. **Watch the papers for the announcement of the hearing and make plans to attend it!**

Two Recent Newspaper Articles of Interest:

Supervisors Are United Against Occoquan Span

By Kara Vick - Times Staff Writer

September 21, 1995

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors united on Monday to send a message to Prince William County not to plan to build a bridge over the Occoquan Reservoir.

The move came after worries surfaced that Prince William was in favor of building a bridge across the reservoir, which is part of the Occoquan River that divides the two counties.

Officials fear that another bridge built in south-central Fairfax across the Occoquan would flood secondary roads in that part of the county with more Prince William commuters going to and from work.

The bridge that Prince William favors would be called Ridgefield Parkway and it would extend between Yates Road Bridge and the bridge for Route 123.

An Aug. 23 letter to Prince William's Planning Commission states "... Funds are committed for construction of a segment of Ridgefield Parkway from Prince William Parkway across the Occoquan River connection to Fairfax County."

"I think it's totally unacceptable to accept that kind of traffic into Fairfax County," said Fairfax Supervisor Elaine McConnell (R-Springfield). "We'd be opening the flood

gates." Sully Supervisor Michael Frey (R) said: "These people are trying to get to our employment centers."

McConnell said many Prince William residents work in Fairfax County. "Prince William County actions include but are not limited to the approval of a Prince William County bond for the construction of the Yates Ford Road Connector, ongoing acquisition of right of way from developers for a future connection to the Fairfax County Parkway [Jack Herrity Parkway] via the Ridgefield Parkway and absolute disregard to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan," McConnell said. Fairfax County has, however, recognized that something needs to be done to accommodate the commuter traffic. But members of the Occoquan Watershed Coalition believe that a central crossing over the Occoquan would threaten the reservoir's drinking water, force condemnation or devalue scores of homes and overwhelm the Herrity Parkway.

Albert Akers, vice president of the Occoquan Watershed Coalition said, "We want to work regionally to solve the problem. Prince William is not working regionally."

Prince William supervisors had not received copies of the Fairfax County position as of Wednesday.

In August, Jessie Oak, president of the Lake Ridge Occoquan Civic Association in Prince William County, told the Times that there hasn't been much discussion in Prince William about the issue.

"We are concerned about it, but there is not a whole lot we can do until the Powers That Be decide what we want to do," Oak said.

Fairfax Anti-Bridge Stand Dismays' Pr. William Leader

By Kara Vick - Times Staff Writer

September 28, 1995

Extracts:

In the going controversy that some have called the "Third Battle of Manassas," Prince William Supervisor Terrence Spellane (I-Coles) said he was "surprised and dismayed" that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to oppose a bridge across the Occoquan Reservoir until completion of a comprehensive study of transportation in the two-county area.

.... On Sept. 18, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a list of recommendations that would discourage Prince William from seeking to build a bridge across the Occoquan Reservoir to link up with roads in south-central Fairfax before completion of a transportation study and consideration of a joint, two county plan.

.... Fairfax supervisors sent the message to Prince William because they feared that a bridge across the reservoir would flood secondary roads in the southwestern part of the county with more Prince William commuters going to and from work.

The bridge that Prince William favors would be called Ridgefield Parkway and it would extend between Yates Road Bridge and the bridge on Route 123.

.... State funds are available for an Occoquan River crossing, but the bridge can't be build without

the approval of the state and both counties.

.... The Fairfax Supervisors amended the draft of the letter, leaving out words that they opposed additional or expanded crossings of Occoquan Reservoir and that they opposed a parkway-to-parkway connector between Fairfax and Prince William.

"The motion passed with amendments leaves the door open to study all the alternatives," said Spellane, who favors asking an independent consultant to study the traffic patterns and possible alternative routes.

In the letter to Prince William officials, Fairfax supervisors say that Prince William has "... absolute disregard to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan.

.... The joint subcommittee doesn't plan to meet before Election Day.