



Tara-Leeway Heights Community News

A Quarterly Newsletter for Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association Members

Winter 2002

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TLCA Board Supports Swanson Addition

The Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association Board demonstrated strong support for the Swanson Middle School addition at a County School Board special meeting on February 20. Swanson is one of eight schools competing for limited funding in the next bond issue. Delay in approval could defer this project for several years, but last minute objections threatened to derail the critically needed addition. President John Vihstadt submitted the following letter to the County School Board members:

"The Board of Directors of the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association is pleased to join our friends and neighbors with the Dominion Hills Civic Association, Madison Manor Civic Association, Tuckahoe Elementary School PTA, McKinley Elementary School PTA and Swanson Middle School PTA in full support of the proposed addition to Swanson Middle School.

"As you are aware, the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association boundaries include Lexington St. on the west, George Mason Dr. on the east, 22nd St. N. on the north, and Washington Blvd. and 16th St. N. on the south. As such, all children within our boundaries have the opportunity to attend Swanson Middle School.

"As we believe has been amply demonstrated, the need for the addition is clear. The significant overcrowding, children learning in trailers in back of the school, and the loss of the tennis courts and other active green space are proof enough. Accordingly, we want to focus on three main points that appear to be the central thrust of those opposing the addition in its current form and at this time:

1. **PROCESS:** Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association member and Swanson parent Dawn Phillips has been a Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) member since inception. Our association hosted Schools staff and the project architect for a detailed, well-received presentation at our Dec. meeting, which was open to all and announced on our Website. The BLPC met painstakingly for months to coalesce around a consensus proposal after considering a range of options.
2. **SITING:** There appears to be a no viable alternative to an addition facing Washington Blvd. While the loss of scarce open space in Arlington is always unfortunate, building up, behind or on the side of the school carry far more negatives than does the current proposal.
3. **PRESERVATION AND DESIGN:** While there may be opportunities for further refinement, we believe that the proposed all-brick addition blends well with the current structure, and with appropriate landscaping, will enhance the Washington Blvd. streetscape. Schools must grow and adapt to changing needs.

"By approving this addition, the School Board will help ensure that Swanson Middle School continues to serve our children and the Arlington community in the best way possible for many years to come."

Sincerely yours, John Vihstadt
President, Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association

On the Horizon

In April and May, be on the lookout for your personal Neighborhood Issues Survey as a prelude to updating the 1980 Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Your participation is essential!

Our Annual Meeting is slated for May. Hot topics include the board and officer elections, update on hospital construction, summer mosquito eradication and more.

School Board Proposes Actions on Swanson

On February 21, the Arlington County School Board voted unanimously in favor of two actions related to the proposed Swanson addition design:

- First, the Board approved the 35% design. This included a locker room renovation in the base project.
- Second, the Board asked the architect, Swanson Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC), and the Arlington Public Schools staff to evaluate the creation of two smaller additions on the school front lawn. In evaluating this option, focus would be placed on the degree to which it supports the educational program necessary for a teamed middle school; the ability to maintain the students' safety during construction; and the cost differential compared with the single addition alternative already proposed.

Evaluating the two-addition option must be completed before March 21 in time to get information for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) recommendations.

Continued on page 2

*Tara-Leeway Heights
Civic Association
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Neighborhood Spotlight

NEIGHBORHOOD SIGN CONTEST

Our neighborhood now has the opportunity to really identify ourselves. The County Board has approved funding for Tara-Leeway Heights neighborhood signs through the Neighborhood Conservation Program.

Interested neighbors, use your creative talents to design the Tara-Leeway Heights neighborhood sign. Have an idea? Need an idea? Check out the signs in other neighborhoods like Arl. Heights, Donaldson Run, Lyon Village, Maywood, Waverly Hills, Westover Village, and Yorktown, just to name a few.

Submit your entry by April 30 on 8 1/2 x 11-in. paper with name, street address, and telephone number on the back. Send your entries to Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association, PO Box 50022, Arlington, VA 22205. You can also drop your entry off with any of the board members (see next column for names).

The civic association board will judge the entries. The winning entry will be presented at May's Annual Membership meeting.

School Board Actions on Swanson (continued)

The Board also asked the Swanson BLPC and staff to continue exploring off-site parking options. Also, a nearby neighbor and a representative from the groups concerned about historic preservation will be added to the BLPC membership.

The Superintendent will present his recommendations for the 2002 bond and the six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) at the March 21 School Board meeting. Look for these recommendations on the School Board website at www.arlington.k12.va.us by March 26.

The School Board will hold three work sessions (April 2, 11, and 16) to consider the recommendations. The public hearing on the bond proposal will be on April 11 at the Education Center, 1426 N. Quincy St. at 7:30 p.m.

The School Board is scheduled to adopt the bond proposal and the CIP on May 2.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you interested in representing your neighborhood on the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association Board? New board members and officers are voted in at the May general membership meeting.

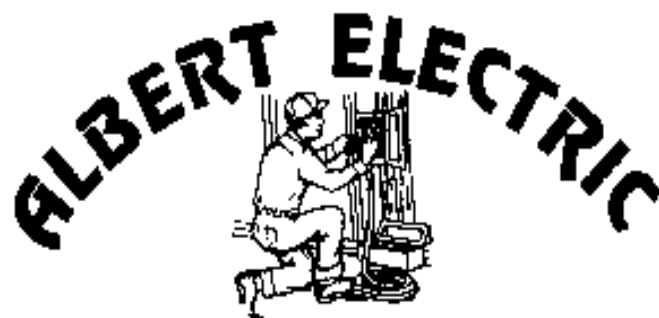
TLHCA is looking for help on community projects as well as communication activities. If you want to become involved in your civic association, contact John Vihstadt at 703-237-6734 or email us at the TLHCA web site.

Go to the Web for News from the Tara Leeway Heights Civic Association!

Are you looking for a community project status or civic association board meeting minutes? Do you want to be included in email correspondence? Let us know! Go to <http://www.geocities.com/tlhca>.

We are thinking about starting a community resource bulletin board on our website to give you an opportunity to share information with your neighbors. Are you celebrating news you want to share? Parents, are you looking for a dependable babysitter for a Saturday night out? Kids, this may be the place to advertise your services! Spring is here. How about doing yard work or mowing lawns? Any yard sales coming up? Want to set up a neighborhood book club or special get together? Please email the civic association at tlhca@yahoo.com

The TLHCA Webmaster reserves the right to determine posting information. Inappropriate material will not be included on the bulletin board.



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TLHCA Officers (one-year terms expiring May 2002)

President: John Vihstadt (703) 237-6734
Vice President: Frank Foote
Treasurer: Ted Stump
Secretary: Laurie Hayden

Board of Directors:

<u>Terms expire May 2002:</u>	<u>Terms expire May 2003:</u>
Willis Braswell	David Calabrese
Jonathan Newman	Tess Cappello
Richard Strasser	Emily Cunningham
	Brian Lineweaver
	Roberta Fox
	Noelle Logan
	Jim Meditz
	Bill Sample
	Robin Schmid

From the President



While some creatures may be in winter hibernation, your civic association has been incredibly active over the last several months. Here are just a few of our highlights:

First, our board took a leadership role in supporting a badly needed addition and partial renovation of Swanson Middle School, the attendance boundaries of which cover our entire neighborhood. In this newsletter, you'll see a copy of our letter to the Arlington School Board and information from a press release of the School Board action in supporting the addition. We intend to closely monitor building developments.

Second, board members Bill Braswell and Emily Cunningham were instrumental in securing funding through the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Council of monies for the placement of Tara-Leeway Heights neighborhood signs at certain "gateways" to the neighborhood. Artists, please note our pending contest to help us design these signs.

Third, members of our board have been in ongoing discussions with Virginia Hospital Center-Arlington about mitigating the impact of hospital construction on the east side of our boundaries, particularly parking by hospital staff and visitors on neighborhood streets.

Fourth, in response to pedestrian safety concerns, especially for school children, the board voted to send a letter to the County in support of a four-way stop sign at the intersection of North 22nd and Illinois Streets.

Fifth, alarmed by the closure of the Westover Market, we've been in contact with both County officials and the manager of the shopping center to declare our support for another full service grocery store in that space.

None of this happens without cooperative effort. Please be sure to attend our annual meeting in May and get involved. Drop us a line, visit our website at <http://www.geocities.com/tlhca>, or give me a call at (703) 237-6734.

See you around the 'hood.....John Vihstadt

Wanted: Neighborhood Historian

Members of the Tara-Leeway Civic Association are currently working on revising its 1980 Neighborhood Conservation Plan. An updated plan allows us as a community to evaluate existing conditions, establish goals, and make recommendations to the County Board to protect and improve the quality of life in our neighborhood for years to come. An important component is documenting our neighborhood's history. If you have such knowledge (historic events, locations, structures, etc.), old photos, etc., and would like to help this cause, please contact Emily Cunningham (ekcunningham@earthlink.net) or Bill Braswell (Braswell67@att.net).

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"Working with Todd and his crews was a good experience. The quality of workmanship was excellent, especially in the tile work, the custom book shelves, the wallboard finishing, and all painting and staining. The plumbing and electrical work was also excellent. All projects were completed in a timely manner. The value and use added to our home by Todd and his crews far exceeds the reasonable cost to complete the work."

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