

Deliberation Day



At 9:15 and again at
11:30, please join
circle number

Saturday
March 17, 2007
8:45 a.m. to 12:30
p.m.

Mary Ellen
Henderson Middle
School

Deliberation Day Schedule

Opening

- 8:45 a.m. Register and visit a community group representative
- 9:00 a.m. Take an assembly seat for welcome
- 9:10 a.m. Move to assigned small tables

First Round

- 9:15 a.m. Ground rules
How does what we are becoming affect you?
- 9:30 a.m. First approach presented for discussion
- 9:45 a.m. Second approach presented for discussion
- 10:00 a.m. Third approach presented for discussion
- 10:15 a.m. Each group composes three questions for city officials
- 10:30 a.m. Move back to assembly seats
- 10:35 a.m. Meet with city officials
- 11:25 a.m. Return to assigned seats at small tables

Second Round

- 11:30 a.m. Discuss and list steps people should take
 - (a) as individuals
 - (b) through community organizations and
 - (c) through government
- 11:45 a.m. Post your list on the wall and review others' lists
- 11:55 a.m. Take a seat for discussion with city officials
- 12:30 p.m. Adjourn – you can visit a community group representative on your way out

Thank you for coming.
Let us have your comments – see the back page.

Ground Rules

Ground Rules

Every person in the group gets *a chance* to speak once before anyone speaks twice.

Speak from *your own* experience.

Be aware of *assumptions*, especially your own. *Talk about them.*

Suspend *judgment*, even when you disagree.

Address *one another*, not the moderator or the scribe.

Avoid *repeating* what was just said; build on previous comments or identify new thoughts to contribute.

Help the leader enforce these ground rules.

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- Village Preservation and Improvement Society
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The City of Falls Church:

What Are We Becoming?

The City of Falls Church formally established itself in 1948. It was the product of a war-time boom that by 1950 had tripled its population to 7,500. During the 1950s and 1960s, the newly incorporated city built Virginia's best school system, and its population increased 44% more, to 10,800. In 2005, Falls Church had 10,600 residents. The City officially projects an increase to 12,300 by 2010, and to 14,900 by 2025. The City's projections may prove conservative or they may fall short. What is certain is the official sense that change is ahead.

Despite passing talk now and again about being absorbed by the larger neighboring jurisdictions, Falls Church has remained fiercely independent. A strong spirit of self-determination prevails, with more than 265 residents serving on over 37 city and school advisory boards and commissions and dozens of business, community and nonprofit organizations that work to serve the community's needs and best interests.

However, as times have changed, the people involved in shepherding the well-being of the community have also changed. The 1980s upsurge in working women -- coupled with increased demands imposed by the economy and commuting in a growing region -- contributed to a general downturn in civic involvement by Falls Church residents over the past two decades.

Yet, no matter who is involved or the reasons why, residents remain passionate about social, political and economic issues. The Falls Church City Government, its boards and commissions and various business, community and nonprofit organizations provide ongoing funding and support for various programs and services that serve Falls Church youth, the elderly and others in need.

Further, various policies and programs that focus on recycling, crime reduction and other challenges suggest a community and government committed to sustaining Falls Church as a desirable place to live and to work.

Continuing to provide high quality education, needed social programs, and other community amenities -- as well as the City's infrastructure -- requires tax dollars.

Some residents and businesses are comfortable with paying the same or higher taxes to sustain Falls Church's current level of public goods and services. Others believe in setting priorities and limiting choices, thereby limiting taxes. Yet others believe in the benefits of growth, i.e., new homes, new programs and services are all a part of enhancing diversity and broadening the tax base. Which approach is the best path for Falls Church?

In November 2006 the Falls Church City Council adopted a vision statement. It describes Falls Church as "a shining example of a city that has been able to retain the benefits of small town life, while remaining financially sustainable, and a full participant in one of our nation's most dynamic metropolitan areas."

The statement sets forth eight unifying principles: successful development, world-class public schools, neighborhood preservation and community life, diversity, environmental harmony, innovation, world-class government and public outreach and the special nature of the place that is Falls Church.

Is this is a desirable vision for Falls Church? If so, how exactly do we make it happen? Like most communities today, the City faces competing demands for public resources and a limited number of volunteers to supplement government efforts. What receives top priority? What doesn't? And why?

Falls Church's annual budget is a blueprint for these kinds of decisions. As city officials approach the time for decisions on this year's budget, Falls Church will need to consider the next phase of its future. The following are three possible approaches. Each of the three approaches balances risk and reward differently. Your reaction to each will depend, in part, on your circumstances and your stage in life.

Approach 1 – How Can Falls Church Be A More Welcoming City?

Falls Church needs more than the area's best schools and a high level of social and community programs to keep pace with the services and amenities neighboring communities offer, at lower tax rates. Our city needs to seize bold opportunities to grow and change.

This "more welcoming" approach means looking for creative ways to stimulate a more vibrant and economically diversified community.

Approach 2 – Shouldn't We Prioritize?

We can't be all things to all people. What used to be an urban village of single family homes is today changing at a very rapid pace. Traffic and parking, already bad, will worsen as a result of mid-rise and mixed use redevelopment. Assuming an increase in population, the cost of schools, social programs and services will also go up. Likewise, programs to encourage and enhance the retail and business environment also come with price tags.

Still, with smart decisions, the urban village atmosphere of Falls Church can be preserved. This means saying yes to some opportunities and no to others.

Approach 3 – Nothing is Broken, So Why Fix It?

Mobility is a way of life in America, especially in metropolitan Washington. Many of us won't be here in ten years, and feel there's no need to worry beyond that horizon. The City of Falls Church has a great location, great schools and is a great spot for a certain time in our lives.

The City will adapt as people come and go, just as it has in the past. We should keep doing what we've been doing: good schools produce good property values. If the City has to keep property taxes high, it's a safe bet the neighboring jurisdictions will, too. We should not take risks.

What Can A Deliberation Do?

In a deliberation individuals share their views, learn from one another and identify the values and goals around which community action can be forged. There are disagreements, to be sure. But deliberation gives individuals a chance to be heard, and a reason to listen, using well-tested techniques.

We start by introducing the three approaches described above and in the pages that follow. These represent the most common ways people express their concerns, put forward here in the most favorable terms, and with recognition of the trade-offs involved and the critiques commonly offered. Student discussion leaders from George Mason High School and adult volunteers will then help deliberators pose questions and compare their views in small groups. Officials will be on hand to respond to the whole gathering with facts and their own opinions. In a second round of small group discussions, you will be asked what actions should be taken by individuals, community groups and government. The panel of officials will then respond to those ideas. Another deliberation may convene in the months ahead.

This format has two key features. First, it starts the discussion at the three places where most people find themselves. Second, it alternates between small and large group discussions, providing everyone a chance to participate and to learn from each other. This two-part method is the product of twenty-five years of research by the Kettering Foundation and the National Issues Forum Institute. Based on past Kettering and NIFI deliberations, you can expect that you and your fellow deliberators will learn what common ground -- which is the basis for community action -- might exist among people of otherwise divergent views. Deliberators will leave the event with a better appreciation of what lies behind points of view other than their own. A few people will even change their minds based on what they hear.

Most important, new approaches, perhaps better-informed and more widely shared, will emerge from the initial three. That is not to suggest the deliberation will deliver a consensus. Rather, it is a means to discover, through civic engagement, the possibilities for consensus and to make progress, often slowly, towards that end.

Messages from a number of community and civic organizations are included at the conclusion of this guide. Many will be represented at Deliberation Day, and offering a way to get involved. Please visit with them before and after the deliberation.

* * *

This guide was authored by the Steering Committee for Deliberation Falls Church City, a partnership of Citizens for a Better City, the Center for Voter Deliberation, the League of Women Voters of Falls Church and the Village Preservation and Improvement Society.

Approach 1 – How Can Falls Church Be A More Welcoming City?

Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. – Wolfgang von Goethe

I'm all for progress. It's change I don't like. -- Mark Twain

Most citizens of the City of Falls Church don't work or spend the whole day here. They move throughout the metro area, seeing progress and change all the time—new shops, changing traffic patterns, more crowded subways. It's not just the City of Falls Church that over the past six years experienced a real estate boom and a surge in tax revenues. All of the metro area did. Falls Church is part of this big picture. It cannot stand apart.

The City and its schools have always been important to young families in Falls Church. Even homeowners without children have generally supported school bond issues. Good schools produce good real estate values. Simple as that. But businesses have not perceived a comparable welcome and sense of importance. The City's tight spaces, compared to large tracts available elsewhere in the area, have left the community overly dependent on residential taxation. The City's best opportunity to diversify its tax base is to welcome more mixed use development and more retail shops and restaurants along its main thoroughfares; the City must become more than a thoroughfare, it must become a destination. This "more welcoming" approach looks for creative ways to stimulate a more vibrant and economically diversified community.

The City can be more things to more people. Its location and transportation access allow Falls Church citizens great opportunities to work and enjoy life in vibrant locations from Alexandria to Tysons to Reston. Residents of those communities, in turn, could just as easily enjoy Falls Church, were there more to do here.

The City needs to be more welcoming to families of all economic levels. To create vibrant diversity, it needs to be more welcoming to redevelopment as well.

What Should Be Done

- Follow through on opportunities for mid-rise, mixed use and other redevelopment on a significant scale. Encourage new retailers and restaurants on the first floors of new condominium and rental apartment buildings.
- Fix traffic and affordable housing problems; more development will bolster the tax base to provide money to do that.
- Fully fund programs that subsidize home buying for the elderly, working families and young professionals.
- Find creative ways to welcome new residents and to meaningfully involve them in an urban village community.

Some Likely Trade-offs

- Downsides to “being all things to all people” may include increased traffic, crime and pollution. Neighborhoods once seen as quaint already seem more crowded.
- While a city in name, Falls Church is an urban village in reality. Redevelopment to create a more purely urban atmosphere will undo that. The look and feel of the City changes when new buildings reach new heights.
- Redevelopment puts pressure on the supply of affordable housing, and not just for retirees. City government and school employees cannot afford to live where they work.
- Resources are inadequate to fund programs that allow Falls Church to be truly diverse. Something will have to be sacrificed.

What Critics of This Approach Say

- Not everyone is interested in or has the time to become involved in Falls Church community affairs.
- Falls Church can't compete with Tysons Corner; further, new retail shops and restaurants only create more traffic.
- If new commercial development doesn't pay for itself, residential taxes will increase even further.
- Commercial development has not been guided by any particular vision before, and doesn't need to be in future. Things are changing too fast already.

Approach 2 – Shouldn't We Prioritize?

"Man is unique in that he has plans, purpose and goals which require the need for criteria of choice." – George Bernard Shaw

The City's comprehensive plan, approved by the Council in 2005, envisions a residential village fronted by urban commercial zones. It also seeks to retain Falls Church's low density residential neighborhoods, complete with "a quiet small town character...historic homes, tree-lined streets, pedestrian-friendliness, and neighborhood parks." There is much to gain, and also something to lose, from trying to be everything to everybody in this way.

The City's 2006 demographic survey compiled opinions from one-third of Falls Church households. The survey respondents said the City's best attributes are its location, its small-town feel, and the quality of the schools, in that order. The survey also found that, at least until the Byron and other new mid-rises are completed, the largest share of new residential redevelopment in recent years has been in-fill construction of single family homes and townhouses. This low-rise redevelopment takes place when retirees and others sell their homes and leave the City, and their residences are rebuilt, most often in a larger, more expensive form. Between 2001 and 2006, retirees as a share of the City's population dropped from 26% down to 22%. The low-rise redevelopment of the past five years has been transformative, and it is continuing. Is there a way to say yes to some of this, but not to all of it?

The new mid-rises will contribute to the City's traffic woes, moving more vehicles onto residential back streets. There is uncertainty as to whether the ground floor commercial spaces in the new mid-rises will deliver on the promise of a more walkable, pleasurable and attractive City center. There is no guarantee that residents of the new mid-rises will support the businesses downstairs, rather than get in their cars and spend their money elsewhere.

Which of the eight unifying principles in the Falls Church vision statement should come first, and why? Education? The environment? Neighborhood preservation? We should determine one or two top priorities, fund them accordingly -- and then capitalize on them.

People who are well-informed about development prospects say we need to frame the choices for the built environment and decide among them: neighborhood preservation versus continued residential in-fill; mid-rise mixed use redevelopment versus more ambitious construction. Other advocates for more careful prioritizing feel that we don't know what exactly is going to happen in terms of redevelopment and new construction. Very few people have all the facts. Most of us find out about things after the City government has decided them. We need a clearer picture of how the City's priorities can be pursued before we can make good choices about the future.

What Should Be Done

- What is past is prologue. It is problematic for developers and others to speak publicly about pending or proprietary plans. But the City should take the lead in clearly, concisely and regularly informing the community about what the latest news is on development. Residents shouldn't need to attend every City Council meeting to know.
- The City needs to ensure that new development, where completed, can succeed. Community programs that encourage local shopping and entertainment are important. There should be more such programs.
- The City needs to ensure that new residents, especially in mid-rises, are brought into the community. Outreach to involve them in the City's boards and commissions, for example, should be a priority.
- The City should enforce its zoning laws concerning in-fill and other low-rise redevelopment. Exceptions should not be the rule. Must every proposal be approved?

Some Likely Trade-offs

- Locking in to certain priorities takes away the City's ability to be flexible and responsive to new opportunities that may be in Falls Church's best interests.
- The growth in demand for close-in housing in the metro area is expected to continue. Redevelopment delayed or over-regulated can be lost to competing jurisdictions. There is a downside to greater caution. The City lost population from 1970 to 1990 by not planning ahead.
- Slowing or forgoing mid-rise development ignores the potential financial benefit of so-called "smart growth" along major transportation corridors. This is the formula that rejuvenated North Arlington along the Orange line. Smart growth maximizes the use of existing roads, utility connections and other infrastructure so that improvements pay for themselves.
- The City's limited space provides few opportunities to attract commercial redevelopment. Low-rise and mid-rise mixed used redevelopment is a potential boon to the City and school revenue base, which in future could allow the Council to lower the City's relatively high residential tax rate.

What Critics of This Approach Say

- It's unrealistic to think that there are only a few key priorities among all eight unifying principles in the Falls Church vision statement. All of them are equally important and should be focused on simultaneously.

- Planned development is the way to avoid more strip malls and a hodgepodge of commercial development, and to replace the eyesores already present on main thoroughfares.
- Prioritization is a management technique, not an end in itself. And the fact is the City already has done the prioritization and extensive due diligence. Its Comprehensive Plan was open to public comment and hearings. The plan balances economic reality with the concerns people expressed. Read it online. Not following the plan results in a government driven by the passions of the moment.
- The plans for the City Center envision an enlivened, urban village atmosphere with places to walk, study, shop or just talk. More welcoming of redevelopment generally is required to bring it about.

Approach 3 – Nothing is Broken, So Why Fix It?

Retirees are leaving. Affordable housing is gentrifying. Traffic is bad.

Yes, metropolitan Washington's suburbs have their problems. But the City of Falls Church is one small part of the metro area. It's too much to expect the City can solve these problems in isolation.

The City's 2006 demographic survey recorded no dramatic concerns. Almost a quarter of the respondents singled out traffic on the main thoroughfares and speeding in neighborhoods as the worst complaints. That's a problem to be solved in Richmond.

Notwithstanding commotion over mid-rises, the 2006 survey found that, compared with an identical survey taken by the same consulting firm in 2001, a 1% greater share of the City's households live in single family homes and townhouses than in apartments or condos. The City seems to have more than kept pace with Fairfax and Arlington in terms of its ability to attract prosperous new residents who can sustain the tax base.

Of course, looking ahead, this can't be taken for granted. A third of the City's residents plan to move in the next ten years. Only a fifth hopes to move within the City. Yet, despite a diminishing supply of affordable housing, and a pair of commercial corridors that remain unplanned and unbent to any particular vision, the City's demographic position and its residential real estate market are enviable.

The survey found that over one-third of current residents are newcomers since 2000. The newcomers are wealthier and better-educated than the City average. Location and education were among the top three things that both newcomers and longer-term residents appreciate about the City. Where the two sides differ is on ambience versus real assets. The longer term residents placed the City's "small town feel" among their three favorite things about the City. The newcomers ranked the value offered by its real estate as more important. By not changing the City drastically, both ambience and rising asset values can be preserved.

So long as the education system is kept strong, the reward will be well-educated youth and appreciating home values. Those who rent here confront challenges and opportunities no different from those in any other prosperous community: Their challenge is to save enough to realize the American dream.

It is a false choice to argue that the City must be more welcoming or more scrutinizing towards development. It shouldn't take any big risks. It should simply keep doing what it has been doing.

What Should Be Done

- Give the schools what they need to maintain their excellence. The higher taxes are actually a good investment.

- If developers come to the City, fine. But don't bend over backwards with tax breaks and special exceptions.
- Don't discourage in-fill and other ways to get value out of property. The City is dependent on its residential tax base and shouldn't take steps that limit its potential.
- Don't break with the past. Falls Church is fine the way it is.

Some Likely Trade-offs

- Market forces have favored the City in the past five years. However, if adverse trends take hold in the metropolitan area, the City is not immune. When a downturn comes, the cities and counties that prepared best will emerge healthiest.
- Allowing affordable housing to disappear adds transportation costs for workers the City needs. Planning and subsidizing affordable housing is not merely compassionate or far-sighted. It can be cost-effective.
- In-fill and other steps to squeeze more living space onto available land can subtract from an urban village ambience and nibble away at green space. Current limits on lot and home sizes should be enforced.
- The City could look better than it does now, and become a more enjoyable place to live, work and play. Plans that take advantage of under-developed commercial corridors, transportation access, and the potential for growth should be supported.

What Critics of This Approach Say

- A stand-pat approach is not a low-risk approach. It can have opportunity costs, in terms of lost chances to make the City better and more financially secure. It is better to keep pace with trends in the metro area.
- The City's education system and the residential property market stand apart because this is an active and community-minded city. Passivity and negligence of common needs endanger the public spirit that has made City schools and homes as valuable as they are.
- If nothing is done to create and sustain affordable housing, the City will become a figurative gated community. It is short-sighted to increase the community's dependence on commuters who suffer increasingly bad traffic. Housing opportunities should be available for those who want to both work and live here.
- What's remarkable about the City is not the number of people who leave once their children finish school; it's the number who stay. Creating a sense of shared purpose and community is its own reward, and for many it is more valuable than the cash received by selling and moving.

Comparing Approaches

Falls Church is a successful community in an economically stable region. The metro area's real estate market is no longer booming, nor is it in a nose dive. The City Council and School Board are revising down their revenue forecasts and tightening their budgets.

A more welcoming City is one that could be better prepared for economic downturns in the years ahead, if risks are taken sooner and they pan out for the good. A City that scrutinizes development more could put less at risk and endure fewer changes, but at the arguable expense of progress and future security. A City that expects what is past is prologue may be right on the money, or it may find itself falling behind and forgetting what truly made its past worth preserving.

The City of Falls Church has prospered in the past by pulling together to support its schools and build a sense of community. Its future identity is something important for its citizens to discuss, and decide, together.

In the following pages you can find information on community organizations that want to help you do just that.

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All data cited herein are taken from the following publications. These are accessible via the City website (<http://www.ci.falls-church.va.us/index.html>) or via www.DFCCVA.org or via these hyperlinks.

"Comprehensive Plan," The City of Falls Church, October 24, 2005. Available at <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/business/comprehensiveplan/index.html>

"The Changing Population of Falls Church, Virginia 2001-2006," The Grier Partnership, November 2006. Available at <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/services/hhs/documents/DemographicSurveyFinalReportNov06.pdf>

Officials' Biographies

Robin Gardner

Mayor of the City of Falls Church

The Honorable Robin Gardner was first sworn in as a member of City Council on July 1, 2000. She was elected Mayor on July 1, 2006. She received a bachelor of arts in politics from Ithaca College and a master's degree in international affairs from George Washington University. She has held internships for Congresswoman Marge Roukema and Senator Bill Bradley. Through her position on City Council, she is a member of the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG). She lives in the City with her husband and her twin children.

Mayor Gardner is currently the Vice President of Business Development with Apogen Technologies. Previously, she worked as an Account Manager with TRW, focusing on the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of State. She joined TRW through their acquisition of BDM International, Inc., an information systems technology and technology services company.

Craig Cheney

Chairman, Falls Church City School Board

Craig Cheney has been a member of the Falls Church City School Board since 2004 and he is currently serving in his first year as chairman. He is a member of the Communications Subcommittee, the Professional Employees Advisory Committee, the High School PTSA, the Middle and High School Athletic Boosters and the Human Services Advisory Committee. Mr. Cheney became a school board member "to make sure we continue to make wise choices in these challenging fiscal and educational times." Before being elected to the school board, he served on the Falls Church City Council Human Services Advisory Committee.

In his professional capacity, Mr. Cheney is Vice President of Project Performance Corporation. He earned his B.A. in history at Bowdoin College and an MPA from the University of Minnesota.

Officials' Biographies

Ruth Rodgers

Chair, Falls Church Planning Commission

Ruth Rodgers has served on the City of Falls Church Planning Commission for the past five years. She is currently on the board of the Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society, serves as Treasurer of Historic Falls Church, Inc and also is Treasurer of The Eric Fund, a non-profit foundation assisting children and adults with disabilities. She volunteers in the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind program where she serves as a reader to a blind college student.

Presently serving as president of Coalition Management Group, Inc., a coalition management and grassroots lobbying firm, Ms. Rodgers has acted as CEO/COO of the firm for more than 20 years. She currently oversees the management of national advocacy coalitions, coordinating their lobbying and grassroots activities. She previously spent several years working as a Congressional staff assistant before joining the White House Congressional Liaison staff as executive assistant to the head of the White House congressional liaison operation

Edward R. Saltzberg, Ph.D.

Chairman, Falls Church Economic Development Authority

Ed Saltzberg is a 28 year resident of the City of Falls Church. He was a founding member of the Falls Church Industrial Authority formed in 1981. He served as the IDA chair from 1985 until it was merged with the Economic Development Authority in 2001. He has been the EDA chair for the past six years and has been involved with the all of the major development projects. The EDA plays an advisory role to the Council and also conducts economic research and public economic development education programs, among other responsibilities.

Mr. Saltzberg has been a management and environmental consultant primarily to the federal government since the mid 1970's. Currently, he leads the environmental market sector for Battelle Memorial Institute, a not for profit firm and the world's largest private research and development organization. Previously he was a director in two management consulting firms that he helped grow and sell to public IT firms in DC.

Christ Crossman United Methodist Church

Christ Crossman United Methodist Church (C²UMC) is rooted in the history of the Falls Church area, dating back to the 18th Century with Fairfax Methodist Chapel, a landmark in American and Methodist church histories. The ruins of the Chapel are still evident in Oakwood Cemetery. In the healing of the moral, economic and legal struggles surrounding the Civil War, Crossman Methodist Episcopal “North” was founded as a church for its stance against slavery. C²UMC continues its progressive legacy by experimenting with innovative worship series and formats, launching learning and discussion groups around topics that face people of faith in modern society (e.g., faith and science, faith in a multicultural society, faith and security), and continuing its outreach ministries that brings people to encounter Christ in diverse settings.

C²UMC is focused on building a community where persons are welcomed, nurtured and renewed for a life of purpose. That focus translates to active civic engagements into social justice issues concerning affordable housing, community-based residential options and care for persons with developmental disabilities, homelessness and lifelong education and development.

Citizens for a Better City

Helping Make a Great City Better

CBC is a non-partisan political organization dedicated to accessible, responsive government and first-class public schools in the City of Falls Church.

CBC was founded in 1959 by a group of concerned citizens who saw need for collective and sustained political action to build a better future for our community and its children.

Our primary objective, as expressed in the first of CBC's Ten Principles, is to promote "Citizen Participation — Encouragement of residents to register and vote in all elections and to participate fully in public affairs."

The members of CBC come from all areas of the City and represent a broad range of views. CBC's work is overseen by an Executive Committee of volunteer civic activists who meet monthly. Our president for 2007-08 is Jody Acosta.

CBC encourages its members, and all Falls Church residents, to discuss City issues with their neighbors and to express their opinions to our elected and appointed officials. This is in keeping with the second of CBC's Ten Principles, which is to promote "open and public consideration of City government policies, with courteous attention to the views of all citizens, forthright communication between citizens and officials, and maximum use of citizens' talents."

The CBC organization has a long tradition of NOT taking positions on specific issues under consideration by the City Council and School Board.

A primary function of CBC is encouraging well-qualified people to campaign for election to the City Council and School Board — people who will exercise good judgment and work in a diligent, civil and cooperative way to move our City forward. Every two years, CBC hosts a convention to nominate candidates for the May Council and School Board elections. For many years, these conventions have been open to all City voters, whether or not they are members of CBC.

We invite you to learn more about CBC and its Ten Principles, which include support for conservation and beautification, equal opportunity, regional cooperation and the effective delivery of public services. Visit us at www.fallschurchCBC.net.

CBC's annual membership dues are \$10 per person or \$20 per household. Please join, and let us know if you want to get more involved in community affairs. Whatever your national party affiliation (or lack of it), CBC welcomes all who have the good of the City at heart. We invite your comments and suggestions about how to make our City a better place to live, work and educate children.

Questions? E-mail CBC through our web site, or leave a message on our Citizen Comment hotline at (703) 873-0095, or write us at P.O. Box 6080, Falls Church, Va. 22040.

City of Falls Church Board & Commission Vacancies

March 1, 2007

The City Council is grateful to the more than 200 citizens who volunteer their time to help make Falls Church City a better place to live, work, and do business. These citizens play an immeasurably valuable role in the development and oversight of City planning and policy.

Volunteers who live in the City of Falls Church are needed to serve on the boards and commissions listed below. Call the City Clerk, Kathleen Buschow (703-248-5014, TTY 711, or e-mail cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov) for an application form or more information. Requests for reappointments must also be made through the City Clerk. Applications are being accepted until the end of the month. In most cases, applicants must be a City resident and qualified voter of the City.

Architectural Advisory Board Board of Equalization Board of Zoning Appeals Citizens Advisory Committee on Transportation Environmental Services Council Historic Architecture Review Board Historical Commission Housing Commission Human Services Advisory Council Planning Commission Private School & Day Care Facility Board	Retirement Board Senior Citizens Commission Tree Commission Utilities Commission Regional Boards/Commissions: Fairfax Area Commission on Aging Fairfax Area Disability Services Board Health Systems Agency of Northern Virginia Long Term Care Coordinating Council Workforce Investment Board
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Before submitting an application to serve on a City board or commission, applicants are required to attend at least one meeting of the relative board/commission to ensure an understanding of its function, activities, and time requirements. The City Council Appointments Committee meets the second Wednesday of each month to interview applicants. Interviews are scheduled at the beginning of the month and last approximately 15 minutes.

The City Council Appointments Committee consists of Council members Daniel Sze (Chair) and Lindy Hockenberry. The Appointments Committee is responsible for reviewing all applications for boards and commissions, interviewing prospective candidates, and considering requests for reappointment. Following its review process, the Appointments Committee makes its recommendations for appointments to the full Council, which then votes on nominations at an open City Council Meeting.

City of Falls Church Planning Commission

The Planning Commission studies and recommends changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan and reviews all site plans to ensure consistency with the Plan.

Annually, the commission prepares and revises a five-year capital improvement program, including capital budget recommendations. The Planning Commission makes recommendations on the preservation of historical landmarks, and design of public bridges, street fixtures, and other public structures and appurtenances. The Planning Commission advises the City Council and the City Manager.

The Planning Commission was established by City Charter Section 17.02.

Meeting Schedule

Meets at 7:45 p.m. the first and third Monday of each month in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, 300 Park Avenue. (Except in January, February, and September when one or more meetings are held on Tuesday because the regular meeting date is a holiday.)

Member Information

The seven-member Commission is appointed by the City Council for four-year terms. Each member is paid \$100 monthly and the Chairman \$150 monthly.

Staff Liaison
Elizabeth Friel
Director, Planning Division
703-248-5182 (TTY 711)

The Falls Church

**115 E. Fairfax Street
Falls Church, VA 22046**

Who We Are

We are a welcoming family, hungering for more of God, wholeheartedly following Jesus Christ.

What We Are Called To

Among our core values, we desire to:

Live Out God's Word in Our Whole Lives – we seek to know and apply biblical truth in our church life, our family life, through our work, and by serving God wherever we are.

Serve God's People in Caring Community – we desire to grow into a community of grace, where we serve one another in love in supportive and accountable relationships.

Reach God's World with the Love of Christ – we want to share the Good News of God, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring the lost to new life in Jesus Christ, and to show compassion to the poor and those in need.

Local Falls Church Partners and Outreach Supported Ministries:

- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) - A Falls Church ministry to provide international/immigrants with English Language classes.
- Jobs Ministry – A ministry that provides job training, peer support, and job networks for the unemployed.
- Birthmothers - An organization that helps women facing unplanned pregnancy overcome barriers to choosing life for her baby.
- Falls Church Emergency Winter Shelter
- Falls Church Community Service Council

Contact:

Nar Taing, Urban Outreach Coordinator.
Email: ntaing@thefallschurch.org
Phone: 703-532-7600

Falls Church Housing Corporation

As the community-based housing provider for Falls Church, we preserve and create more permanently affordable rental housing to:

- serve unmet needs;
- promote our City's historic strength as a diverse, economically vibrant community; and
- help ensure that people who work here have the opportunity to live and retire here.

In this mission, we:

- acquire and improve existing rental properties;
- produce quality housing;
- provide exemplary management and maintenance of our properties; and
- increase public understanding of local housing needs and community-wide support for solutions.

Join FCHC in support of meeting head-on the challenges to our community's future well-being inherent in the affordable housing shortage crisis throughout our region.

fchc@fallshchurchhousing.org; 703-241-5402

About Historic Falls Church Inc.

Historic **F**alls **C**hurch Inc. (HFC Inc.) is a non-profit organization committed to the preservation of the historic character of the City of Falls Church. HFC was founded in the 1970s by recognized community leaders for the purpose of preserving the historic character and assets of the City of Falls Church. The call at the time was to preserve the Birch House, which was in very poor condition and in the path of development of a mid-rise apartment complex. In the process restoring the Birch House, HFC owned several other parcels on the 300 Block of East Broad Street - and ensured the survival of the entire block. It also developed the rear of that block with the Wrens Town Houses on Cherry Street in a character compatible with the neighborhood, providing a permanent buffer for the block to prevent future attempts to destroy that historic district.

HFC advocates for the historic character of Falls Church to be reflected in new development to provide for seamless compatibility and enhancement of the wonderful history here.

HFC has been instrumental on many other projects. It holds historic covenants and easements on over 30 important historic properties in the City. In the 1990s, the organization has successfully worked through the financial, legal and regulatory issues to relocate and preserve the historic Porter-Proctor House (now at 303 E. Broad Street). It was in the path of a town house development (Church View). Many attempts were made to preserve the Porter-Proctor House at its original location, but the end result was that town house developer gained a demolition permit and the house had to be moved or destroyed. In 2006, HFC moved Dr. Smallwood's Cottage Office from the path of demolition to a new location next to Green Gables- with a permanent preservation easement.

HFC is a non-profit community organization with no paid staff. We use the talent of the community and paid contractors to accomplish its projects. HFC is composed of membership from throughout the community led by the Board of Directors.

Our board is composed of known leaders in the City - Merelyn Kaye (realtor), Paul Barkley (architect), Lou Olom (retired, a founding leader of HFC), Ruth Rodgers (trade organization president and member of the city's Architectural Advisory Board), Charlie Moore (architect and member of the Historic Architectural Review Board) and Keith Thurston (federal executive and former City Planning Commission Chair).

League of Women Voters of Falls Church, Virginia

A Voice for Citizens and a Force for Change in the United States

Open to all eligible voters, the League of Women Voters offers opportunities to study and influence government policies at the local level. Through the LWV of Virginia and the LWV of the United States, it provides members a voice at state and national levels as well. A nonpartisan organization, it meets and circulates a bulletin monthly.

The League has been a training ground for City leaders for many years. Members who take an active part in League studies and action often go on to City committees. A number of our members have gone on to positions on the City Council, the Planning Commission and to assume other roles in City life. To join the LWVFC, email us at edie@lwvfallschurch.org or ellie@lwvfallschurch.org.

Our Accomplishments

The Comprehensive Plan: The League has studied planning and zoning and endorsed the adoption of a Master Plan. During the 2001-2002 league year, the League completed an education project and review of the current Comprehensive Plan and presented its findings to the City Council and the citizens of Falls Church.

Fiscal policy: Fiscal studies have allowed the League to testify on the city budget, and promote the development of a well-balanced fiscal policy.

Housing: The League took a leading role in pressing for a Fair Housing Ordinance and the establishment of a Housing Commission.

Public Education: In 1955, a study of the effects of the Supreme Court decision on integration was adopted. The Falls Church League of Women Voters opposed dissolution of the public school system. The League was effective in pressing for the establishment of local kindergartens, and in the early 70s, all-day kindergartens. The League proposed and promoted the establishment of extended day-care (before and after school programs). The League gave strong support to the bond issues which helped build the auditorium at George Mason Junior-Senior High School, the Community Center and the addition to the Mary Riley Styles Public Library.

Recreation: The League successfully petitioned the City Council for the employment of a full-time recreation director, and the development of a year-round recreation program. The League has supported obtaining additional land for neighborhood parks.

Sustainable Development: The League studied and promoted the concept of sustainable development which has influenced the development approaches taken by city planners and committee leaders.

Voter Service: The League has presented voters guides and forums for elections at the city, state and national level and has been a non-partisan voice in the election process for many years. From voter registration to voter participation to voter information, the League is always there.

The Village Society

You moved here for a reason!

Perhaps you are among those who moved to the City of Falls Church because of our strong sense of community. The mission of the Village Society is to preserve and improve that sense of community, and it is your membership that helps to sustain us. To join us, contact VillageSociety@yahoo.com.

Last year, your membership supported many Society-sponsored projects and events that are integral to Falls Church City's culture and environment, such as:

- Arbor Day Celebrations
- Farmers Market Information Booth
- Summer Concerts in Cherry Hill Park
- Neighborhood Tree Program
- Independence Day Readings
- Excellence in Design Awards
- Community Gardens (Tricentennial, President's, Elizabeth Graham Garden and the Sue Olom Memorial Garden)
- Watch Night (New Year's Eve)

The Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS), originally founded in 1885, is an active nonprofit citizen volunteer organization in the City of Falls Church, Virginia.

The Society is comprised of concerned citizens who address many important issues that face our community. The Society works to preserve our natural and built environment, historic structures and landmarks, and promotes cultural activities.

Members are primarily residents of the City of Falls Church and former residents or neighbors who have an interest in Falls Church City. Members are of all political persuasions and are bonded by their interest in and a commitment to improving the City of Falls Church.

Please visit us at www.VPIS.org.

The Winter Hill Community Association

- Established June 25, 1976
- Consists of 194 Townhouse Residences, located on and south of Broad Street and W. Annandale Road, including Gundry Drive, South Virginia Avenue, and James Street
- Promote the health, safety, and welfare of our residents
- Provide for the preservation, maintenance, and architectural control of the residence lots and common areas within our community

Deliberation Falls Church City

www.DFCCVA.org

A Chance to be Heard, A Reason to Listen

Deliberation Day is organized by a partnership of volunteers from Citizens for a Better City, the Center for Voter Deliberation, the League of Women Voters of Falls Church and the Village Preservation and Improvement Society.

You heard enough from us today. **Let us hear from you.** Please write your thoughts below or on the back of this page, then hand it to your discussion group's leader or recorder, or another organizer. (Or e-mail us later at Info@DFCCVA.org.)

- What are the most important things we should do better on Deliberation Day, if we do it again? The less important things?
- What topics should we deliberate, and when should Deliberation Day happen again – next month, next year, or as the need arises?
- How can we publicize Deliberation Day better via e-mail lists and other word of mouth? Printed advertising and postage for this first Deliberation Day cost approximately \$1,300, or \$12 per participant, half of that financed by grant money. Deliberation Day won't survive at that cost.
- Can we enlist you, or your organization, to take part in this volunteer effort?

Thank you for coming today.
We hope to see you again at another Deliberation Day.