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Tolls / Fairfax County Parkway / School Bond Referendum
The Herry Report
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Board Opts Not to Study the Economic Impact of Toll Increases in the Dulles Corridor

Early predictions are for at least a \$1.2B overrun on Phase 2 of the Dulles Rail project and recent decisions by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority will likely cause that dollar amount to rise. The primary source--as well as the only uncapped source--of revenue for the project is the Dulles Toll Road. Tolls are currently projected to exceed \$10 (excluding the Greenway) one way by 2020 even before the overruns are fully factored in.

For some time I have raised concerns that these major toll increases could have an adverse impact on the corridor. Before we make major decisions regarding Phase 2, I believe we must look at the impact of the tolls on the future of our economic engine. I am aware of at least three companies that have chosen to locate outside the corridor because of the tolls and MWAA's own projection shows a decrease in activity on the toll road. Surely completion of rail in this corridor will bring jobs to the area, but how will this offset the loss of jobs resulting from companies who decided to relocate away from the area because its employees would have to pay over \$10 each way to drive to and from work by 2020?

The Dulles Corridor and Tysons Corner are the economic engines of Fairfax County, Northern Virginia and the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. The Dulles Toll Road is a key component of that corridor. I believe that protecting the health of this corridor is critical to our future in everything from jobs to tax base.

At the Board of Supervisors meeting on April 26, I asked for the Board to support a motion to direct the County Executive to commission a study of the economic impact the increased tolls in the Dulles Corridor will have on Fairfax County and our tax base. I also asked that the study be concluded no later than 30 days after the release of the project's cost estimate.

My request to get this critical information was defeated by a vote of 7 to 3. It is past time we start asking and getting answers to the hard questions that need to be addressed while we still have a chance to influence the direction of this project.

Big Changes Coming to the Fairfax County Parkway

I am taking a number of steps to address the current and projected conditions on the Fairfax County Parkway. These conditions include the following:

- We are already seeing an increase in traffic from the employees moving into Fort Belvoir at a rate of 300 employees a week - most coming from western Fairfax County,
- Cutthrough traffic from I-95 to I-66 (including truck traffic) is expected to increase as soon

as the new section of the parkway is accepted into the state system (and subsequently GPS systems),

- A number of median crossover accidents; three that ended in fatalities,
- Pavement that is full of potholes and in overall bad shape, and
- A major bottleneck on the Parkway north loop at Rolling Road.

Some of the activities that I have undertaken to address these include the following:

- I moved that the Board ask the state to convert the Fairfax County Parkway (and Franconia-Springfield Parkway) from a secondary to a primary road in the state system. This should lead to an increase in construction and maintenance efforts by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). I was tired of explaining that Route 123 has been repeatedly paved as stimulus money was limited to primary roads.
- As previously reported in the Herrity Report, Delegate Albo and I had VDOT conduct a safety study on the Parkway - you should see some of the improvements soon. The entire report and presentation from the community meeting is available on my website at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/events.htm>
- I am continuing my efforts to have VDOT add the Parkway to this year's paving schedule.
- I added the north loop to the Board's priority transportation project list. Planning is moving forward and funding is now included in the Governor's funding plan for design and right of way acquisition.
- The Parkway will be widened southbound between Route 29 and Braddock Road to eliminate a bottleneck at that location.
- As covered below, a grade separated interchange is being constructed at the Parkway's intersections with Fair Lakes Parkway and Monument Drive.

While these steps are a start in addressing some of the problems, I am looking for your input on developing a longer-term vision and plan for the future of the Fairfax County Parkway, one of Fairfax County's main streets.

Comments of the School Bond Referendum

The proposed Fall 2012 School Bond Referendum came before the Board for approval at the Tuesday Board of Supervisor's meeting. Below are my comments on the referendum.

"Let me start by saying that I fully support the School Bond referendum.

That said, I can't let pass without comment several items in the proposed School Bond Referendum that again point to the need for transparency and accountability by the school system.

First, I note that there are at least three items in the bond package - capacity enhancements at Fairfax Villa ES, Greenbriar East ES and Union Mill ES - that are mostly the result of the closing of Clifton ES.

During the hearings on the closure of Clifton one school board member said "Clifton ES has 366 students and all students can be moved to successful nearby schools without the necessity of additions or renovations."

COO Dean Tisdadt, when discussing the funding of the additions, said "we actually have a great deal of money on what we call the construction reserve," and directly from the schools web site "there will not be construction loans to fund the proposed additions".

These statements are in direct conflict with the inclusion of capacity improvements at these schools in the bond package.

They also repeatedly state "Clifton is more expensive to renovate than a normal elementary school" yet I see every one of the six elementary schools listed in the bond for renovation is well over the \$11M to renovate Clifton ES.

During the process of closing Clifton ES, Springfield District residents were repeatedly promised that the closure of Clifton would accelerate the renovation of WSHS and no bond funds would be used in closing Clifton ES - that clearly is not the case.

I do not hold much hope that the school board will reverse the Clifton closure even though the bond referendum clearly shows that the third reason espoused by the school system for closing Clifton is just as false as the other two

- The well water is fine - there is no more bottled water.
- The enrollment is actually growing instead of shrinking as the school system projected, and;
- As the bond referendum clearly shows Clifton was no more expensive to renovate than the other six in this bond referendum.

As the Board knows, I have been a vocal proponent of keeping the schools Capital Improvement Program at the higher amount of \$155M when it was due to shrink to \$130M due to our overwhelming school construction and renovation needs.

Despite what I consider to be problems with some of the specifics in the package, I will be strongly supporting the Schools Bond Referendum."

Two of the schools listed for capacity enhancements are in the Springfield District. My office is beginning to receive requests for information on the details of these additions and the impacts on traffic. The Board supported my request for schools to provide details on these proposed additions and the projected traffic impacts on the community.

I will share the information on the schools as they provide it. We are only four months from the projected increase in students at these schools.

Fairfax County Parkway/Fair Lakes Parkway/Monument Drive Interchange: The Detours Are Coming!

I wanted to give you notice of the upcoming detours and changes at this critical intersection. Of particular note is the upcoming two step detours for traffic traveling through the Fairfax County Parkway/Fair Lakes Parkway intersection. Though the date is not yet set in stone (I promise to keep you informed via this newsletter once I have confirmed dates), the first step of detour will prohibit through traffic on Fair Lakes Parkway across the Fairfax County Parkway, redirecting traffic to Fair Lakes Circle and should take place in late June. This detour will still allow turns onto northbound and southbound Fairfax County Parkway from Fair Lakes Parkway.

The second step of detour should be in place by late November and will prohibit left turns from Fair Lakes Parkway onto northbound and southbound Fairfax County Parkway. Through movement and right turns will be allowed at this time. I am as concerned as you probably are about how this will affect the already-terrible traffic in the area during the holiday season. Although this will surely frustrate most of us who drive through the area, I will continue to work closely with VDOT to make sure these transitions go as smoothly as possible.

The detours are illustrated in VDOT's powerpoint presentation for the project available here: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/NorthernVirginia/Flakes_POD_presentation.pdf

During construction and its related detours, Fairfax County Parkway traffic will be able to make all movements that it does now.

VDOT's long-planned, permanent closure of North Lake Drive at the Fairfax County Parkway will occur on June 1st. VDOT will be placing electronic messaging signs at the location ten days in advance to alert motorists and residents to the upcoming closure. Also related to the interchange project, VDOT is planning to install a storm drain across Monument Drive near its intersection with the Parkway that will necessitate a closure of Monument Drive in that area during the day on the weekend of June 4th and 5th. The rain dates will be June 18th and 19th so as not to interfere with Celebrate Fairfax.

VDOT also updates its website for this project on a monthly basis so residents and drivers will know what work and related closures to expect in the coming weeks. It is available at: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/fairfax_county_parkway-fair_lakes.asp

Community Parking District Signs

You may recall from previous issues of The Herrity Report, last year I designated the entire

Springfield Magisterial District as a Large-Area Community Parking District (CPD). For more information on the CPD program, visit the Fairfax Department of Transportation's website at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/large_cpd.htm

Prior to the entire Springfield District's designation as a CPD, CPDs had been established in individual communities on a by-request basis and signs were installed on neighborhood streets to reflect these parking restrictions. However, now that the entire District is a CPD and large-area CPDs are enforceable without signs, all previously-installed neighborhood signs are going to be removed over the next several months. This will save the county money in terms of maintenance and staff time as well as prevent confusion in areas where signs currently exist adjacent to those without. If you have any questions about this issue, please contact Peyton Onks of my staff at 703-451-8873.



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