
New Directions

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Arlington New Directions Coalition
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VOTE “YES” ON THE TRANSPORTATION REFERENDUM

By John G. Milliken
Chairman Citizens for Better Transportation

In November, voters in Northern Virginia will have a chance to do something to relieve some of the region’s increasingly serious traffic problems and to make important new investments in the region’s transit system.

A YES vote on the transportation referendum question on the ballot will dedicate \$140 million a year from a new one half-cent sales tax to build specified transit and highway projects across Northern Virginia. Importantly, all of the funds raised will be kept in Northern Virginia and controlled by a new Northern Virginia Transportation Authority made up exclusively of Northern Virginians. And by law, Richmond will not be able to reduce the other transportation funding that Northern Virginia would ordinarily receive. Most people realize that if something is not done, and done soon, our problems will reach a point at which they cannot be fixed. So the time to act is now.

The transit funding is critical. Funding for transit in Virginia is largely a local government responsibility. If these new funds are not made available, then Arlington and other jurisdictions will be forced to use limited General Fund dollars, adding transit obligations into the annual budget competition with education, affordable housing and other important social needs, and public safety.

The legislation earmarks \$2.75 billion to specific projects. Forty percent of those funds will be allocated to Metrorail and

Continued on page 10

Table of Contents

- 2.....Reducing the Number of African American Students In Arlington’s Special Education Programs
- 3.....Living Wage Campaign Comes to Arlington
- 4.....Arlington New Directions Coalition - School Board Candidate Questionnaire
- 5.....Arlington New Directions Coalition - County Board Candidate Questionnaire
- 8.....Data Reveals Questionable Discipline Patterns in Arlington Public Schools
- 9.....Overnight Parking Ban Unfair, Needs Review
- 14.....Clarification on Arlington’s Housing Grants Program

WHY I’M VOTING “NO”

By Keith Willis

Virginia developers and corporations enjoyed a booming decade, but now we are waking up with a hangover from last decade’s party. We are faced with massive infrastructure deficiencies and expanding sprawl. Developers and real estate interests fear that they will face magnifying resistance to development from residents angry about sprawl and gridlock. These groups truly do wish to resolve our terrible transportation problems, but they have not come to us with the best solution.

In November, Virginia voters will go to the polls and decide whether to increase the sales tax regionally by a half-cent to 5 cents on the dollar. The tax increase would raise about \$130 million a year to finance a total of \$5 billion in bonds to spend on transportation projects. This will be a pivotal decision about how our tax system will be structured well into the future. However, it is only one of many solutions to our transportation woes and it certainly is not the best possible. If passed, we will be giving a major windfall to developers and technology companies, while forcing low- to middle-income families to shoulder the costs of sprawl. This amounts to subsidization of further development and another case of corporate welfare.

Given the structural flaws in the Virginia tax system, it is shocking that our political leaders would come up with policy that essentially perpetuates these defects. Virginia is a relatively low-tax state, but the distribution of the tax burden is very regressive. A regressive tax is one that makes middle- and low-income families pay a larger proportion of their income in taxes than the wealthy. The sales tax is regressive, hitting low-income families the hardest. [See chart on page 10] When one compares the rate of the sales tax with that of income taxes, it becomes clear which tax is the fairest. In income taxes, the lowest income quintile paid at a rate of 0.8% of income, while the wealthiest 1.0% paid 4.8% of their taxes in income. Most of the taxes paid by the wealthy come in the form of income taxes, while the poor pay roughly 60% of their taxes in sales taxes.

An increase in the sales tax will only exacerbate these problems because the moderate to lowest income quintiles will see

Continued on page 10

Special Feature
ANDC Candidate Questionnaire for the
School Board and County Board Elections
Pages 4 and 5

Reducing the Number of African American Students In Arlington's Special Education Programs

Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

This year, nearly 3,260 Arlington Public Schools students received special education services. A disproportionate number were African American. This problem is not unique to Arlington and, in fact, reflects a national trend. Researchers, however, believe several factors can improve the situation including: more supports in the general education environment before referral; better teacher training and cultural sensitivity on learning styles of minority children; stronger collaboration between parents and schools; collaboration among parents, schools and community mental health agencies; and better assessment practices.

How do students become eligible and placed in special education?

When a school staff member or parent believes a child may have a disability that affects the student's ability to learn, a written or verbal request for an evaluation is made to the child's school. Together the child's parents and a team of educational experts, including a psychologist, social worker, special education teacher and regular education teacher, determine if the child would benefit from special education services. If so, the team helps the parents and student to develop an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and placement. *(Federal and state laws require parental consent for evaluation and placement in special education. Students cannot be placed in special education programs without parental consent.)*

Why do some north Arlington schools have disproportionately large enrollments of African American students in special education?

The law requires that students be educated in their neighborhood schools when possible. A number of programs, however, are

housed in north Arlington schools. Placing African American students in north Arlington schools which have smaller African American populations accounts for what seems to be overrepresentation in these schools' special education programs.

Has the percentage of African American students identified for special education changed in the past five years?

Yes, the proportion of African American students receiving special education has gradually decreased as indicated in the following chart:

Enrollment of African American Students in APS

School Year	*Percent General Population	*Percent Special Education	Percent Point Gap
1997-1998	17%	26%	9
1998-1999	16%	25%	9
1999-2000	16%	22%	8
2000-2001	15%	21%	6
2001-2002	14%	20%	6

*percentages rounded

What has APS done to reduce overrepresentation by African Americans in special education programs?

Specifically, we have worked to:

1. develop school-based intervention teams,
2. examine assessment practices with a focus on non-biased assessments,
3. recruit qualified teachers,
4. develop an intervention checklist for teachers, and
5. expand mental health services for students and families prior to referral.

Next Steps

While the school division has made significant progress, there is clearly a need to continue to intensify efforts to address this matter. We plan to:

- continue to set high expectations for all students,
- conduct more outreach to parents,
- differentiate the curriculum,
- offer teachers and students strategies and supports prior to referral,
- increase parent and student engagement,
- collaborate with the Minority Achievement Office,
- train general teachers on culture, diversity and disability issues,
- examine assessment and referral practices,
- require schools to undergo a central review process prior to the eligibility meeting for any African American student,
- coordinate more mental health services, and
- hire a special coordinator to provide technical assistance and monitoring on issues regarding overrepresentation.

We are confident that these strategies will help us continue to reduce overrepresentation of African American students in special education.

New Directions is the newsletter of the Arlington New Directions Coalition (ANDC). ANDC reports on local news and presents formal ANDC positions. *New Directions* also publishes articles and opinion pieces consistent with ANDC's mission and values concerning critical public issues in Arlington County.

For more information about contributing an article or opinion piece to *New Directions*, contact Mary Rouleau at: (703) 527-1063 or 1maryr@comcast.net

Editorial Board

Jack Cornman, Carlos Luna, Charlie Rinker, and Mary Rouleau.

Living Wage Campaign Comes to Arlington

By Gene Betit

The failure of Congress to keep the minimum wage current with the cost of living over the past two decades has influenced ten states and the District of Columbia to pass minimum wage standards higher than the federal level.

A full-time job at the current minimum wage rate, \$5.15 per hour, nets an employee \$10,700, significantly below the federal poverty level of \$18,100 for a family of four. Congress last authorized a \$.90 increase in 1996. If it were to have the purchasing power it had in 1968, the minimum wage would be more than \$8.40 today. In other words, between 1979 and 1989 the purchasing value of the minimum wage decreased by 31 percent.

Putting it in another context: An Arlington group, Wider Opportunities for Women, calculates that a single parent with one child would have to take home \$33,000 per year to live in Arlington without state, local or federal subsidies

The major difference between the *“living wage”* and the *federal minimum wage* is that the minimum wage applies to nearly all workers. In contrast, the living wage is targeted at workers hired by contractors of municipal governments, sometimes also at businesses receiving tax abatement or subsidy, and occasionally at city employees themselves. Significantly, a living wage is linked to a poverty threshold, assuring annual adjustment. Also: a living wage is generally significantly higher than the minimum wage, ranging from \$6.25 in Milwaukee County to \$12 an hour in Santa Cruz. The wage set reflects the local cost of living.

Historically, the *living wage* movement took off when Baltimore passed a living wage in 1994. Over the past several years, dozens of cities, counties and other jurisdictions have enacted living wage legislation.

Two years ago, Alexandria passed a living wage ordinance; attempts to overturn it legislatively have, so far, been unsuccessful. The Alexandria City Manager’s office calculates the cost of the legislation over the past year at \$400,000—out of a budget of over \$400 million. Alexandria considers the legislation quite successful.

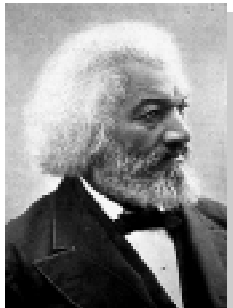
Beneficial results accruing to business from a living wage include a reduction in employee turnover and increased productivity. Workers take greater pride in their job, and many report that second or third jobs are no longer necessary—leaving more time for family activities. Communities also benefit, although no studies have yet been done on the potential wide-ranging social implications of greater parental supervision, and the spill-over effect of job contentment in the home. Perhaps most significant, workers earning a living wage are no longer dependent on public subsidies merely to survive.

It is important to note that recent evidence dispels the notion that the social benefit from higher wages would be wiped out by job cutbacks among businesses subject to living wage laws. A study of 36 living wage cities by a Michigan State university economics professor David Neumark [who was described by Time.com as an “early skeptic of such laws”] found that slight job losses were more than offset by the poverty decrease.

There is growing concern over mounting economic disparity in the United States. It is difficult to argue that those working 40 hours and more per week should live in poverty. Americans have grown accustomed to Congress regularly voting itself a pay raise as well as to reading about outrageous CEO salaries and stock options. Rather than dividing ourselves into camps of haves and have-nots, the saner social policy would seem to dictate that those at the lower end of the spectrum earn enough to pay for rent and other basic necessities.

This past summer, a group of Arlington churches, community groups, and labor unions met to form the Arlington Living Wage Coalition in order to encourage the Arlington County Board to pass living wage legislation. Certainly, absence of a living wage has exacerbated the affordable housing crisis in Arlington and throughout the country.

It is time we join Alexandria in demonstrating concern for low wage workers who perform the essential tasks upon which we rely. **For more information on how individuals and groups can join the coalition and help, call Kathleen Henry of Jobs With Justice at (703) 684-5697.**



Frederick Douglass

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and it never will.

Come to our Community Forum on October 26th. Details on page 15

ANDC adopts Resolutions on Columbia Pike. See page 14.

Arlington New Directions Coalition - School Board Candidate Questionnaire

- 1. Do you support the school bond issues slated to come before the voters in November? Please briefly explain the reasons for your position.*
- 2. In 2001 the County Board voted to implement revenue sharing with the county public schools. Please state your views on this policy and, if you do not support it, please briefly state your alternative plan.*
- 3. Since the early 1970s the Arlington public schools have provided some degree of educational options within the school system. Recently, even more options have been introduced into our system, with several more under discussion now. What is your view of educational options in Arlington as they relate to public schools? Please include in your statement the role of charter schools, vouchers, and any other proposals you endorse.*
- 4. For many years, the Arlington Public Schools have recognized the gap between the achievement level of African American students and White students, and between Hispanic students and White students. An imbalance in referrals to Special Education classes and in school discipline patterns, following the same racial and language lines, has also been noted and may contribute in some ways to this gap. The identification of the reduction of the achievement gap as one of the five strategic goals of the school system has provided positive results in the narrowing the gap in the last few years. What further steps would you recommend to improve the level of school achievement for these students?*
- 5. Historically, students are the only component of our educational systems that are held to published accountability standards (e.g. grades, standardized tests, SOLs). Superintendent Smith recently implemented an Accountability Task Force as an advisory committee to explore the implementation of accountability programs across the school system. The challenge is how to evaluate programs, educators, and ancillary departments as they impact student performance. How would you address accountability programs in our public schools, and what role, if any, do you believe parents and the community should have in school improvement?*

Mary Hynes

1. Yes, I support the School Board's bond request. Approval of the bonds, coupled with redistricting, will eliminate the shortage of permanent classrooms for current and projected students at all elementary and middle schools, and at Yorktown High School.

2. I support revenue sharing. For two years, revenue sharing has established a reliable financial framework for school and county budget planning, streamlining the budget process by providing early, accurate financial information. The agreement, whose criteria were developed in part by the school's Budget Advisory Committee, respects each Board's constitutional responsibility and preserves their joint budget discussions.

Taxpayers hold the School Board directly accountable for proper stewardship of 48.6% of Arlington's local tax dollars, a percentage derived from historical funding levels. The School Board is able to evaluate educational programming in the context of expected funding.

Revenue sharing allows both Boards to focus on long-term planning for community good, without unnecessarily limiting the School Board's ability to seek additional funds from the County should they become essential.

3. As a parent for 22 years in the Arlington Public Schools, with 5 children who had varying educational needs, I was able to take advantage of both neighborhood schools and the educational options that Arlington had to offer in ways that made sense for our family. As a Board member, I have supported the creation and/or expansion of educational options at Arlington Science Focus, Claremont, Campbell, ATS, Drew, Key, Gunston, Kenmore and Wakefield.

I will continue to support a blend of neighborhood schools and educational options. I look forward to the implementation of new community-developed options at Randolph, Oakridge and

Continued on page 6

Beth Wolfe

1. I support the bond and I urge everyone to vote for it. However, certain projects might wait, such as those for additional administrative space. The Board may need to delay or pare some projects, so that we have enough money to pay our teachers competitively. Also, all bonds should be sold at today's record low fixed interest rates, not variable rates as planned.

2. Revenue sharing puts our budget process on autopilot and absolves both County and School Board members of making the tough budget decisions we elect them to make. Our schools should get all the money they demonstrate they need, when balanced against the needs of our police, firefighters and other departments. Some years, the schools may need more than the current formula provides, and they shouldn't be restrained by the formula. Other years, they may need less, in which case they shouldn't start with the presumption that they will get funds they cannot demonstrate they need. One good thing has come from revenue sharing: the County should continue the new practice of providing revenue projections to the schools early in the budget planning process. It would be helpful if they could be a little more accurate.

3. Arlington students should have as many choices of successful programs as we can afford. I was disappointed when my opponent voted two years ago to never consider charter school applications, and pleased when that decision was overturned by state law this year. I don't think our system should be so complacent as to think that it is the only source of good educational choices.

I don't favor vouchers in Arlington. We don't need them.

I strongly favor expanding successful programs like Arlington Traditional School (ATS), HB Woodlawn and Drew Model School to additional schools, so that children don't have to win a lottery to attend such excellent programs. In particular, I favor instituting an ATS-style program at a school in South Arlington, if a

Continued on page 6

Arlington New Directions Coalition - County Board Candidate Questionnaire

1. What should be the goals of policies governing residential and commercial development in Arlington?

2. How important is the goal of ensuring that Arlington has an adequate supply of sound affordable housing compared to other competing goals? What are three most important actions the County could take to increase the supply of affordable housing?

3. What improvements should be made in the retirement system for County employees to help make the County “an employer of choice”?

4. What values and goals should determine the real estate tax rate?

5. What steps should County take in the next two years to begin to implement the recently adopted vision statement for Arlington’s future?

Chris Zimmerman

As Chairman of the Arlington County Board, I view all policy issues through the lens of our vision of Arlington as a “diverse and inclusive world-class urban community, with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important.” This leads to specific goals including: maintaining the highest level of support for our public schools; addressing the affordable housing crisis; protecting services for Arlington’s most vulnerable residents; meeting our transportation, environmental and other investment needs; and safeguarding Arlington’s top bond ratings and fiscal health.

Ensuring that Arlington is a place for people of all incomes is fundamental to realizing our vision. The County Board has made affordable housing a top priority for a number of years, as demonstrated by the appointment of the Affordable Housing Task Force in 1999, and the adoption of new Goals and Principles in December 2000. It was also demonstrated by the Board’s decision to sharply increase funding for the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) in each of the last two years, which will bring the total available funds to start the new fiscal year to \$7 million.

I have demonstrated my own commitment to housing affordability. This year, I led a cooperative effort to preserve the 465 affordable homes at the Gates of Arlington, a vibrant multicultural community in the Buckingham area. My commitment has also been demonstrated by my decisions to vote against development proposals that did not adequately address affordable housing needs, such as “Twin Oaks” in Rosslyn, the “Odyssey” in Courthouse, and “Liberty Center” in Ballston. Other steps I have called for include:

- Putting explicit reference to housing affordability goals in our adopted plans.
- Helping develop co-op housing as a form of ownership for low- and moderate-income communities in Arlington, as has been done successfully in the District of Columbia and Maryland.
- Exploring tax abatement incentives to promote affordable housing.
- Creating a single Housing Department, for a less fragmented housing policy and more consistency internal advocacy.

During my time on the County Board, we have made a great deal of progress in ensuring that Arlington attracts and retains the best personnel. In my first chairmanship we initiated a major overhaul of the retirement system, the first in two decades. Since

Mike Clancy

1. The fundamental tenet of development is balance in the context of the overall vision of the community. This balance includes, for example, small and local businesses, preserving our residential neighborhoods, affordable housing (see below), access for the disabled, transit and environmental factors.

2. Affordable housing is a complex challenge that requires a matrix of strategies. First, the County must work with nonprofits through loans and tax credit programs to ensure nonprofits have the financial capability to purchase and maintain residential buildings at affordable levels. I have seen this approach work. I serve on the Board of Directors of an AHC property (Arlington View Terrace). Second, there should be a greater emphasis on home ownership. This could be accomplished through tax credits to incentivize developers to build affordable single-family homes. Third, there must be a housing plan of action for affordable housing on Columbia Pike.

3. The current retirement system for County employees is the worst in the region. My opponent has ignored this substantial inequity while at the same time he is disingenuously claiming that Arlington is an “employer of choice” and spending tax dollars to provide corporate welfare, including \$750,000 to E-Trade, and to fund special interest groups, including \$5.5 million to Signature Theater. The County’s priorities must be reordered to put PEOPLE FIRST. This should include the employees’ retirement system, which should be upgraded to achieve the benefit level that existed prior to the Board’s substantial reduction of retirement benefits in 1981.

4. Homeowners bear an unfair and disproportionate burden of taxes. Reform is necessary. Residential property taxes have risen at an extraordinary rate in the past three years due to assessment increases. Last year the increases were 20 – 70% depending upon the neighborhood. These increases far exceed prior years and the taxes are projected to increase another 20-50% this coming year.

These tax increases are a grave injustice. They impact every neighborhood, and are contrary to the goal of a livable, sustainable community. They threaten the economic security of senior citizens and low-and-middle-income families, especially in these difficult economic times. Specifically, these soaring taxes increase the monthly mortgage payments (the tax escrow) and rents for families. If this continues, there will be no middle class in Arlington.

To protect our senior citizens and families, we must control

Abingdon in the near future.

I do not support vouchers. I do support Board consideration of community-developed educational options. I hope that these options can continue to be part of the Arlington Public Schools, rather than separate charter schools.

4. Improving student achievement and closing the gap depend on daily classroom actions and decisions. Arlington’s work with the Minority Student Achievement Network, a 15-district K-12 national consortium, has confirmed the critical role the teacher plays in improving achievement. My top priorities will continue to be hiring quality teachers, providing on-going staff training focused on teaching practices that increase achievement, assuring that programs are effective through regular assessment, and insisting that every teacher “teach the child – not just the subject”.

Teachers can’t do it alone. Partnership with families and community is crucial. That’s why I voted for a Community Engagement policy that directs schools to work collaboratively to provide timely information about educational options, inform families about challenging courses and support enrolled students, expand successful programs like GEAR-UP, and increase family/community interactions that support students.

In addition, identification processes—like special education and gifted—as well as disciplinary actions must be monitored regularly by the School Board and community to ensure that youngsters are receiving fair, appropriate, individual consideration and treatment.

5. Lasting educational improvement isn’t possible without on-going evaluation and public accountability. Effective evaluation is based on standards derived from best practices, professional benchmarks and community values. As a Board member, I pushed for the adoption of an Evaluation and Accountability policy that is based on these principles. Program evaluations — Instructional Media and Technology, Early Childhood, Health and PE, and Adult/Career/Vocational education — are now being completed. Each includes feedback from parents, teachers, students and the community on the effectiveness of the program. All are publicly disseminated.

As staff evaluation processes are revised, I will work to make sure parent and student comments are included in teacher evaluation and teachers, parents and students participate in principal evaluation. Meaningful comments depend on clear, shared understandings of performance expectations.

ANDC is a nonpartisan organization. It does not endorse candidates. As part of its education mission, ANDC asked the candidates for County Board and School Board to comment on a number of issues of interest to ANDC. The views expressed by the candidates are their own and are not necessarily the views of ANDC.

neighborhood there would welcome it. I believe neighborhood residents should have priority for a significant percentage of those seats, and other South Arlington residents should have priority for another significant percentage. If that school is successful, I favor quickly looking for ways to expand HB Woodlawn to an additional school, and extending ATS to the middle school level.

4. We should look at which of our achievement programs are working best. They vary from school to school, so it’s important to know this. Look at which children attended Y.E.S., met regularly with an achievement coordinator, attended SOL remediation, or were taught by a teacher who had received TESA training, and examine whether those students improved in terms of grades, test scores, attendance, and/or disciplinary records. Some people argue that we can’t tell which programs are working because students participate in multiple programs. In my experience, this is seldom the case. Students are rarely enrolled in more than one achievement program, so that resources are conserved and as many students as possible are exposed to at least one program. Responsible management demands that we know which program(s) work best. Then we can expand them and fix or redirect those that aren’t as successful.

5. Computer records reveal which teachers are assigned to each student. We should examine changes in grades, test scores, attendance and/or disciplinary records of students assigned to the teachers implementing the programs we want to evaluate. The Task Force was created more than two years ago, but has not yet begun this work, nor even to agree on a set of standards by which to evaluate programs. Let’s have fewer “customer surveys” and better hard data.

Candidate Web Sites

Beth Wolffe

www.bethforschoolboard.com

Mary Hynes

www.maryhynes.com

Mike Clancy

www.mikeclancy.org

Chris Zimmerman

www.zimmerman2002.org

then we've made improvements to employee pay, and last year we gave the Manager direction for Arlington to be an "employer of choice," looking comprehensively at all the factors that affect the desirability of county service. We have taken initial actions toward that goal, for instance, by revising and improving retirement rules for public safety employees and general employees. We have also created a "live-near-your-work" benefit that will help employees who wish to buy homes in Arlington.

This is a continuous process, however, and we have directed the Manager to review all compensation and benefit policies on an on-going basis, and to consult regularly with employees to ensure that we remain competitive.

In development as in other policy areas, I start with the broad goals of our vision statement. To achieve these we must be true to our traditions of citizen-led planning and our historic pattern of transit-oriented development, or what is now known across the country as "smart growth." This means managed growth and compact development, with high-density development confined to the roughly ten percent of the county within the Metro station sectors. It means creating people-oriented places, with walk-ability and access to transit, and the preservation of open space.

these real estate tax increases. This is not a tax cut. It is controlling increases to protect families.

Controlling these tax increases would NOT require any cuts in services nor preclude improvements in the employee retirement system. Last year, the County had a \$16 million surplus and the pension fund has a surplus of over \$200 million. This year there will be another substantial budget surplus. Moreover, commercial assessments should increase substantially to provide even more revenue.

It is simply not fair to burden families and senior citizens with harsh tax increases in order to give, for example, \$750,000 to E-Trade. Justice and fairness requires controlling these increases to protect seniors and families.

5. The major flaw in Arlington's "vision" is the reality that county government is not inclusive and meaningful participation by our diverse community is limited. Columbia Pike has been neglected for decades. Many neighborhoods are not included in the neighborhood conservation program and citizen input is often dominated by a few large, organized civic associations. I will take aggressive steps to ensure programs, like neighborhood conservation, include all neighborhoods; that citizens have the opportunity for meaningful participation in the County's processes by directly engaging citizens in all neighborhoods; and that citizens from all our diverse neighborhoods have the opportunity to serve on the commissions that advise the Board.

Clarification on Arlington's Housing Grants Program:

In issue #7 (Spring, 2002), page 7 of the Arlington New Directions Coalition newsletter, for the article written by Lois Athey, entitled "Finding an Affordable Apartment Is Tricky in Arlington", we wish to provide a clarification. The author stated, "For those families who cannot afford the cost of housing, housing grants help pay the high rents. But tenants cannot access these grants unless they have a signed lease. But since tenants often cannot qualify for the apartment unless they have the housing grant, there is no solution. The family thus may be forced to sub-lease a unit rather than live independently."

The ANDC editorial board got a few calls from persons in County government stating that this was not correct — that this policy had been changed recently and that a family does not have to have a signed lease in order access the County's housing grants program (Arlington's locally- funded rental assistance program for low-income households). Research on this issue determined that while it is technically correct that a family cannot receive a housing grant without a valid lease, the County housing grants staff will provide eligible households with a "pending eligibility" letter that documents the family's potential eligibility and the eligible grant amount to the landlord.

However, the currently used Arlington County Housing Grants brochure clearly states the following:

"Q. Must I have a lease to qualify for a Housing Grant? A. Yes. You must have a lease in your name to qualify for the Housing Grants program."

There has been a recent policy change on this matter. But the brochure, which is used to publicize the Housing Grants program and to do outreach to populations that might use the program, needs to be revised and rewritten to reflect current policies. Unwritten policies used to administer the program which are not clear about what one must do to get housing grants assistance are misleading and unfriendly to those households that need them most.

Moreover, the County needs to do a better job in publicizing the Housing Grants program. We suggest that the revised Housing Grants brochure be broadly available in the community (in both hard copy and electronic form). We need to inform all households presently on the Section 8 waiting list, all other households known to the County Dept. of Human Services, all County residents in countywide publications, all religious organizations and social service providers in the County, and all Arlington landlords. The County ought to hold briefings with landlords to inform them about the program and encourage landlords to accept housing grants in their complexes. The County must make sure that all materials produced about Housing Grants be in both English and Spanish. The County needs to provide housing grants program training to all County and community services staff persons who come into contact with households that housing grants might help. This is important because the affordable housing problem in Arlington County has reached crisis proportions; and real people in our community are suffering.

Data Reveals Questionable Discipline Patterns in Arlington Public Schools

Part II of a three part series by Andi Cullins

The Arlington Public School System is currently addressing the discipline policy affecting all students. Upon a cursory review of the draft for ASD(s) 25-4.01, 5.02,5.03 and 12.02 proposed for the Arlington Public Schools Handbook Management Bulletin #37, these policies seem reasonable and rational. However, APS has had a long-standing and persistent disparity in the numbers of minority students, specifically African-American and Latino students, who are subject to school discipline.

In 2000, the Arlington Human Rights Commission asked Superintendent Smith and representatives of the schools to address the perception among members of these communities that disciplinary measures were more often meted out to minority students. Since that time, Dr. Smith and Meg Tuccillo provided information that corroborated this perception. According to the information they provided, Blacks and Latinos (especially males) were the objects of school discipline at rates far beyond their representation in the population. In fact, the extent of the skew is so great that reasonable explanation fails.

Although the policies outlined in the policy document seem race and gender neutral, some items are clearly open to interpretation by individual classroom teachers and building administrators. It is difficult to know with certainty how race and teacher tolerance affect the skew, however there is anecdotal information that can shed light on how these situations play out.

Last year I spoke with a small, racially-mixed group of high school students who shared a single observation. They noted that one teacher seemed to have a very different tolerance level for the same general behavior, depending on the race of the student in question. This teacher made no reference to race nor did he make any comments during class that led these students to feel he was “a racist”. However, over the course of the year a pattern clearly emerged, so much so that an unaffected group of students were able to discern the disparate treatment. In this case the teacher was tolerant of classroom talking and disruption by white students, while he was intolerant of the same behavior from African American students. Not only did he verbally chastise minority students, he frequently sent them to the school office for further discipline.

It is intolerable, especially in this day and age, for our schools to accept flawed discipline practices. We need to acknowledge that the nature of discrimination has changed substantially. We no longer deal with the overt, or even conscious action. What we deal with now is more subtle, less intentional, but nevertheless just as damaging and just as unacceptable. Once the student reaches the office, the level of discipline and specific punitive actions may be proscribed. However, which students are singled out, and why, is still open to the perceptions of the individual classroom teacher.

Discipline policies that require all students to be punished to the same extent for similar infractions are logical and necessary. However, corresponding instruction in racial sensitivity for staff and teachers, the effectiveness of such training, and monitoring staff and teacher application of the policy must be part of the same effort.

The answers to this problem are understandably complicated and diverse. However, concerned citizens should engage the schools in a meaningful examination and dialog regarding these disparities. To do less is to endorse the current skewed discipline practices, and makes the statement that we believe misbehavior at school is inherently linked to race. This by itself becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The data below is from a report presented at a meeting of the Minority Affairs Advisory Committee of the Arlington Public Schools earlier this year. This is a citizen’s advisory committee made up of volunteers from the community. The members are not necessarily minorities themselves, but they review information that affects or pertains to minority students as a whole within the APS system. The information in the report was provided by the Arlington Public Schools. The analysis and comments were provided by a member of the Minority Affairs Advisory committee. All footnotes and remarks are part of the report and were provided by the same source.

Once again, a pattern emerges that has unsettling implications for Arlington’s African American community, and while no correlations have been made between the special education statistics provided in the Spring 2002 *New Directions* [“Minorities Over-represented in Special Education Classes in Arlington Public Schools?”], and these statistics on discipline, it is once again apparent that schools [at the secondary level] on the far north end of the county have disproportionate numbers of suspensions as compared to the numbers of African American students enrolled. That is, the fewer the number of African American students enrolled, the higher the rate of suspensions.

A. District-wide data¹ shows an overall and statistically significant disparity as to Black students, but not as to Hispanic students:

Black enrollment: 14-16% Black suspension rate: 39-43%
 Hispanic enrollment: 32-34% Hispanic suspension rate: 29-38%

B. District-wide disparities between enrollment and suspension rates are even greater when considering categories with relatively high possibility of subjectivity or discretion²:

Insubordination:	98-99	Black:	57%	Hispanic:	25%
	99-00	Black:	42%	Hispanic:	39%
Interrupting school					
or class:	98-99	Black:	59%	Hispanic:	17%
	99-00	Black:	60%	Hispanic:	36%
Fighting (no injury):					
	98-99	Black:	37%	Hispanic:	38%
	99-00	Black:	46%	Hispanic:	33%
Fighting (minor injury):					
	98-99	Black:	66%	Hispanic:	23%
	99-00	Black:	44%	Hispanic:	33%
Fighting (all):	00-01	Black:	43%	Hispanic:	28%
Profanity:					
	98-99	Black:	65%	Hispanic:	41%
	99-00	Black:	41%	Hispanic:	43%
Threats to staff and students:					
	98-99	Black:	60%	Hispanic:	26%
	99-00	Black:	44%	Hispanic:	35%

OVERNIGHT PARKING BAN UNFAIR, NEEDS REVIEW

By Fred Millar

As a tenant in Columbia Park Apartments, I am very concerned about the strong momentum in the County towards handling tensions over on-street overnight parking in private and official ways that appear to be arguably illegal, which are discriminatory towards (largely Hispanic) apartment tenants, and which have involved neighborhood and governmental processes that are less than neighborly and democratic. I hope that the County will initiate an inquiry, with participation by all stakeholders, into the problems, and will promptly issue findings and recommendations about ways to mitigate the problems.

The overall problem is caused by the need of many apartment tenants in Northern Virginia to drive to work at locations not well-served by public transportation. We typically have more cars than permits in often-full apartment lots. Some apartments (e.g., many off Columbia Pike) give only one or two parking stickers to a two-bedroom apartment and no overnight guest permits.

Concord Village (soon to be Shirlington Overlook) management reports, for example, a total of 531 apartments, but only 580 parking spaces. If they had as many cars as potential adult residents [by bedroom occupancy code] in the apartments, the total potential cars would be 1437, nearly 3 times the number of spaces.

So when the lots are full, tenants need to park overnight on the nearby streets. In various neighborhoods, tenants have experienced hostility from neighbors when they do this. Some of the residents of single-family homes do not like neighbor-tenants parking overnight in front of their homes. They say they want the spaces for themselves or their guests to park in front. Others say they don't see a big problem.

Some single family home residents [clearly illegally] routinely put orange cones on the streets (which are public right-of-ways), and some put notes on tenant cars to intimidate them. One example, from a block in the Barcroft area on which the homes have two-car garages and two-car driveways, reads: *"This block has limited available parking for homeowners, residents and guests. Kindly be considerate and PARK your vehicle in the block where YOU RESIDE. Your cooperation will be appreciated."*

Arlington County government has a "pilot" overnight parking ban [7pm-3am] project in Douglas Park. Apartment tenants, e.g., from nearby Concord Village on Four Mile Run, are banned from parking overnight in several nearby streets, even when their apartment residence addresses are within the boundaries of the neighborhood association. Single family home residents, on the other hand, are granted permits for overnight parking and get as many decals as they have cars. There are, in fact, a few streets in Douglas Park where, because of steep property slopes, there are few driveways; these residents are also crucially dependent on on-street parking.

It is my understanding that at least two other civic associations in Arlington are interested in and moving strongly towards similar overnight parking bans. And, apparently a proposed

ordinance is being analyzed by County staff. I have seen a recent report from the County Manager's office on the Douglas Park pilot project that raises many questions as to the legality, discriminatory impacts, ultimate effectiveness, and procedural fairness of that project and future similar ones.

The report indicates straightforwardly that the new nighttime parking ban policies foreshadowed by the Douglas Park pilot program "would have a major impact on a large percentage of residents of the County" ... *"About fifty percent of the dwelling units in Arlington County are multi-family; the proposed Residential Zone Parking Policy" would have a major impact on a large percentage of residents in the County. The impact would eliminate parking opportunities for multi-family residences that are close to single family communities, because under the draft plan, only single family neighborhoods that experience overcrowding can be investigated for a permit-parking program."*

"The questions that exist with the newly drafted policy are whether the policies will stand up in court. Residents of single family homes have reserved off-street parking, while residents of multi-family units frequently do not. Streets are public and are maintained through taxes from all residents, even for renters. Part of the collected rent is directed towards taxes that in turn are used to maintain the streets."

In Douglas Park and in both areas being looked at for the next nighttime parking bans, there have been reported sporadic acts that verged on violence, initiated when residents have very aggressively challenged "out of area" drivers who park in front of their houses. One resident reported that "the police had been called on occasion, but no reports may have been filed."

In my own research on overnight parking bans in Arlington and Fairfax, I find a strong case not for racist intent, but certainly for disparate racial impact. In most cases, a few, mostly white single family home residents nearby have imposed overnight parking bans designed to constrict the tenant parking options around the apartment complexes with much larger numbers of mostly-Hispanic tenants.

It is important to also remember that these bans in Arlington and Fairfax have been imposed with virtually no notification to the tenants. Neither the needs nor the opinions of the tenants have been effectively solicited (and certainly not in Spanish) by the Counties in advance of instituting these projects, nor have I heard of any plan to assess the impacts on the tenants. I suspect the collective hardships on the tenants, many of whom are the working poor, are severe. This constitutes an unfortunate introduction to American democracy for our newest neighbors.

In my view, with an overnight parking ban the County has effected a quiet land transfer, i.e., it has transferred substantial amounts of parking space on the nearest public streets from nighttime use by apartment tenants and made it available only to single family home residents. It may be illegal and in any case, this process so far has not met any fair standard of democratic public process. We tenants have been disregarded throughout this process, and in effect have been treated as non-neighbors and non-residents in our own communities.

The "pilot" Arlington County policies which have been

“Yes” Continued from page 1

other mass transit projects. For example, \$350 million will provide critical local funds to match future federal and state funding to extend Metrorail through Tysons Corner to Dulles Airport and into eastern Loudoun County. For Arlington, this means that individuals who live in Reston or Herndon who now drive their cars into or through Arlington to reach their jobs can instead use the rail system and stay off of our local streets, reducing congestion and improving air quality. And individuals living in Arlington, downtown D.C. or the closer-in suburbs for whom public transit is essential to their daily lives will have a transit option to get to jobs in the Tysons-Dulles Corridor where many of the new jobs are located.

An additional \$75 million is earmarked to begin the development of a new transit way along the Route 1 Corridor between the Braddock Road Metrorail Station in Alexandria and the Pentagon and another \$70 million will provide partial funding for transit along Columbia Pike from the Pentagon west to Bailey’s Crossroads. Substantial additional funding will be used to rehabilitate some of the older stations in the Metro system, add additional cars to increase capacity and build new entrances to provide improved access.

In Arlington, highway funding of \$25 million is designated to replace older bridges such as the Washington Boulevard Bridge over Columbia Pike and, importantly to our community, the

“No” Continued from page 1

tax increases, while the wealthiest quintile will see a barely noticeable change.

The organization pushing in favor of the referendum often claims that the sales tax increase would only cost Northern Virginians \$91, but the actual cost would be closer to \$145 a year. This means a year of milk for a family or of bus rides or any of the many things critical to low-income workers. In terms of a tax change as a percentage of income, the proposed increase would hit the lowest income quintile at a rate of 0.6%, while the increase would mean a rate of 0.1% for the wealthiest 5%. This means that

legislation makes clear that the monies available for I-66 cannot be used inside the Beltway.

All of the funds raised by the additional half-cent increase in the sales tax (which will not cover food or non-prescription drugs) will be administered by the new Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, made up principally of local elected officials from Northern Virginia. At the urging of Arlington Board Chairman Chris Zimmerman, the Authority adopted a set of principles that includes important protections for Arlington. First, no project will be approved by the Authority over the objection of the jurisdiction in which it is located. Second, over any six year period, each jurisdiction will receive funding proportional to its population. Third, the share for transit and HOV will be set at a minimum of 50 percent for all funds available to the Authority.

Approval of the referendum will be an important step toward dedicated funding for our transit system, providing better transportation options for modest income people seeking to get to work at reasonable cost, giving our local governments more control over transportation policy and making us less dependent on Richmond to meet our critical needs.

For all these reasons, on behalf of Citizens for Better Transportation, a coalition of citizens, business leaders, educators and elected officials from both political parties, I urge you to vote “YES” on the transportation referendum November 5th.

the poorest 20% would experience a tax increase six times larger than that of the wealthiest 5%.

To exacerbate this, these same two income quintiles had dramatically different economic experiences over the past two decades. The poorest fifth saw their income fall by 1%, while the wealthiest fifth enjoyed a massive increase of 43% in income. Passing this referendum would mean that the people who have benefited the most from the economic boom and in many ways were the main contributors to the resulting sprawl would shirk any responsibility for the larger community’s problems.

Continued on page II

Virginia taxes at 2000 Levels*							
As Shares of Family Income for all Taxpayers							
Income Group	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Middle 20%	Fourth 20%	Top 20%		
					Next 15%	Next 4%	Top 1%
Average Income in Group	\$8,500	\$19,300	\$33,300	\$55,100	\$94,200	\$191,600	\$997,000
Income Range	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 - \$26,000	\$26,000 - \$43,000	\$43,000 - \$71,000	\$71,000 - \$142,000	\$142,000 - \$295,000	\$295,000 - or more
Sales, excise & gross receipts taxes	6.20%	4.70%	3.80%	3.00%	2.20%	1.40%	0.60%
General sales tax, individuals	2.40%	1.90%	1.50%	1.30%	0.90%	0.60%	0.30%
Excise & gross receipts taxes, individuals	2.70%	2.00%	1.50%	1.20%	0.90%	0.50%	0.20%
Sales, excise & gross receipts taxes, business	1.10%	0.90%	0.70%	0.50%	0.40%	0.20%	0.10%
Property taxes	3.40%	2.30%	2.10%	2.10%	2.30%	2.50%	1.40%
Property taxes on families	3.30%	2.20%	1.90%	1.90%	2.10%	2.20%	0.60%
Business property taxes	0.01%	0.20%	0.20%	0.20%	0.30%	0.40%	0.80%
Income taxes	0.80%	2.20%	2.80%	3.10%	3.60%	4.10%	4.80%
Personal income tax	0.80%	2.20%	2.80%	3.00%	3.50%	4.00%	4.70%
Corporate income tax	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%	0.10%
Total before federal Itemized Offset	10.40%	9.20%	8.60%	8.20%	8.10%	8.00%	6.90%
Federal Itemized deduction Offset	0.00%	0.00%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-1.1%	-1.7%	-2.0%
Net Taxes after Federal Offset	10.4%	9.20%	8.50%	7.80%	7.00%	6.30%	4.90%

Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy Microsimulation Tax Model, July 5, 2000.

*Assumes fully phased-in car tax and grocery tax reduction

Besides the tax equity problems with the referendum, the passing of this referendum would only temporarily shore up our dysfunctional tax system and faulty revenue stream. Our political leaders should be working on innovative legislation instead of engaging in myopic election year maneuvering. The Commission on Virginia’s State and Local Tax Structure [“the Commission”] and business groups such Responsible Economic Growth in Our Region [REGION] and the Business Roundtable recognize the need for real tax reform—why don’t our leaders?

As outlined in an article in the Spring 2002 *New Directions* [“Yes, Virginia, There is a Better Tax System”] the Commission recommended a series of goals and ideas to make Virginia’s tax system more equitable, efficient, adequate and predictable. For example, it recommended that the income tax structure be changed to have two brackets of 5% for the first \$50,000 and 5.75 for amounts above \$50,000. The Commission report offers solid solutions that would mean long term fiscal stability for Virginia while maintaining a relatively low tax burden.

The Commission’s plan recognizes that the most equitable way to raise taxes is through either an income or corporate tax increase. The corporate tax in Virginia has remained unchanged for nearly thirty years and an increase has some clear support among business groups.

Another alternative is to make a new top tax income tax rate for incomes above \$60,000. This would be a little more progressive than the Commission’s plan and would likely raise more revenue. Increasing the income tax would allow the taxpayers who itemize their federal taxes to write off a portion of the increase, which passes on at least part of the cost of the increase to the federal government. With this modest and barely noticeable change the state could raise the necessary \$130 million for financing of local bonds.

It is clear that there is some consensus among business groups and other prominent conservatives (not just the “tax and spend liberals”) that Virginia should reform its tax system, but the

“Discipline” Continued from page 8

Threat/intimidation:	00-01	Black:	40%	Hispanic:	23%
Bullying:	00-01	Black:	46%	Hispanic:	25%
Disorderly conduct: ³	00-01	Black:	51%	Hispanic:	26%

C. Note that, for **profanity**, Hispanic suspension rate is greater than Hispanic enrollment for both years. In certain categories, Hispanic suspension rate is slightly greater than Hispanic enrollment for one year but not the other (insubordination, interrupting, fighting-no injury, threats to staff and students).

D. Only other category (with relatively large numbers) where Hispanic disciplinary rate is greater than the 32-34% Hispanic enrollment is **truancy**; the disparity for Black students is also greater than their 14-16% enrollment, but by a lesser magnitude than the infractions listed in B above.

98-99	Black:	22%	Hispanic:	45%
99-00	Black:	26%	Hispanic:	48%
00-01	Black:	27%	Hispanic:	34% ⁴

politicians have brought forth an inadequate and unfair proposal. This seems mysterious until one examines the groups behind this referendum because it is a testament to the power of developers in Northern Virginia and the lack of real progressive leadership in any of our politicians.

The group that brought this referendum to us is a coalition called Citizens for Better Transportation. While the steering committee is made up of some good citizens who genuinely wish to find a way out of our transportation mess, the group’s primary funding sources —the real estate, development, construction, and finance industries— have a heavy economic interest in perpetuating sprawl and development, as well as in diverting tax burdens away from those in their industries.

One of the steering committee members of the Citizens for Better Transportation is from the Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC), which was prominent in the debate about the Internet sales tax. It seems a little strange that the NVTC would vociferously oppose an internet sales tax, yet would organize and fund a campaign for a local sales tax. NVTC lists among its legislative goals a desire to lower telecommunications taxes, liberalize sales tax exemptions on research and development, change the tax laws so software integration is exempted as purchases needed for production, and to expand business facility tax credits. All of this adds up to an organization that is attempting to shore up its case for corporate tax cuts in lean times by shifting the burden to the rest of us in the form of sales taxes.

Nonetheless, with such glaring structural inequities and questionable motives by its proponents our local political leaders are pushing this referendum. We should defeat this referendum not only on the basis of its inequities, or its potential boon for developers, but because we need to send a message to the politicians that we expect more innovative and progressive leadership from them.

[Keith works for the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy in Washington DC and lives in South Arlington. The opinions expressed are his own.]

E. School Building Comparisons.⁵

Significant disparities between the suspension rates for Black students and their enrollment were present at all the middle and high schools.⁶ Disparities for disorderly conduct and/or other categories where the possibility of subjectivity/discretion is relatively high tend to be greater. This is particularly true at the high schools, where the category of disorderly conduct tends to have the highest percentages and/or the largest number of students.

Only a few schools show a disparity between suspension rate for Hispanic students and their enrollment in the school – Williamsburg, Kenmore (slightly), Yorktown.

1. Gunston – 141 students suspended

Black enrollment:	26%
Black suspension:	48%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	58%
Black suspension fighting:	43%
Hispanic enrollment:	43%
Hispanic suspension: ⁷	34%

2. Jefferson – 58 students suspended⁸

Black enrollment:	21%
Black suspension:	41%
Black suspension bullying:	60%
Black suspension fighting:	83%
Hispanic enrollment:	44%
Hispanic suspension:	36%
Hispanic suspension drug violations:	80% ⁹

3. Kenmore – 79 students suspended

Black enrollment:	18%
Black suspension:	44%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	45%
Black suspension fighting:	53%
Black suspension battery:	80% ¹⁰
Hispanic enrollment:	43%
Hispanic suspension:	44%
Hispanic suspension disorderly conduct ¹¹ :	42%

4. Swanson – 32 students suspended¹²

Black enrollment:	5%
Black suspension:	17%
Hispanic enrollment:	21%
Hispanic suspension:	17%

5. Williamsburg – 118 students suspended

Black enrollment:	9%
Black suspension:	36%
Black suspension bullying:	50%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	36%
Black suspension fighting:	53%
Black suspension weapons:	50% ¹³
Hispanic enrollment:	15%
Hispanic suspension:	22%
Hispanic battery:	67% ¹⁴
Hispanic threat/intimidation:	50% ¹⁵

6. Wakefield – 206 students suspended

Black enrollment:	29%
Black suspension:	59%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	69%
Black suspension battery:	56%
Black suspension threat/intimidation:	90%
Black suspension theft:	83%
Hispanic enrollment:	44%
Hispanic suspension:	28% ¹⁶

7. Washington-Lee

Black enrollment:	14%
Black suspension:	28%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	43%
Hispanic enrollment:	35%
Hispanic suspension:	37%

8. Yorktown

Black enrollment:	7%
Black suspension:	20%
Black suspension disorderly conduct:	19% ¹⁷
Black suspension other:	30% ¹⁸
Hispanic enrollment:	19%
Hispanic suspension:	29%
Hispanic suspension other:	19% ¹⁹

Note that, the smaller the percentage of Black students at the school, the greater the magnitude of the disparity. For example, at the middle school level, Gunston and Jefferson, the percentage of Black students enrolled is 26% and 21%, and the suspension rate is approximately double – 48% and 41%, respectively. At Swanson, Black enrollment is 5%, but the suspension rate is more than triple – 17%; at Williamsburg, Black enrollment is 9%, but the suspension rate is 4 times higher – 36%. At the high school level, the enrollment of Black students at Wakefield is 29%, and the suspension rate is approximately double – 59%; at W&L, Black enrollment is 14% and the suspension rate is again double – 28%. However, at Yorktown, where Black enrollment is only 7%, the suspension rate is nearly triple that – 20%.

Williamsburg and Yorktown, the two schools where there is a significant disparity for Hispanics, have the lowest enrollments of Hispanics — 15% at Williamsburg, with a suspension rate of 22% or less, and 19% at Yorktown, with a suspension rate of 29%.

F. At the middle school level, it may be worth considering why some schools have a larger number of students suspended overall. For example, a high of 141 students were disciplined at Gunston (Williamsburg was next with 118), compared to a low of 42 at Swanson (Jefferson was next with 58). Comparing schools with somewhat similar racial/ethnic profiles might be particularly useful, e.g., Gunston with 26% Black enrollment and 141 students suspended, Jefferson with 21% Black enrollment but only 58 students suspended, and Kenmore with 18% Black enrollment and 79 students suspended.

G. While the suspension rate for Hispanic students is less than their enrollment Countywide and at most schools, many in the Hispanic community nevertheless perceive this to be otherwise. Could the perception be due at least in part to the type of infraction? For example, at the high school level, disorderly conduct is one of the largest categories at all the schools and for which a relatively large number of Hispanic students are suspended. Could the possibility, or at least the perception, of subjectivity contribute to the general impression of a greater disparity/unfair treatment?

H. The information above apparently includes double counting, that is, one student may be suspended several times and be counted each time. The comparisons could be more meaningful if double counting was eliminated.

I. The information above shows greater disparities at some schools than at others, and could prompt further consideration of the disciplinary practices at those schools. Tracking the information to the teacher level might prompt additional questions. For example, are there teachers with relatively high rates of suspending students generally? Relatively high rates of suspending minority students? Have those teachers received TESA training? If they have not, then perhaps they should receive it very soon. If they have, then perhaps the training needs to be reinforced or reevaluated.

J. It would also be useful to have information on referrals of students, to look for situations where students are referred

but not suspended. Particularly at the teacher level, there could be even greater disparities than those disclosed above.

K. Data on length of suspensions would also be useful, to see if there are racial or ethnic disparities or if this factor is contributing in some way to the perception of disparities or unfairness. While there may not be disparities in suspension rates for Hispanics, it is possible that Hispanic students might be suspended for longer periods for similar offenses and/or for longer periods due to the nature of the offenses.

L. Similarly, data on in-school suspensions should be analyzed for racial or ethnic disparities.

¹ Ranges reflect enrollment and suspension rates for school years 98-99, 99-00, and 00-01

² Categories changed in school year 00-01, so can't show data for all three years for all categories; only considered categories with numbers large enough to disclose significant differences.

³ This includes suspensions in the previous year categories of insubordination, profanity, interrupting school, misbehavior in school, and misbehavior on bus.

⁴ Figure for 00-01 based on information provided at December committee meeting that "Other" category was primarily attendance-related.

⁵ Date only provided for 00-01.

⁶ Focus on middle and high schools, as the number of students enrolled and suspended were large enough to provide meaningful comparisons; numbers of suspensions at the elementary level were too small to do so.

⁷ The suspension rate for Hispanic students for certain categories was 100%, but the numbers of students represented were too small to provide meaningful comparisons: bullying (1 student), sexual offenses (5 students), vandalism (2 students).

⁸ Number of students suspended for each category is small (bullying – 3 students, fighting – 5 students), so comparisons should be made with caution. For Hispanic students, numbers for each category are generally too small to provide meaningful comparisons, except perhaps for drug violations.

⁹ Represents 4 Hispanic students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹⁰ Represents 4 Black students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹¹ Fourteen Hispanic students suspended for disorderly conduct – more than any other category at school.

¹² Note the relatively low number of students disciplined as compared to other middle schools

¹³ Represents 2 Black students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹⁴ Represents 2 Hispanic students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹⁵ Represents 4 Hispanic students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹⁶ Note significant underrepresentation of Hispanics suspensions as compared to Hispanic enrollment.

¹⁷ Represents only 3 Black students, so comparisons should be made with caution.

¹⁸ Representing 14 Black students, largest category at school.

¹⁹ Representing 9 Hispanic students, largest category at school.

"Parking" Continued from page 9

utilized so far in overnight parking bans attempt an unfortunate win-lose solution to vexing common parking problems. **Instead, I hope that the County Board will act:**

1. To terminate the Douglas Park "pilot" project which has now run for more than its intended six months, and to include in the final assessment of that project a study of the impacts on the parking options of the nearby apartment tenants.
2. To impose a moratorium on any new bans for the time being at least until a legal analysis and a public dialogue can be completed.
3. To conduct a full and bi-lingual civic dialogue, with all stakeholders fully represented, and with a thorough search for creative and constructive solutions.
4. To communicate to single family home residents that apartment tenants are also families who go to church, are hard-working taxpayers and neighbors, and are deserving of respect. And that apartment managers and tenants pay substantial property taxes and are doing their best in a difficult situation with 50-year-old local government codes and daunting space limitations and demographic realities. And that the

widespread practice of "coning off" single family home neighborhoods to intimidate potential tenant parkers is illegal.

5. To calculate the value at fair market rates of the transfer of use of public land in overnight parking bans.
6. To initiate consideration of more forward-looking, creative "WIN-WIN" solutions to the parking dilemmas facing us, which might include:
 - Revising obsolete County codes on parking requirements for multi-family dwellings and single-family homes and applying them to older apartments.
 - Providing some compelling market incentives for apartment owners to provide more parking facilities for tenants.
 - Leading the arrangements for shared parking between churches, shopping centers, and other owners of empty nighttime space with nearby apartments (perhaps by providing county-funded liability indemnity).
 - Providing county-operated tenant parking lots or parking garages near large apartment complexes.

- Charging homeowners fees for on-street parking on their block that would be sufficient to fund such county-operated lots for tenants.
- Educating homeowners and tenants alike in the basics of American civic participation and propriety.
- Phasing in over 20 years progressively stricter limitations on cars that are not hybrid or better in use of less-polluting technologies.

- Improving public transit between residences and suburban jobs.

Surely Arlington can avoid an elitist “gated community”-type solution to our common parking problems. I stand ready to work together with the County and our neighbors in a fully democratic process towards creative and equitable solutions.

(Fred Millar is a tenant in Columbia Park Apartments and a consultant to the Tenant and Workers Support Committee. He can be reached at 703-979-9191 or fmillar@erols.com)

ANDC ADOPTS RESOLUTIONS REGARDING COLUMBIA PIKE REDEVELOPMENT; URGES NO NET LOSS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING & RETENTION OF SMALL BUSINESS

As you have been reading in various publications, the Columbia Pike Initiative is well-underway. According to the County:

“To stem the tide of minimal investment and/or disinvestment in the Columbia Pike Corridor and to be proactive in revitalizing Columbia Pike, the Arlington County Board announced the creation of the Columbia Pike Initiative (CPI) in 1998. The goal of the Initiative is to build a safer, cleaner, more competitive and vibrant Columbia Pike community. Through the course of numerous meetings with the community in 2000 and 2001, a long range vision and plan was established that focused on economic development and commercial revitalization, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation/transit/traffic/parking and public infrastructure, and open space and recreational needs.”

[For more information, go to <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/columbia/index.htm>]

ANDC adopted the following in response to concerns about the level of emphasis being placed on affordable housing and small business.

Affordable Housing

Whereas there is a significant number of market rate and committed affordable housing units in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Area, and

Whereas many residents of the area favor maintaining the area as a home to an economically and culturally diverse population, and

Whereas there is a critical shortage of affordable housing units in Arlington, and

Whereas affordable housing, which serves families with annual incomes ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000, is not an unfair

“burden” on a section of the County,

Therefore, the Board of the Arlington New Directions Coalition (ANDC) urges the Arlington County Board

1. To set a goal of no net loss of housing units affordable to the range of incomes that currently reside along Columbia Pike, and
2. To instruct County staff to seek out ways and programs to attain and to aggressively pursue this goal.

Small Business

Whereas independent small businesses provide essential services to the community, and

Whereas independent and locally owned small businesses are vital components of the community, often supporting important community activities, and

Whereas independent and locally owned small businesses are important to the economic strength of the County, and

Whereas, based on past experiences, special efforts will be necessary to retain a vibrant mix of independent and locally owned small businesses in Columbia Pike Revitalization Area,

Therefore, the Board of Directors of the Arlington New Directions Coalition (ANDC)

1. Strongly supports the Arlington County Board’s concern for ensuring that independent small businesses (including those that are owned and operated by residents of the Columbia Pike community) will have ample opportunities to locate and flourish in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Area, and
2. Urges the County Board to establish a goal for the retention of small business locations in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Area as a measure against which to evaluate the success of the County’s redevelopment efforts, and
3. Strongly urges the County Board to instruct County staff to seek out and implement innovative approaches for ensuring ample opportunities for small, independent and locally owned businesses to locate and flourish in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Area.

[9/15/02]

COMMUNITY FORUM

“CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACING ARLINGTON’S LOW AND MODERATE INCOME TENANTS”

WHEN: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2002, 9 A.M.—12:30 P.M.

WHERE: ARLINGTON MILL COMMUNITY CENTER
4975 COLUMBIA PIKE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

FEATURES:

1. ARLINGTON TENANTS TESTIFY ON THEIR ISSUES
2. PERSPECTIVES FROM PANEL INCLUDING:
 - BILL ROSS, CHAIRMAN OF ARLINGTON LANDLORD-TENANT COMMISSION,
 - BENNETT DOWNEY, LEGAL AID ATTORNEY WHO REPRESENTS TENANTS,
 - MELODY BARON, ALEXANDRIA LANDLORD-TENANT STAFF
 - DAN FIGG, A-SPAN

Come and hear about the pressures and difficulties tenants in Arlington face. The panel of tenants will describe:

- * difficulties in finding and renting apartments in Arlington,
- * problems in getting repairs and maintenance done, and
- * involuntary displacement due to private redevelopment in Arlington’s “hot” real estate market.

Another panel of persons experienced in rental housing issues will present views about landlord-tenant relationships, the legal issues involved and how persons who are low-income and with special needs have great difficulty renting in Arlington.

There will be time for discussion and questions from the audience, as well as a wrap-up session where we will try to identify some things that we can do as a community. It is a great opportunity for persons who care about our community to learn about issues and needs that are often not understood.

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ARLINGTON INTER-FAITH COUNCIL
BUYERS AND RENTERS ARLINGTON VOICE (BRAVO)
LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA
FREDDIE MAC

EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

***Never doubt that a small, highly committed group of individuals
can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.***

-Margaret Mead

**For news about affordable housing, go the County's Housing Online newsletter at:
<http://www.co.arlington.va.us/cphd>**

Visit the ANDC Web Site

<http://www.arlingtonnewdirections.org>.

Post a Message or a Meeting!

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**Mary Rackmales
874 N. Jacksonville St., 22205**

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