



SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Minutes of SRCA Annual Meeting September 18, 2022

Call to Order and Welcome – 5:30 PM

Jeanne Jacob, President

- Jacob welcomed those attending the annual meeting, thanked Beth Chase for letting SRCA use the SSSAS campus and facilities for our picnic and annual meeting.
- Jacob discussed how COVID presented so many challenges these past two years that she served as President of SRCA:
 - We had to change how we held our picnics and annual meetings – no more self-serve picnic-style food and voting in advance of the meetings whenever possible to ensure we had a quorum. Jacob has been pleased with the quick thinking and planning of the SRCA boards during this challenging time as they were able to ensure favorite old events could take place while also adding several new events, as well as tracking the many City plans that affect the Seminary Ridge neighborhood.
 - We changed to holding our monthly SRCA meetings via Zoom vs. in-person. This allowed more residents to participate who may not have come in person to participate and ask questions of the Board. We also found it easier to meet electronically and to accomplish more. It will be up to the new board to decide whether meetings will continue to be held via Zoom.
- Jacob thanked all of the SRCA Officers, Committee Chairs, and Block Captains who have worked so hard this year to keep Seminary Ridge a strong, healthy, and fun place in which to live.
- Jacob asked that the current **SRCA Officers** please stand and be recognized:
 - Richie Weiblinger, First Vice President;
 - Kate Hennigan, Second Vice President and Chair of the Events Committee;
 - Susan Clark-Sestak – Secretary and Chair of the Communications Committee;
 - Maria Browne, Treasurer;
 - David Pritzker, Parliamentarian;
 - Don Frahler, Immediate Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee was not in attendance as he and his wife, Sharon, sold their home this summer and moved out of the neighborhood.
- Jacob asked that the current **SRCA Committee Chairs** please stand and be recognized.
 - Mike Brookbank, Historian;
 - Susan Clark-Sestak, again Communications Chair as well as Secretary;
 - Paul Judge, Liaison to the Seminary Hill Civic Association;
 - Laura Plati, Chair of SRCA's Welcome Committee;
 - Beth Chase, Liaison with St. Stephens and St. Agnes;

- Jeremy Flachs, Liaison with Beth El Hebrew Congregation;
- Scott Sutherland – SRCA Liaison for Duke Street;
- Joe Sestak, Liaison for Strawberry Run;
- Jacob asked that the following **SRCA Committee Members** and other volunteers please stand and be recognized:
 - Lyn and George Allen, Cindi Bartol, David Cheney, Bill Pfister; Eileen Giglio, Rick and Susan Gould, Erica Jones, Larry and Carol Kocot; and Pat McClellan. All of these people faithfully served on SRCA’s many committees this year.
- Next, Jacob asked that the **Block Captains** (individuals who deliver “hard copies” of SRCA news to SRCA residents) to please stand and be recognized:
 - Mike Brookbank; Dave Cavanaugh; Beth Chase; Susan Clark-Sestak; Patty Collette; Jane Flinn; Don Frahler; Gerry Frank; Amy Hadley; Kathryn Hollomon and Mark Sweet; T. Judge; Jennifer Lian; Elizabeth Murphy; Stephanie Paulson; Laura Plati, Harriett McCune; Nancy Rawlings; Ollie and Alison Russell; Ann Ridenhour; and Rosi Urbine.
- Finally, Jacob asked that any previous SRCA Presidents or other Officers in attendance to please stand and be recognized and thanked them for their past service to the community.
- Jacob noted that SRCA has a large group of committed volunteers in Seminary Ridge, and we are always seeking more. Jacob thanked everyone for giving their time to make Seminary Ridge a better place to live.
- The, Jacob stated that SRCA greatly appreciated the support received from the Alexandria Sherriff’s Office and the Alexandria Police Department. In attendance were Marcel Basset, spokesman for Alexandria’s Chief of Police Don Hayes; Sgt. Tony Moore who meets with SRCA at its monthly meetings; Sgt. Mike Macaro, Officer Saks, and Officer Watts-Cerrato. Jacob asked that they stand and be recognized.

Alexandria Sherriff Liaison for SRCA

Lt. Lemuel Houston

- Lt. Lemuel Houston was unable to attend, but regularly attends SRCA’s monthly board meetings. These dedicated public servants keep our community safe. Each month, if not more often, they provide SRCA with updates on issues affecting Seminary Ridge.

Alexandria Police Liaison for SRCA

Marcel Bassett

- Jacob thanked Mr. Basset, Sgt. Moore, Sgt. Macaro, Officer Saks, and Officer Watts-Cerrato for all that they do for Seminary Ridge throughout the year and opened the floor to all five for Q&A.
 - **Q:** Does more crime happen during the day or night?
A: Night shift
 - **Q:** We hear about recruiting challenges. How’s that going?
A: We’re a little on the short side but our largest class to date is scheduled to graduate in the Fall. In 6 months or so once everyone is out of the academy, we’ll be back to full staff.
 - **Q:** We’ve heard they’ve had to de-prioritize petty crime. Is this true?
A: No, we’ve had a modification of how services are prioritized to determine which calls require an officer on-site or which can be handled by a member of our call center. We’re not letting anything slide and there has been no reduction in service, just a different allocation of services. For example, for credit card fraud, an officer isn’t

required onsite-this can be handled by the call center. So we're being more efficient with our services.

- **Q:** Are you, in this location, experiencing an increase in the number of arrested individuals being released compared to other times?
A: No.
- **Q:** How's morale?
A: Morale is in pretty good shape; we have good leadership. There's a collective bargaining agreement and getting the new academy class trained up is huge. Our officers work three 11-hr shifts a week. The highest volume of services we provide occurs in the evenings. We have an 'A side' and 'B side' – each works 7 out of 14 days and a total of 15 days a month.
- **Q:** How do you know if people are using our neighborhood as a cut through?
A: The ropes on the ground measure traffic. Speed cameras also monitor how many cars go by and at what speed. More officers monitoring Fort Williams Parkway are making sure people aren't using Seminary Ridge neighborhood to cut through. Speed bumps help with this. A request has been made to put in a mirror at Seminary Rd. & Fort Williams because of the number of accidents, so we're trying to find an appropriate location for it so it works as intended.
- **Q:** With the closing of West Taylor run, more traffic is supposed to be coming and going down Quaker Lane. We want to ensure it's monitored so people aren't coming down Fort Williams Parkway. Are you monitoring this?
A: Yes, police are monitoring this. The closure is a test right now but they're trying to see what impact it may have.
- **Q:** Are you seeing any large groups of people (like flash mobs) entering stores to steal inventory?
A: No, there is not a large amount of that type of thing going on. The biggest new crime is with catalytic converters, which is a part on vehicles that contains a lot of metals. These are being broken down to sell the metals.
- **Q:** Does each shift have to patrol our neighborhood?
A: Officers are broken down by sectors and beats, so an officer is present in all. Seminary Ridge is Beat 32 and gets patrolled at least once an hour, barring times when an officer patrolling your beat gets called elsewhere; only then might they not be able to patrol each area as often as they would like. Every officer is assigned a beat and takes ownership of that beat and spends as much time as they can in the beat.
- **Q:** How many "nuisance" calls do you get?
A: We have a priority level system; a shooting is priority 1, a noise complaint is not. Our dispatch call center rates each call, with priority 1 being highest.
- **Q:** Regarding mufflers and modified mufflers, we can hear the beltway here at the Ridge, and we hear mufflers/modified mufflers but don't know where they are. Can you take any legal action against owners of vehicles with these?
A: A new law recently went into effect as of July 1st, whereby we can start pulling people over and ticketing for these instances, but it depends on where they're located. We're working with the City to determine how they will support this in legality terms.

- **Q:** Has the APD been asked by the City to provide input about the Duke Street in Motion initiative?
A: We would like to be asked, but our department is not the one that the City would contact. We are not aware, to date, of APD having been asked for its input.
- **Q:** Now that school is back in session, can you comment about the violence in the Bradlee Shopping Center? Has it gotten any better since school started? It usually happens right around the time school is dismissed.
A: We work closely with Alexandria City High School, which they started staggering their dismissal times, and they're not supposed to be releasing for lunch. Additionally, Bradlee shopping center has hired their own security and has hired APD as additional security, so the area is being patrolled.
- **Q:** Is there anything more the gang task force could be doing to reduce the violence?
A: They're working closely with the schools. Be careful about associating the uptick in violence to gang activity; personal opinion is that students have social anxiety, and many are struggling with how to socialize and navigate the school amidst the pandemic. Officers are partnered with the schools – there are three SROs in the high school.
Q: Would it make a difference if there were more SROs with 5,000 kids?
A: Yes, but APD doesn't have the power to add more but we do what we can. We're consistently in touch with the schools. Part of the SRO program includes mentorship, which helps. SROs are there to help build relationships and mentor. Officers are trained to de-escalate, which helps in the long run.
- **Q:** Is there anything we can do to support the police department?
A: Don't be afraid to call us and invite us to events and have these engaging conversations/meetings. We love interacting with you so we understand what your goals are: to feel safe, to be safe and protected. We're proponents of open dialog at any given time.
- **Q:** We're hearing a lot about Fentanyl in schools now. Have you noticed a lot coming into the City?
A: We did have a few scares. There has been an uptick in fentanyl cases nationwide, but we haven't seen an uptick here. There's also a rainbow pill and blue pill that kids are trying to smoke through aluminum foil.
- **Important Announcements:**
 - The APD is hiring! Police and civilian unit positions are available, even some part-time volunteer positions at as few as three hours a week. There is no age limit to apply. Volunteers can help out in any office – fingerprinting, creating brochures, etc.
 - Jacob noted that there are two very important foundations if residents would like to make a donation to help: The Alexandria Police Foundation which raises funds to help police, and the Alexandria Fire Foundation which helps raise funds for the firefighters and paramedics.
- Should you have any questions about traffic in the neighborhood, we can discuss them at the November meeting because we should have the data by then.

- Jacob continued by providing a recap of her Presidency. She became President of the Seminary Ridge Civic Association two years ago with four personal goals she wanted to achieve:
 1. Increase involvement of Seminary Ridge residents on the Board;
 2. Increase communication with the Seminary Ridge community;
 3. Continue to work with the Seminary Hill Association and the City on issues of concern to Seminary Ridge homeowners; and
 4. Provide quality programs for SRCA members and their families.
- Jacob said she was able to meet all four goals with the help of two excellent boards, incredible Committee Chairs, and strong volunteer support from the community.
- The SRCA Board was expanded from six officers and the Immediate Past President to include a Historian; a Communications Chair; Liaisons to Seminary Hill Association, SSSAS, Beth El, and the City; a Community Beautification Chair; a Welcoming Committee Chair; and an Events Chair who also has provided monthly reports on home sales in Seminary Ridge. SRCA also has 20 Block Captains covering the Covenant areas of SR and 9 Block Captains covering the non-Covenant areas.
- She noted that SRCA increased communication with the SR community (she gave thanks to Susan Clark Sestak who really took charge of communications) by holding our monthly board meetings on Zoom so they are easy to attend; launching the SRCA Website (<https://www.seminaryridge.net>) and Facebook page; initiating an SRCA newsletter; printing a new SRCA Directory; holding Zoom Forums to introduce candidates running for Mayor and City Council; providing all new homeowners with an SRCA Directory and a welcoming gift (thanks to Laura Plati, SRCA Welcome Chair); and posting signs around the neighborhood notifying residents of upcoming events.
- SRCA has a designated Board member (Paul Judge) representing SRCA at the Seminary Hill Association's meetings, and Jacob has attended and actively participated in the meetings of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations and the West End Coalition of Civic Associations. In addition, SRCA has had a dedicated team of residents who have been working with the Board on City issues concerning Seminary Ridge (SR) that include: saving the SR Bradford Pear trees; saving Strawberry Run nature preserve from harmful stream restoration; advocating for limiting lane closures on Duke Street and not adding dedicated bus and bike lanes that would take away the service roads; repaving SR streets; monitoring traffic on Fort Williams Parkway and Seminary Road; fighting the plan for the development on Seminary Road called Karig Estates; and working with the City to clean up the islands on Fort Williams Parkway and Fort Worth Avenue.
- The fourth goal of providing quality programs for SRCA members and their families never stopped even though SRCA was "slammed" by Covid restrictions and had to be creative to even be able to provide events. SRCA's Events Chair Kate Hennigan has done an incredible job the past two years by spearheading a lot of activities with help from others. SRCA was still able to produce despite COVID, and SRCA Treasurer Maria Browne made sure we kept within our budget and knew how much things cost.
- Jacob thanked everyone who helped her reach these four goals, and especially thanked her husband, Gerry Frank, who has been "voluntold" for so many SRCA events that can't even be counted. Plus, he also served SRCA as Treasurer for 12 years and continues as a Block Captain.
- Next, Jacob asked each of the 2021-2022 Board members and Committee Chairs to give brief reports on their accomplishments this past year.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Maria Browne, Treasurer

- Browne has been Treasurer for four years and the goals have changed over time. Previously the Board focused on four major events a year, but thanks to Jacob and Clark-Sestak's leadership and skillsets, the Board is now focusing more on encouraging community involvement, advocating positions to the City, and expanding events.
- SRCA currently has a balance of \$20,684.91, which is very healthy.
- Dues collection this year has been through both check and use of the SRCA website. Prior to tonight's picnic we've received dues from approximately 100 households, so we've received almost \$5,000 (a slight deduction gets taken by PayPal from those who submitted dues via PayPal).
- Primary expenditures this past year were as follows: Halloween parade, holiday party, annual picnic, insurance, Screen on the Green, yard sale, administrative supplies, Zoom account, website, welcome wagon, directory printing (pretty significant in 2021), charitable contributions, and a little bit of money was put towards beautifying the medians.
- Expenses in 2021 were higher than typical because of the directory printing and website development.
- To date this year, we have spent \$3,500, whereas last year, at year end, more than \$17,000 was spent, mostly due to the Directory and website development. The picnic has become more expensive due to boxed meals. In the future, it would be less costly to serve a BBQ style buffet now that COVID concerns aren't as high.
- After accounting for the annual meeting/picnic, Halloween, and the holiday party, Browne anticipated that SRCA will end up right around \$10,000 this year vs. \$17,000 last year.
- We've only collected about a third of all dues to date, which includes covenant and non-covenant members. By end of the year, we should have around \$18,000 to \$20,000 available in the budget.

Secretary/Communications Report

Susan Clark-Sestak, Secretary & Communications

- SRCA worked to improve communication over the last two years, not only to get the word out about various social activities planned in the community, but also about issues potentially affecting our quality of life, such as the current Duke Street in Motion initiative, which could have a tremendous impact on our community.
- We use Mail Chimp to distribute electronic newsletters from SRCA's gmail account (news4srca@gmail.com). We now have over 400 subscribers on our email distribution list, with about a 90% open rate. People are enjoying the newsletters which focus on SRCA's great events and things that really matter to our quality of life here.
- Public Service Announcement: Clark-Sestak shared one topic of importance, particularly if some missed it when it was mentioned in an SRCA newsletter. It is the recent problems with "check washing", which she personally had experienced as had others in our neighborhood. Check washing is where a check is stolen from a mailbox, washed, the payee's name and the amount of the check are changed, and if your bank doesn't catch it, you can be out a lot of money for quite a while until the bank gets it resolved. The guidance to follow is:
 - Never put check into the blue "free-standing" mailboxes; always bring inside a US Post Office

- Use a gel pen when writing checks as they are harder for the check to be washed
- Do not use the envelopes a company might provide – this makes it more likely to be noticed; just use a plain envelope instead.
- The SRCA directories and addendums are becoming difficult to juggle. Clark-Sestak asked for input about whether people would like to receive the next copy of the SRCA Directory electronically (sent directly to the emails on file; NOT posted in any public forum) or printed. There were 30 responses: 9 for printed, 21 for electronic. The Board will solicit additional input from the community in a future newsletter.

Events & Home Sales Report

Kate Hennigan, 2nd Vice President

- Hennigan planned many events this year, all of which were really well received. She made an effort to move some events around to other cul-de-sacs so others could have a turn hosting and having events near them.
 - **Halloween event** took place on the Hardee Place cul-de-sac and featured treats for all (individual candy and toy bags since we were coming out of COVID last year) and a fire truck and EMT vehicle for children and adults to explore.
 - **Holiday party** returned again this year and took place in December 2021. 75 people attended (COVID held some people back this year), and we received positive feedback. We are grateful to Sharon and Don Frahler for hosting again this year and we wish them best of luck in their new home!
 - **St Patrick's Day event** was new this year and was held on Harris Place. 25 people attended and we had a wonderful array of Irish beer to sample as well as traditional Irish food. People indicated they would love to see this event return next year.
 - **Spring Cleaning** took place in April and was our second annual community clean-up day. We had three times as many volunteers as the first year and worked to rid the parkways and islands of leaves, rocks, litter and weeds. SRCA may want to consider dedicating more time and funding towards doing something different with the medians this year, such as work on mowing the grass and possibly considering hiring someone to help landscape to make them look a little more attractive.
 - **Community Yard sale:** 14 households participated in this event which was held in May. The wet weather deterred some on the day of the event, but we still had a great turnout. Many people showed up at 7:45am to try and get the best deals. Whatever was leftover, Hennigan had the Vietnam Veterans Assn. pick up any leftover items.
 - **Screen on the Green** was held in July and approximately 85 neighbors came out to enjoy SRCA's third annual movie night watching *Cheaper by the Dozen 2* on the football field of SSSAS. Thank you to Beth Chase for letting us use their field. SSSAS had some speaker issues that prevented us from having a later summer event so SRCA might try to reschedule in the Fall.
- Thank you to Browne for allocating the budget for these events.
- Coming up: Halloween event 2022 – The tentative plan for this year is hold the parade in a designated cul-de-sac, and to serve pizza and have a fire truck and police car for the kids to see and climb on and then disperse for trick-or-treating from there.
- Seminary Ridge had 10 home sales in the last year, with the highest at \$1.57M last month. Overall, prices are still up and the average days on market was roughly 9 days. It's still a seller's market regardless of what you're hearing on tv. We live in a very desirable neighborhood

thanks to everyone who keep their homes and yards well maintained. Should you have any questions about real estate numbers, please contact Hennigan.

Welcoming Committee Report

Laura Plati, Welcome Committee

- Plati was not able to attend the meeting, so Hennigan presented on her behalf.
- Plati personally met with all of our new neighbors and presented them with an SRCA Directory and a gift card from Great Harvest bread company to welcome them into Seminary Ridge.
- Welcome to our new neighbors at the addresses below. We look forward to getting to know you.
 1. 4121 Fort Worth Place
 2. 4013 Fort Worth Avenue
 3. 4016 Featherstone Place
 4. 3635 Trinity Drive
 5. 4115 North Garland Street
 6. 4009 Harris Place
 7. 3605 Trinity Drive
 8. 4021 North Garland Street
 9. 3916 Terry Place
 10. 3700 Templeton Place

Seminary Hill Association (SHA) Report

Paul Judge, SHA Liaison

- Paul has been our liaison between SHA and our community. SHA consists of nine different associations in adjacent neighborhoods; we're listed as #9 of the nine. SHA spends much of its time focused on City issues, such as flooding, density (types of housing being allowed in Alexandria, including Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADUs), transportation issues (such as changes to Duke Street), and how the City prioritizes issues (state-city interactions). Voting board members come from single family homes. Police officers and the Sheriff attend as well.
- Density is a big issue right now. Regarding housing, some townhomes are going up near the fire station on Seminary Rd. right across from Pickett St.
- The sale of Inova Hospital on Seminary Road is also a big issue for SHA. Inova Hospital will transition to Landmark so the real estate on Seminary Road will become available for development. The bad news is that Inova insists that the value of its existing property must be maximized to be able to afford the move to Landmark, and they're saying they can't transition to Landmark the way they want unless we let them re-zone. While there was an MOA between the hospital and SHA that zoning at the current Inova hospital property could not be changed without SHA approval, City Council didn't consider it to be legally binding, so we lost the fight and they're moving forward. They were trying to convert zoning to townhouses, which is not the agreement that was supposed to happen with the neighborhood, but the City will likely re-zone it. We will continue to talk to the City about the zoning since this is an issue that could affect everyone in terms of congestion on Seminary Rd. One individual asked Judge whether it could it be a mix of residential and retail space, and Judge thought that was a possibility.

- Fort Ward falls under some neighborhoods so SHA is concerned about that. There's a historical element to Fort Ward. They plan to put an improved children's playground on the grounds but the location has to be worked through.
- City reps talk to SHA about the Duke St. Corridor. This will be a continuing topic about what the different options will look like for construction, and it will come in phases. There is a lot you can read on our website about this if interested.
- Creek restoration - we're concerned with all creek beds, not just Strawberry Run.
- SHA will continue to work through light and noise ordinances, including at the City's athletic fields. If certain sporting events will be occurring at night, the City will have to raise its noise ordinances to a later time.
- Any questions regarding SHA should be addressed to Judge.

SSSAS Report

Beth Chase, SSSAS Liaison

- Chase is thrilled that SSSAS is partnering with Seminary Ridge.
- SSSAS has purchased new speakers so we can hold Screen on the Green event again.
- SSSAS Homecoming is Oct. 1 so many alumni will be back for that.
- SSSAS has worked with St. Andrews Methodist Church to purchase the back parcel of its land; the church is erecting a new building closer to the street. A new road had to be put in that should be complete within 4-6 weeks. SSSAS has no plans to develop the land; they just purchased it as an opportunity. SSSAS plans to utilize the old church space for more parking for the school.
- SSSAS will begin building a new Science wing in the summer of 2023 that will include demolition; the new wing will be built over the school year and open in the Fall of 2024. They'll need to make temporary "learning cottages" (not trailers) for classrooms, some of which will reside on the baseball outfield (7 science rooms and 5 general classrooms). Learning cottages will be built with ramps and bathrooms. All traffic has to come in and out of this road so there will be construction traffic, but they'll make sure they use St. Stephens Road and won't go through neighborhood. Chase will continue to be very transparent with the neighborhood about what's happening.
- A discussion was had about the large number of sporting events that take place on SSSAS fields on the weekends and the fact that the school is not kept open for bathroom use (because there is no security then) and there are currently no porta potties provided on the fields. Chase was asked to consider renting porta potties when sporting events are taking place on the weekends so adults and children don't use resident houses and yards as a bathroom, which was noted to be happening quite often. Chase agreed to consider this.
- One individual asked whether SSSAS had any plans to put lights up for Friday Night Lights, and Chase responded that there are no such plans in place.

Beth El Report

Jeremy Flachs, Beth El Liaison

- Flachs is the liaison between the Beth El Hebrew Congregation and SRCA but was unable to attend the meeting. Jacob relayed that Flachs wants new residents to know that Beth El is the voting location for Seminary Ridge residents no matter what type of election. Beth El still has limited attendance for in-person services, so on the High Holy Days we likely won't see the

traffic we used to see. As Beth El's contact with Karig Estates, Flachs did everything he could to fight their plan to develop the back lot but unfortunately the developer went forward with selling the entire property. Flachs is upset about this because they cut the roots of trees on the Beth El's property, and it looks as though Beth El will lose many more trees. Should anyone have questions about this matter, contact Flachs through any one of SRCA's Board members.

Historian Report

Mike Brookbank, Historian

- Brookbank has served on the Board at various times. He is responsible for capturing events in the community since it was established. Should any residents have original design plans by Pulte, he'd love to have them since we've seen a lot of change since the early days. There are many more young families with kids in the neighborhood now; we've rejuvenated the neighborhood twice. As people clean out their homes, he'd like to preserve these old SRCA and Pulte documents for history.
- He then gave thanks to "strongest board he's ever been a part of".

Report on Seminary Road

Richie Weiblinger

- There have been some challenges on Seminary Rd with vehicles that haven't seen the island/bumps and the solar crosswalk signs. The City is still doing their long-term assessment and wanted to wait until we got back to more pre-COVID times to complete their traffic report.

Report on the City's Plans for Redesigning Duke Street

Scott Sutherland

- There is an effort underway by the City of Alexandria that will likely bring substantial changes to future traffic on Duke St. The city received an \$87 million grant from the State to design and implement bus rapid transit along Duke Street between Landmark Center and the King Street Metro station. The city is currently holding meetings to decide what the re-design options should be. To accomplish the task the City appointed an 11 member "Duke Street Transitway Advisory Group" that has held 5 meetings to date.
- SRCA member Scott Sutherland has attended several of the meetings as a private citizen. His assessment from the Group is that there is a strong majority of the panel that favors establishing dedicated bus and bicycle lanes for the entire length of the project. It's not clear how the city can accomplish multiple dedicated lanes for buses and bikes without major impacts to automobile traffic and on the quality of living for those whose homes front onto Duke Street especially those homes and yards currently buffered from busy traffic by frontage roads.
- The Advisory Group has already committed to the principle of dedicated bus and bicycle lanes and has also decided on a goal of lowering the speed limits along Duke Street. These actions will likely result in hampering automobile traffic flows. This process will probably be more challenging than what occurred on Seminary Road due to a much higher volume of cars that travel along Duke Street. If you remove automobiles from a lane or add bus lanes down the center of the street, there are stretches where there will only be one lane for cars in each direction. There has been some talk in the Advisory Group about also eliminating frontage roads, such as the one near the corner of Fort Williams Pkwy and Duke Street. Because the homes in that stretch do not have driveways, if that frontage road becomes a traffic or bus lane, it is unclear where those residents will be able to park. One member of Advisory Group did

question the option that would include adding bus lanes into the middle lanes of the street, asking how people would be able to make left turns (across bus only lanes) into their neighborhoods? Sutherland strongly encouraged SRCA members and others to become involved in the process to determine the future of cars, buses, bikes, and pedestrians on Duke Street.

- The next phase of the process will be gathering public input during October. A few meetings will present alternatives and include listening sessions. This means there is a short 28-day window for those who are concerned to be involved and voice their opinion. The city's transportation staff will also seek input online. "No Change" is not an option, so for citizens that use Duke Street it is important to express their ideas and concerns because change is coming.

There are several ways you will be able to learn more and give your input:

To start, simply search 'Alexandria Duke Street In Motion' or click this link:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion#DukeStreetTransitwayAdvisoryGroup>

More information will become available through that website.

- 1. View the kick-off webinar: Available online beginning on October 1**
- 2. Share your input using the online feedback form: Available online beginning on October 1**
- 3. Learn more at an in-person gathering (details below)**

- Segment 3* (Roth Street – King Street Metro Station): October 12, 6:30-8:30pm, Bishop Ireton Auditorium, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria
- Segment 2* (Jordan Street – Roth Street): October 17, 6:30-8:30pm, Bishop Ireton Auditorium, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria
- Segment 1* (West End Alexandria – Jordan Street): October 20, 6:30-8:30pm, Patrick Henry Rec Center, 4653 Taney Ave, Alexandria
- Corridor-wide Open House (no presentation at this meeting): October 26, 5:30-8:30pm (drop in any time), Patrick Henry Rec Center, 4653 Taney Ave, Alexandria

*Note that you can learn about and provide feedback on all segments at each meeting.

Report on the City's Plans for Strawberry Run

Joe Sestak

- Sestak explained the status of the City's proposed stream restoration of our Strawberry Run stream in the section that runs right through our community (between Fort Worth and Duke Street along Fort Williams Parkway). The City initially proposed a fairly major stream restoration project called Natural Channel Design (NCD) for Strawberry Run because it is under a mandate to gain pollution credits by reducing pollution from erosion that is carried by a stream flowing into the Chesapeake Bay. When we started this effort, we didn't oppose NCD, we just requested a review of the plans. What we explained to the City is that they have only done one NCD ever, and it was done in Strawberry Run. However, unknown to the City, it had begun to fail just one month after it was put in and was completely washed out after three years, per a 2013

city presentation that was discovered and then verified by a walk of the stream to show City Council members.

- Part of the issue in trying to make our small urban natural stream do something unnatural by placing boulders in it to stop erosion by re-directing its flow, is that during flash floods the high velocity of the stream just breaks the boulder designs apart and the stream returns to its original flow pattern. And because there is an insufficient-sized culvert that the stream must go through under Duke Street, when there's a flash flood, the stream waters hit this culvert "chokehold", smashes back upstream 50-100 yards, forming a large lake that destroys the boulder formations intended to "channel" the stream. We also fought the issue that the City used a model to determine how many pollution credits it could get by using a default measurement of pollutants from a stream in Pennsylvania. When it actually measured the pollutants in Strawberry Run at our request, the City was only able to get ¼ of the pollution credits it had originally said it would obtain by doing a NCD. As a result, the City has now dropped the justification for doing NCD based on getting pollution credits, and agreed to look at other, less damaging stream restoration methods -- if a review shows that any erosion protection from the stream is actually needed.
- On September 10, the City produced several new designs: one design is to "do nothing" except to protect two properties from erosion from the stream as the remainder of homes are not endangered (and also repair two nearby small storm water culvert outlets above the stream. However, this is a maintenance issue, not a stream restoration issue). Three other designs the City proposes are variations of another previous design that was put into Strawberry Run about 2015, and also completely failed. There are about 165 boulders sitting in the stream outside another large culvert that goes under Ft Williams and exits into the section of the stream where the City wants to again place about 165 large boulders along the stream's banks. However, these boulders were previously blown out because water comes out of the culvert under Ft Williams during a flash flood at 22 ft per second (which was found in a 2016 city study of culvert velocities), yet the City's design was for 9 ft per second. Plus, the Army Corps of Engineers' stream restoration manual states municipalities should not do boulder designs unless the stream's erosion is threatening infrastructure, such as a home and there are only two homes endangered further down the stream towards Duke Street. The Army Corps of Engineers manual states this because erosion is the sign of a healthy stream – unless it is needed to protect a home or other infrastructure. This is because boulders used in stream restoration have a negative impact on the ecology and habitat of a stream. Plus, the City no longer needs pollution credits as it has found how to obtain them by other means.
- At the September 10 all-day meeting, we proposed our position which is to do nothing except to stop erosion of the stream where it endangers the property of a home. This follows the Corps of Engineers study that recommends "do nothing" to stop a stream's erosion – unless a home (infrastructure) is endangered. We have two houses that are potentially impacted by erosion – and neither of them are actually within SRCA. But we are recommending protecting them using a natural material (wood), rather than boulders that harm the ecology and habitat.

Report on Voting Results

David Pritzker, Parliamentarian

- SRCA's Bylaws require an Annual Meeting, at which the members elect officers for the coming year and transact other business that may arise. To take any such action, the Bylaws require a

quorum (present in person or represented by proxy) of 10% of the owners of the 237 lots in Seminary Ridge, which is 24. The quorum requirement was met by 35 attendees in person plus 40 via proxy, for a total of 75 homes represented.

- Votes were taken on two matters and members had been urged to vote in writing prior to the meeting. Ninety-one (91) ballots were received. First, a set of proposed revisions to SRCA's Constitution and Bylaws, circulated in advance, received the required two-thirds majority, with 81 votes in favor, 9 votes opposed, and one blank ballot. These changes will therefore be incorporated into a revised version of the SRCA Bylaws and Constitution. Second, the entire slate of officers proposed by the Board received 91 votes, with no write-in candidates offered. The new Board's members are:
 - Richie Weiblinger, President
 - Krista Ludwig Poretz, First Vice President
 - Katie Dominick, Second Vice President
 - Karen Meade, Secretary
 - Scott Sutherland, Treasurer
 - David Pritzker, Parliamentarian
 - Jeanne Jacob, Immediate Past President
- Following Pritzker's report on the election, he announced an item of current community news. Noting that he had served for many years representing Alexandria on the governing board of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (now known as NOVA Parks), he reported that a few days prior, the Winkler Botanical Preserve, a 44-acre woodland park area, was transferred to NOVA Parks and is now a publicly-owned regional park and is open to the community. The significance for residents is that the Winkler Botanical Preserve is located very close to Seminary Ridge, on Roanoke Avenue, which is a side street off Beauregard Street. For more information about the park, see <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/winkler-botanical-preserve>.

Immediate Past President's (IPP) Remarks

Jeanne Jacob, SRCA IPP

- Jacob thanked Pritzker for his report and congratulated the incoming SRCA board members. Jacob noted that there is a SRCA Wine Tasting Club and Book Club. If interested in joining, let T. Judge (Paul's wife) know. The neighborhood wine club has been dormant for a couple of months but is being brought back. Reed makes sure we learn about the wines we're drinking.
- Jacob then "passed the gavel" to Weiblinger and asked that he address those attending.

New President's Comments

Richie Weiblinger, Incoming President

- Weiblinger expressed his appreciation to Jacob for all he had learned this past year. Prior to living in Seminary Ridge, Weiblinger lived on the other side of Quaker Lane where he had experience getting involved with issues facing his neighborhood there. He got to see first-hand what happens when you don't speak up or get involved. The issues brought up today impact us. Jacob has graciously agreed to remain as an advisor or mentor to the new incoming Board on the many issues facing Seminary Ridge property owners. Weiblinger concluded that he is looking forward to working with everyone.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:20 PM

Richie Weiblinger, President