



Arlington Green Party

The Arlington Greens Newsletter

John Reeder, Green Party candidate for Arlington County Board, received 32% of the votes cast in last November's election. □

Respond to info@arlingtongreens.org

I-66 Suit Delays Greens Sue to Stop I-66 Construction

A motion filed January 20 in the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia by three Green Party members has resulted in a delay of the 'pothole' construction (spot improvements) for several weeks, while awaiting the court's decision. The plaintiffs have filed a motion for a summary judgment. See the article. □

Three members of the Green Party, Audrey Clement, (Co-Chair of the Virginia Greens) John Reeder and Josh Ruebner have filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Alexandria to halt Virginia's plans to widen Interstate 66 in the guise of "spot improvements".

Josh Ruebner points out that the I-66 spot improvement plan is "a waste of taxpayer dollars as it will only create new traffic bottlenecks. This is road widening

by stealth, in violation of the Coleman decision limiting I-66 to two lanes in each direction. It is an example of extremely poor transportation policy planning by VDOT."

Using the ill-defined term "spot improvements", Virginia highways has attempted to place road widening in a category with filling in potholes. They failed to produce a comprehensive plan to reduce traffic (road widening won't do it), and they have had the unmitigated gall to say on record that there is no substantial controversy surrounding the wid-

Homeless Alone in Arlington

Sign Homeless Petition

If you wish have your name included in the homeless petition to be presented to the County board (see page 5), simply e-mail your name and address to:

info@arlingtongreens.org

Arlington Greens, together with activists associated with Arlington churches, as well as speakers from the homeless in Arlington, have presented a petition to the Arlington county board asking for funding a year around homeless shelter, and asking for the implementation of an employment program that would aid the homeless.

The petition addresses several standing concerns and asks for their remission. It

asks the county to:

- Establish year around shelter
- Eliminate harassment of homeless
- Seek Federal funds for jobs programs.

To date, the county has not responded, except to reiterate that the county board is concerned about the homeless. The problem of homelessness in the Washington metropolitan area, including Arlington,

Arlington Greens Endorse Referendum

Arlington Greens have endorsed the Arlington Police and Firefighters and the Arlington Coalition of Police initiative to place a referendum on the ballot to change the form of county government to a county board plan, creating voting districts in Arlington. More next issue □

Residents on the Pike to Take a Hike

Developers and the County are working apace to gentrify the Columbia Pike corridor and move the current moderate income and fixed income residents out. As a part of the overall scheme, a cosmetic introduction of the Columbia Pike trolley is being put in place. Consultants make no attempt to hide the fact that the trolley is designed to increase real estate assessments along the pike with the aim of

gentrifying the surrounding neighborhoods. With the demolition of existing garden apartment complexes and existing older apartment houses along the Pike (everywhere in Arlington, as a matter of fact), developers will supplant these with new high end apartments, townhouses and high rises catering to higher income residents. As this continues to happen, current residents will find themselves without a home, and Arlington County will

Homeless,(cont.)

Representatives of the homeless population, Greens, and representatives of local churches continue to solicit signatures around the County to submit to the Board . □

Go Greens!

Here are some comments from local citizens regarding Virginia's plans to widen I-66, culled from various sources - citizens association and blog (Arlington Yuppette.com) websites.

".....I don't need any more highways and interstate traffic congestion followed by 5 years of highway and interstate widening followed by more traffic congestion 5 years later. Go Greens.

..... I'm on Washington Blvd most mornings waiting for the bus and the vast majority of the cars that drive by are solo drivers, which are not allowed on 66 because of the HOV restrictions. The high volume of traffic on Washington Blvd in the mornings and evenings is due to solo drivers using this route as an alternative to 66, not drivers bailing off a congested 66. From what I see, a wider 66 will have little or no impact on the volume of traffic on our streets.

.....VDOT's I-66 studies ignored both eastbound I-66 traffic and potential increases in traffic incidents (such as crashes and breakdowns) due to elimination of the shoulders that will be required to do the spot improvements. Widening eastbound is not on the table because the bottleneck there is the Roosevelt Bridge, and there's no way to address that in the near term. As a result, any westbound-only widening is certain to increase eastbound traffic and eastbound I-66 congestion, which means more traffic regularly using I-66, and that, in turn, will mean more traffic diverting to local streets during I-66 traffic incidents. In general, changes to I-66 (in either direction) would have little impact on local traffic because much I-66 traffic must still use local streets such as Washington Blvd, Lee Highway, Glebe Rd, and Fairfax Dr for access and egress.....widening the road will only increase congestion. The spot improvements currently contemplated will do nothing significant in terms of alleviating traffic absent changes in

Stop I-66 (continued)

ening. They do this to sneak around having to file an environmental impact statement.

"Unfortunately", Audrey Clement points out, "although it has sued to stop construction of I-395 HOT lanes, the Arlington County Board has not sued to stop the widening of I-66, even though grounds for both suits are identical—VDOT's use of so-called categorical exclusions to avoid assessing alternatives to road widening."

Even though on record as opposing the widening, Arlington County has dropped

Columbia Pike (continued)

find itself without the diversity that it currently boasts.

Under ordinary circumstances, you would think a trolley, or light rail, would be a good thing, replacing the use of automobiles, and reducing exhaust pollution. However, in the Columbia Pike corridor, this is hardly the case (*The Examiner* reports that the electricity for the trolley will emanate from the coal-fired plants of Wise County, Virginia). With the concurrent redevelopment of Columbia Pike, the trolley becomes nothing more than window dressing for building an upscale neighborhood. The higher income folks moving in to the redeveloped areas will not likely be using buses or trolleys. The trolley plan comes coupled with upscale cosmetic

changes planned for Pike to entice development. The trolley is only one indication of things to come. As Arlington residents can plainly see, massive redevelopment is under way now, with new upscale stores and new exclusive apartments and townhouses already built and under construction. It's just a matter of time for remaining existing residents. The county has been quoted in the press as anxious for the real estate revenue from the new buildings. However, neither the county nor the Columbia Pike Revitalization organization have made any provision for retaining current residents in their homes or for preserving existing market rate and affordable housing along the Pike. □

the ball in entering suit to stop it. (Ironically, the County's 395 law suit asks for an adequate environmental review of the 395 widening, and the resulting pollution created by the increased traffic). It's significant that the Arlington County Board Member who sits on Transportation Planning Board for this region (Chris Zimmerman) did not oppose or vote against the approval of funds for the spot improvements.

Called putting your money where your mouth is, these Greens have initiated the legal action on 66. □

What's That Ringing Sound?

Arlington County's problems in insuring housing that middle income and fixed income residents can afford continue unabated.

Over 13,000 affordable units have been lost to redevelopment since 2001, with no end in sight of continued demolition and high end construction. This figure does not even include the moderately priced single family houses that have been lost to McMansion building.

The county has even stopped counting the losses, and for several years has not published the total units lost. The county published goal over the last few years has been to establish 400 affordable units a year, and they have not even been able to meet that goal, even while double counting refurbished affordable units as new units (cooking the books). In the mean time, county policy of encouraging redevelopment, the elimination of affordable housing, and the institution of high-end development continues apace.

Housing Gone (continued)

For a decade, beginning with the loss of Arna Valley apartments to upscale development, the County did not take seriously that it was losing affordable housing and losing its diverse base of middle income residents. Today, the county alternates giving lip service to providing affordable units with statements to the effect that their hands are tied, and there is little they can do. Over the years, however, the county has done a great deal to encourage redevelopment and elimination of housing. Not the least of their endeavors was the infamous back room deal that allowed a private developer, the United Bank of Switzerland (yes, those folks) to tear down Buckingham Village, a complex that qualified for historic preservation and that could have been saved to preserve affordable units. The county has no way to help relocate residents evicted for by-right development.



HISTORIC BUCKINGHAM VILLAGE 2 AFTER MAN-MADE DEVASTATION.

Garden apartment complexes are fast disappearing all over Arlington, and residents should have learned by now not to ask for whom the bells toll. □

Compare Parties—Significant Issues that face us all

I-66 and Transportation

Greens oppose further highway development for autos, and are suing to try to stem further environmental damage resulting from any more widening of I-66. Greens support alternatives to more cars on the road.

Democrats in Arlington are two-faced on stopping further highway development. The Arlington County Board is on record as opposing widening and further construction on I-66, yet a board member who is also active on regional transportation boards did not oppose funding it. The Virginia Democratic Party supports further freeway building and environmental destruction, presumably under the presumption that it can be very lucrative for the right people.

Republicans think greater gridlock is wonderful, and refuse to consider alternatives – build it and they will come.

Affordable housing

Greens advocate for the preservation of existing market rate, affordable housing in Arlington County; for the county to acquire and maintain the existing remaining garden apartment developments, apartment buildings, as well as moderate income duplexes and single family houses in the County, in order to stem the loss of over 13,000 affordable units since 2001.

Democrats led by the County Board have failed to address the housing problem, do not establish goals to retrieve the lost housing, and continue to work with developers for the destruction of existing affordable units.

Republicans are silent on this issue.

Development and 'growth'

Greens advocate for stricter a zoning ordinance, a moratorium on deconstruction, and increased developer fees to address the destruction of infrastructure, in order to control demolition of houses and the spread of McMansions.

Democrats are in favor of gentrification, rampant growth and overdevelopment. They refuse to try to preserve existing housing, are opposed to a housing authority, are opposed to a moratorium on development, and abandoned any attempt to strengthen the zoning code.

Republican political philosophy provides that property rights and a free market economy override the rights and needs of others.

Go Greens! (cont.)

settlement patterns west of the beltway and/or reduction in vehicle miles traveled.....As VDOT's own studies demonstrate, the real answers to I-66 congestion are rail to Dulles (which is happening), increased commuter bus service, expansion of HOV (both ways, longer hours, and/or HOV-3), inducements for telecommuting, tolling, and better land use planning.

..... I believe in and would vote for any type of rational alternative to personal automobile transportation. I cannot believe that widening I-66 inside the beltway will have any effect other than moving the backup points a few miles down the road. This approach simply treats a symptom of the problem at a microcosmic level versus the root cause from a multi-regional perspective.With well over one percent of the surface of the US now paved, we cannot afford to sustain our present personal transportation infrastructure, let alone add more paved surfaces to maintain. The only change that will truly improve our lot and quality of life is practical alternatives to personal automobile transportation. The only way we're going to embrace this change as a culture is to get over the perception that alternatives threaten our freedom of choice and cause unbearable inconveniences....

.....Traffic is just like a waterway system of streams and rivers. The flow into DC from Virginia will always be limited by the number of bridges available for crossing, the number of lanes on each bridge and the degree of traffic flow restrictions on the other side. We will still have a good sampling of the nation's second worst rush hour traffic. The only thing that will change is that we'll be able to see more lanes of stalled traffic through Arlington. Moreover, without a substantial shoulder and a landscaped buffer, the safety and aesthetics of I-66 will be greatly compromised, all without achieving the desired result. Air pollution will increase significantly. Ever ridden a bike over I-66 during rush hour in the summer? You need to carry oxygen.

.I don't believe that evening eastbound traffic will improve one iota, because the same volume of traffic will still have the same knotholes to pass through at a new point along the same road. The bottlenecks will just move downstream unless you widen every major highway and bridge AT THE SAME TIME! Personally, I'm

Comparison, Continued

Columbia Pike redevelopment

Greens believe that the gentrification of Columbia Pike, not to mention the rest of Arlington County, is a mistaken and unfairly discriminatory policy.

Democrats in Arlington, as a cosmetic feature of the redevelopment of the Columbia Pike corridor, have initiated establishing trolley service on the pike. The trolley is designed to increase Pike real estate assessments with the aim of gentrifying the surrounding neighborhoods. This gentrification process has already initiated the mass exodus of middle income and fixed income residents who have no place to go in Arlington.

Republicans are the developers.

Homeless

Greens support establishing a year around adequate shelter for homeless persons. Greens also believe the county should work with the other jurisdictions in the Washington metropolitan area to fund and initiate cooperative solutions to the homeless problem;

Democrats in Arlington budget for cosmetic initiatives to please segments of voters, but withhold funding for such humanitarian purposes as providing adequate shelter for those without.

Republicans regard humanitarian endeavors as a waste of taxpayer money.

Social justice

Greens believe everyone should share in the fruits of our society, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, class, age, or disability. Greens will work for a world in which all can live free of fear and discrimination.

Democrats in Arlington allow political considerations and the concern not to offend self-interested voters precedence over helping the disadvantaged.

Republicans do not even have the term in their lexicon.

Grassroots democracy

Greens believe citizens have the right and responsibility to participate in the environmental, political, and economic decisions that affect our lives.

Democrats in Arlington retain tight control over all civic and social justice activities, including holding tight the purse strings of all the social service organizations in the county.

Republicans do not reach out to nor consider the interests of minority residents, presumably anyone not like them.

Respect for Diversity

Greens support the cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, and spiritual diversity among all of us. Greens also cherish and encourage the preservation of the Earth's biodiversity.

Democrats are systematically removing minorities from Arlington County through their policy of redevelopment of the county.

Republicans are the party of the Chamber of Commerce, and of developers, who are the agents of gentrification in the county, and of the removal of minorities and lower income groups.

Living wage

Greens support a living wage for all middle income and lower income workers. Greens joined the coalition that lobbied for a living wage for County workers and contract workers.

Democrats, in the form of the County Board, to their credit supported and initiated a living wage for county employees and contract workers.

Republicans state-wide oppose a living wage for any worker who is not the Chief Executive Officer of a multi-national corporation.

Go Greens! (cont.)

fascinated at our capacity to treat minor symptoms rather than the root causes of a vast and systemic problem. It's like insisting that the earth is flat centuries after Magellan's epic voyage.

.....Municipal planners are forever stuck in the past. They are bound by bureaucratic protocols and hamstrung by politics. They have no vision beyond their jurisdiction. They are subject to gerrymandering from afar (Richmond) and near (Congress and the White House). The only justification they have for highway projects is simple linear regression – forecasting trends based on current statistics. Their projects, like widening I-66 inside the beltway, are obsolete and overcome by events and changes years before they even get started. The point is here that by the time the I-66 widening project is finished, it may become a non-issue where the majority of us will live and work outside the beltway, or better, will be telecommuting three to five days a week. More realistically, the future of gridlock is destined to be outside the beltway. The FBI has already moved to West Virginia and the US Navy to Quantico.

.....We're not alone. As a traveling consultant, I've experienced comparable rush hour traffic in LA, San Diego, Boston, Birmingham, Atlanta (now there's a real mess), Dallas/Fort Worth, Colorado Springs and Virginia's Hampton Roads..... It's all one big mess because our culture only accepts one mode of local or regional transportation.....

.....I am opposed to the gobbling up of the countryside, but given the structure of our government (Dillon Rule) and the influence of developers in Richmond, it is hard to imagine that it can be stopped. ...

.....I am tired of our transportation policy benefiting urban in-fill and outer suburb sprawl developers and auto dealers. Wake up Virginians, in 50 years there won't be any agriculture or forests left for your kids and grandkids. Something has GOT to be done about the population growth of the United States. We cannot go on adding 3.0-3.5 million to the U.S. population every year without major environmental consequences in only a few decades. □

More Comparison

Death penalty

Greens oppose the death penalty and have spoken out against it in Virginia, and participated in lobbying for its removal.

Democrats support the death penalty and vote to retain it in Virginia.

Republicans support the death penalty and vote to retain it in Virginia.

Invasion of Iraq

Greens - Opposed the invasion of Iraq. Even before the invasion, in 2002, the Green Party publicly denounced the impending invasion as in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and subsequently as an unwarranted and criminal taking of life which only casts shame on our society. Greens continually remonstrate for total withdrawal from Iraq today. The Arlington County Board refuses to join other jurisdictions in issuing a declaration opposing the war.

Democrats toe the Republican line in supporting, funding, and continuing a hopeless mess.

Republicans, of course, are complicit in initiating it, and still think it's wonderful.

Afghanistan

Greens concur with a majority view in the United States that our policies and actions in Afghanistan must change. Greens believe that the US should withdraw its military force and revert to diplomatic initiatives and humanitarian service where we are able to do so.

Democrats are holding to a failed military strategy in that area of the world.

Republicans initiated the failed strategy. □

Homeless Petition

Here is the petition presented to the Arlington County Board. Greens, other activists with churches and representatives of the homeless population continue to collect signatures to present to the Board:

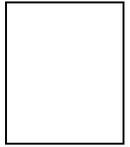
Petition to the Arlington County Board—A Plan to Improve the Well-Being of the Homeless and Near Homeless in Arlington County Virginia

1. All people have an inalienable right to basic shelter, and to be treated with dignity
2. The County Government should open and operate a year around shelter for all homeless people with special attention paid to families with children, single men and single women. This year-round shelter should be a "low barrier" shelter that takes care of any individual provided he or she is not violent or disruptive to staff and other people.
3. This year-round shelter should be operated directly by Arlington County Department of Human Service social workers and other direct employees of Arlington County Government.
4. The County Government will finance the establishment of single room occupancy (SRO), basic dormitory style housing, so that single adults can be quickly transferred from the shelter to the SRO or any vacant affordable apartment in the county affordable housing program.
5. The County Board shall direct the Arlington County police to cease harassment of homeless individuals sleeping in the open including citation of these people for "public camping" (a misdemeanor). County police instead are directed to call DHS social workers whenever such individuals are found sleeping in the open so that such individuals may be directed to safe shelter.
6. The County Government should enlist the support of Arlington faith communities and other voluntary organizations to provide supplemental shelter in cases when the year around shelter is full. DHS social workers shall train and encourage community volunteers to help staff the year around shelter as much as possible.
7. The County Government should seek federal funds to begin a public job program for homeless people and unemployed residents to perform needed work in county parks, school buildings, community clean up efforts such as along Four-Mile Run, the Potomac River, and major roads and streets, and undertake green energy savings efforts such as weatherization and free energy audits for county residents. □



Arlington Green Party

c/o Kirit Mookerjee
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Arlington, VA 22205
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www.arlingtongreens.org (watch for new, updated site)



And check out the Arlington Green Party Facebook page!

ARLINGTON GREEN NEWSLETTER; Don Rouse, Ed.
info@arlingtongreens.org

Get Involved ! Contact the Green Party at info@arlingtongreens.org

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Yes, I would like to get involved with the Arlington Courthouse Greens. I'm interested in:

- Attending monthly meetings
- Receiving email and newsletter updates
- Organizing events
- Working on Green Party campaigns
- Joining the Green Party of Virginia and making a contribution*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please return to: Arlington Green Party, c/o Kirit Mookerjee, 1201 N. Kensington St. #9, Arlington, VA 22205

* **Federal law** requires the Green Party of Virginia to collect the name, address, occupation and employer from donors contributing more than \$200 per year. Please include this information with your check. You must be at least 18 years of age in order to contribute. Contributions to the Green Party of Virginia are not tax deductible.

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