



May 2006

2006 Board

Stephanie Bolton
332 Parkway Street

Mary Cooper Gilliam
218 South Street W.

Colette Hall (President)
101 Robertson Lane

Anne Hemenway
800 Park Street

Elvira Tate Hoskins
537 2nd Street N.E.

Robert LeHeup (Treasurer)
806-D E. Jefferson Street

Catherine G. Peaslee
307-A 2nd Street N.W.

Richard Price (Secretary)
321 Parkway Street

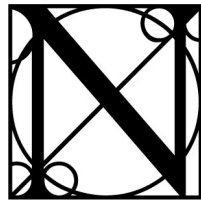
Ruth Stornetta (Vice President)
307-C 2nd Street N.W.

Adela Su
903 2nd Street N.E.

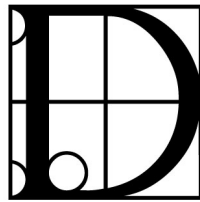
Debra Weiss
401 Hedge Street

Jill Williams
101 3rd Street S.E.

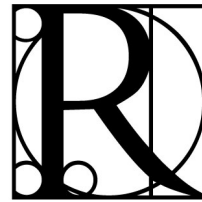
NDRA
PO Box 1739
Charlottesville, VA 22902
<http://avenue.org/ndra>



N



E



W



S

The Newsletter of North Downtown

McIntire/250 Bypass Planning Underway

Perhaps the biggest project to impact North Downtown since the creation of the Downtown Mall thirty years ago, a grade-separated interchange at the junction of the 250 Bypass, McIntire Road, and the future Meadowcreek Parkway is well into the planning phase. An initial public forum was held in March, and a second opportunity for community input is slated for an as-yet-to-be-announced date in June.

An eleven-member steering committee appointed by the Mayor and City Council has been meeting since early spring. The role of the committee is to provide input and make suggestions to the City and VDOT regarding the development of interchange concepts, detailed interchange alternatives, and a preferred alternative, including the assessment of their effects.

Input from the steering committee, the general public, various environmental resource and regulatory agencies, and local and state elected officials, along with the results of the various analyses, will be considered by the City in making a decision that meets their guidelines and requirements of VDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and various permitting agencies. The steering committee's timeline calls for a final alternative to be approved by spring 2007.

The new interchange, funded by a federal earmark by Senator John Warner, will be built independent of the Meadowcreek Parkway, though its impetus clearly stems from the increase in traffic the Parkway will generate at what is already a busy crossroads. Accordingly, the size of the interchange will be significant. Raising the 250 Bypass to allow McIntire and the Parkway to pass underneath will impact an area stretching from Park Street to the Covenant School. Depending on the scenario selected, the skate park will be eliminated, the Rescue Squad moved, and even Schenk's Branch relocated. One bit of good news is that the committee's goals include improving pedestrian access to McIntire Park.

Illustrations of the options under examination are posted on the steering committee's web page, www.250interchange.org (click on the "Meeting Information" link and then "Meeting #4"); one possibility is shown on the following page. **North Down residents should take advantage of the June forum to make their opinions heard!**



Two Steps Forward, One Back

It's no secret that Charlottesville real estate values—and thus real estate taxes—have soared over the past few years. In the last three years alone average assessments have increased upwards of 9 percent or more per year. City Council has in those same years

reduced the tax rate, but not as quickly—only around 5.5% each year. The inevitable result is that the real estate taxes residents pay have gone up at a rate exceeding that of inflation.

To take one North Downtown property as an example, a home assessed at \$350,000 in 2003 is now valued at 449,524 (an increase of \$99,524, or 28.4%). In those same three years,

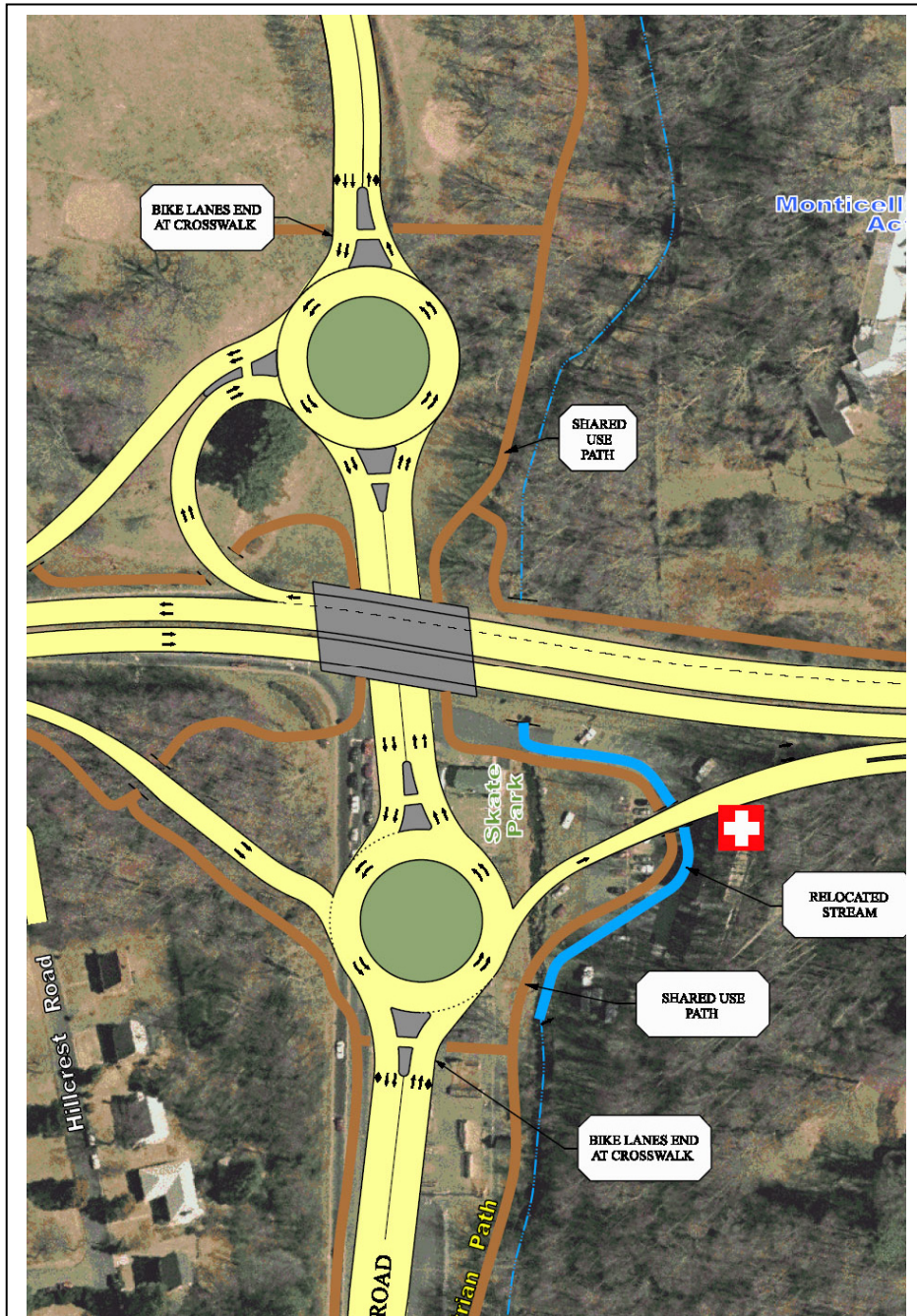
despite a decline in the tax rate from \$1.11 per \$100 to \$0.99 per \$100 (a decrease of 10.8%), the annual tax due has increased from \$3,885 to \$4,450 (an increase of \$565, or 14.5%).

While it is a given that the City's expenses will rise each year, it's not unreasonable to expect that growth to be in line with the general rate of inflation. The City is, in effect, capitalizing on increased assessments to fund a growing budget, but in doing so risks pricing the City beyond the means of many low- and middle-income citizens. What will happen when the middle class can no longer afford to live and work here?

On the Mall

It's been a busy few months for the Downtown Mall. The rag-tag assortment of newspaper boxes have been relocated to the side streets, and work on the transit center is on track for a fall completion. Some sizeable new developments have been proposed that will bring new housing and businesses to Water Street next to Lewis & Clark Square, and to Market Street across from Lee Park. The City has even implemented guidelines and a new fee structure for vendors.

Also, a much-debated second vehicle crossing of the Mall has opened at 4th Street. The Planning Commission voted in January against a second crossing, citing insufficient evidence that merchants on the eastern end of the Mall had truly been impacted by the closure of 7th Street, and recommending that any changes be deferred until after work is completed on the Transit Center and Holsinger condominiums. City Council, however, was persuaded by a concerted lobbying effort by the downtown merchants and agreed to the opening on a one-year trial basis, and is subject to further review next spring. The street opened in early May, and has thus far proved uneventful.



One possibility for the McIntire/250 Bypass intersection. A public forum to discuss this and other possibilities will be held sometime in June.

Downtown Calendar

Ongoing

Charlottesville City Council

First and Third Mondays of the month (Tuesday if the Monday is a holiday), 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, City Hall. City Council meetings are open to the public, and televised on cable Channel 10. Time is open at the beginning and end of each regular meeting for speakers on subjects not listed on the agenda.

Planning Commission

Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM, Council Chambers, City Hall. The Planning Commission advises City Council on the City's comprehensive plan, including land use, transportation, community facilities and service, zoning, subdivision, capital programming and other planning.

Board of Architectural Review

Third Tuesday of the month, 5:00 PM, Neighborhood Development Services Conference Room, City Hall. The BAR considers proposed construction in the Historic Preservation and Architectural Design Control District—which includes significant parts of North Downtown—to preserve and protect old, historic or architecturally worthy structures, spaces and neighborhoods. The BAR ensures that any new development or alteration of existing structures and spaces is in harmony with the historic or architectural character of the area.

Fridays After Five

Fridays, through September, 5:30-9:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free weekly concerts every Friday through early fall. Artists through June are listed below. www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

Charlottesville City Market

Saturdays through fall, 7:00 AM-NOON, Water Street Parking Lot. Home-grown, home-made, and home-baked items from local gardeners,

bakers, and artisans. Arrive early for the best selection.

Historic Downtown Walking Tours

Saturdays, 10:00 AM, leaving from the Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society, 200 2nd Street NE. Walking tours of historic downtown Charlottesville. Learn about the early years of Charlottesville, its citizens, businesses, and buildings. \$3 donation suggested; 296-1492, www.albemarlehistory.org

* * * * *

June-September

Citizen Informational Meeting on the McIntire Road/250 Bypass Interchange

Check the bypass web page, www.250interchange.org, for time, date, and location.

This is the public's second opportunity to view and comment on proposals for the McIntire/250 Bypass interchange.

Charlottesville and Albemarle County at Mid-Century

Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society, 200 2nd Street NE. The first in a series of exhibits from the Russell Payne Photographic Collection; www.albemarlehistory.org

All My Sons

June 1-17, Live Arts, 123 E. Water Street.

The price of war, the pride of a nation, and the sins of the father meet in this play of our America. Celebrate Arthur Miller—the conscience of our country—with a family story and the true cost of war. \$10-\$17; 977-4117x108, www.livearts.org

Fridays After Five: Alligator

June 2, 5:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of Grateful Dead covers.

National Trails Day

June 3, Rivanna Trail. Celebrate National Trails Day with volunteers from the Rivanna Trails Foundation. (See article on page 5.)

Montgomery Gentry with Jason Michael Carroll

June 3, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. \$39.50-\$51.50; www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

Municipal Band Summer Concert #1

June 6, 8:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of music from marches to Broadway show tunes, classical, light classical, and pops performed by Charlottesville's finest since 1922.

Fridays After Five: Agents of Good Roots

June 9, 5:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of gritty roots rock.

Fridays After Five: Tropikiimba

June 16, 5:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of Latin rhythms.

Municipal Band Summer Concert #2

June 20, 8:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free admission.

NDRA Monthly Meeting

June 22, 7:00 PM, Downtown Library, 3rd floor.

Fridays After Five: Eric Lindell

June 23, 5:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of New Orleans rock and soul.

Train

June 29, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. A benefit for the Charlottesville Area Association of Realtors Work Force Housing Fund; \$27-\$41.50; www.caar.com

Fridays After Five: Chickenhead Blues Band

June 30, 5:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free concert of rockin' blues.

Marshall Tucker Band

July 2, 7:30 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. With opening act Wrinkle Neck Mules. \$17-\$27; www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

Big Head Todd & The Monsters, and Toad the Wet Sprocket

July 8, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. \$27; www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

John Hiatt backed by the North Mississippi Allstars

July 10, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. A benefit for the Music Resource Center \$25-\$37.50; www.musicresourcecenter.org

Urinetown

July 13-August 5, Live Arts, 123 E. Water Street. A dreadful title! Too much exposition! An awful premise, fully realized! The return of the Live Arts Summer Musical has it all—a golden stream of songs, splashes of satire and frothy, bubbly laughter. Don't dare wait—there will be a line. \$10-\$17; 977-4117x108, www.livearts.org

Willie Nelson

July 16, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. A benefit for the Charlottesville Free Clinic. \$31.50-\$51.50; www.cvillefreeclinic.org

Municipal Band Summer Concert #3

July 18, 8:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free admission.

Bo Bice

July 22, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Yes, it's the American Idol contestant, with opening act Ryan Cabrera, Josh Hoge, and Jay Buchanan. \$27-\$37.50; www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

Municipal Band Summer Concert #4

August 1, 8:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free admission.

Guster, and Ray LaMontagne

August 2, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. \$29.50; www.charlottesvillepavilion.com

Municipal Band Summer Concert #5

August 15, 8:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. Free admission.

Bruce Hornsby

August 22, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. A benefit for the Jefferson Area Board for Aging. \$17-\$47; www.jabacares.org

Lyle Lovett

August 26, 7:00 PM, Charlottesville Pavilion. A benefit for Live Arts. \$31.50-\$51.50; 977-4117x108, www.livearts.org

NDRA Monthly Meeting

August 31, 7:00 PM, Downtown Library, 3rd floor.

Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival

September 10, 3:00 PM; September 14, 8:00 PM; September 17, 3:00 PM, September 21, 8:00 PM, September 24, 3:00 PM; venue TBA. Annual series of chamber music concerts, with programs reaching to Scandinavia, to Hungary, to Appalachia, and to the historical core of the chamber music tradition in baroque trio sonatas of Handel and Telemann. 295-5395, www.cvillechambermusic.org

NDRA Annual Picnic

September 24, 3:00-6:00 PM, McGuffey Park. Neighbors, food, drink, and entertainment. Don't miss it!

NDRA Monthly Meeting

September 28, 7:00 PM, Downtown Library, 3rd floor.

Charlottesville Vegetarian Festival

September 30, 11:00 AM-4:00 PM, Lee Park. Eighth annual celebration of a healthy and humane lifestyle bringing together individuals who want to make the planet a more healthy, sustainable, and compassionate place for all. Includes free vegan food samples, restaurant booths, healthy-living exhibitors, nonprofit and educational organizations, video festival, dog and cat Adoption Fair, Kids' Patch, live music, and "fun"-raising activities supporting Voices for Animals. www.cvillevegfest.org

•
•
•
•
Join the NDRA

From South Street and the Downtown Mall to the 250 Bypass, and from McIntire and Birdwood Roads in the east to Kelly Avenue in the west, North Downtown is the heart of Charlottesville. What voice do you have in its future?

The NDRA advocates for our neighborhood and distributes this newsletter three times a year. The NDRA welcomes all residents of North Downtown as members. Annual dues are \$10 per household; make checks payable to NDRA.

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Telephone

E-Mail Address

Check here if you prefer to be notified by e-mail when a newsletter is posted on-line **instead** of receiving a printed copy by mail.

Please mail to:
North Downtown Residents Association
PO Box 1739
Charlottesville VA 22902

Water Plans Advance

By Ruth Stornetta

The Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority held a public meeting on April 18 to announce the preferred option for meeting the demand for water for the Charlottesville-Albemarle community for the next fifty years. The authority considered over 30 options, whittled down to two main choices through a process of public meetings and expert research with both public and professional input. The two choices left under consideration prior to the final decision were either to construct a new and higher dam at the Ragged Mountain Reservoir and to construct a pipeline connecting the Reservoir with the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir, or a more controversial 24-mile pipeline from the James River.

Although widely expected, about 70 people gathered for the meeting at Monticello High School to hear RWSA director Thomas L. Frederick, Jr., announce the formal selection of the Ragged Mountain Dam option. The sentiment of Rivanna Conservation Society director Matt Rosefsky summed up one of the strongest arguments for the plan, "We are thrilled that we're keeping the water local."

The proposal will cost over \$130 million but was less expensive than other options. The money is expected to come from local sources and, of course, will ultimately come from the consumers of the water. The plan does include phases so not all the money will have to come at once. As Mr. Frederick noted, this is a fifty year plan.

The new dam will eventually increase the reservoir's height by 45 feet and add about 1.86 billion gallons to its capacity. The pipeline to the Rivanna Reservoir will be built along a ridge and will thus minimally impact surrounding

watersheds. It will be underground and is not expected to have any permanent environmental impact. The dam's effect on the water level of the current Ragged Mountain Reservoir will impact on some streams and a few acres of wetlands. Under federal and state regulations, these effects will require mitigation involving stream restoration or protection and creation of new wetlands. The decision has not yet been made as to which particular streams will receive the improvements.

Charlottesville City Councilor Kevin Lynch urged that we take the opportunity to improve some of our urban streams, and certainly North Downtown resident Fred Schneider would agree. Mr. Schneider pointed out that Schenk's Branch, which runs through the linear park section of McIntire Park paralleling McIntire Road, is under pressure from industrial runoff. Here is an opportunity for North Downtown to get involved with the process and help to restore an urban stream to a healthier state.

National Trails Day

Over twenty miles long, the Rivanna Trail completely encircles Charlottesville, and it's easy to forget the countless hours of volunteer labor that go into its maintenance and improvement. Once a year is our chance to give back and help out. The Rivanna Trails Foundation invites residents to celebrate National Trails Day on Saturday, June 3, starting at 8:30 A.M., by participating in a morning of trail building, stream cleaning, and native plant nurturing. There will be activities for all ages and skill levels, music, a free lunch, and fun surprises.

Wear clothes and shoes for getting dirty or wet, work gloves, and long pants. Bring drinking water and a snack. RTF will have some tools available, but if you have them please bring a hand

clipper, pruning lopper, pruning saw, garden rake, shovel, hoe, mattock, or pick.

Participation and lunch are free, but please pre-register at 923-9022 or www.rivannatrails.org.

McGuffey Update

Fundraising for the redevelopment of McGuffey Park has made significant progress in the last year, with the Friends of McGuffey Park having raised about four-fifths of their \$650,000 goal. NDRA, local foundations, the City, and numerous residents have all offered financial support.

To make the vision of a renewed park a reality, the next few months require raising the final funds. Tax-deductible donations can be made to Friends of McGuffey Park, Inc., P.O. Box 224, Charlottesville VA 22902. For more information about sponsoring specific elements of the park (play equipment, gardens, etc.), please write to mcguffeypark@earthlink.net.

While construction cannot start until next spring at the earliest, if the fundraising goal is reached this summer NDRA hopes to host a ceremonial ground-breaking at September's North Downtown picnic held in, appropriately enough, McGuffey Park.

Parking on North 1st

Parking on N. 1st Street has only gotten tighter in recent years. While permit parking is in place, it is in effect only on weekdays between 8:00 and 5:00. Some residents on the street are asking the City to extend those restrictions overnight and through Saturday, excepting only Sundays (for church parking). To support this effort, residents of N. 1st are encouraged to write Karen Firehock, chair of the City Planning Commission.



CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902

DO NOT FORWARD
CURRENT RESIDENT OR:



We Need You

This newsletter is sent to all the residents of North Downtown, making the support of those members who pay annual dues all the more important. Look at your address label below; if the date above your name is 2005—or if there’s no date at all—it’s time to show your support for the NDRA.

Only \$10 gets you the *NDRA News* and supports the association in its efforts to improve North Downtown. Dues are also used for supplies, postage, and the annual picnic. NDRA represents you before City Council, the Planning Commission, and other City committees. The Board President also sits on the Downtown Advisory Committee. Please mail your check with the form on page today!

Newsletters Available On-Line

Would you prefer to receive this newsletter on-line? If so, you can help the NDRA save on printing and postage costs by letting us know if you’d like to receive an e-mail notification when each edition of the *NDRA News* is posted to our web page. In fact, our past newsletters are posted as well, at <http://avenue.org/ndra>.

E-mail Board president Colette Hall at colettehall@earthlink.net. We also use our e-mail list to send notices about board meetings, meetings and workshops sponsored by the City, and occasional other items of interest. The list is moderated to prevent spam, and we will never sell your e-mail address or share it with commercial firms.

•
•
•
•

2006-07 Meeting Schedule

NDRA meetings begin at 7:00 P.M. in one of the third-floor meeting rooms of the Downtown Library. All are welcome.

- June 22
- July TBA
- August 31
- September 24 -
Neighborhood Picnic and Board Election
- September 28
- October 26
- December 7
- January 25, 2007
- February 22
- March 29
- April 26