

**NEXT MEETING: 7:30 PM, THURSDAY, APRIL 3
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER**

**PARK PLANNING WORKSHOPS
Great Parks, Great Communities
Mt. Vernon District – Park Planning Process
Tuesday, March 25, 2008 at 7 p.m. at Newton Forest Elementary School
Thursday, March 27, 2008 at 7 p.m. at Whitman Middle School**

If you think preserving, protecting and planning parks to serve coming generations is please join us at one of two district-wide park planning workshops. The Fairfax County Authority wants your input! Come help us plan and strategize how to protect and preserve our natural and cultural resources and ensure quality places for the next generation to play and thrive.

Great Parks, Great Communities is an exciting new planning process initiated to get your ideas for balancing Fairfax County's future park needs and resources, within each district of the County. Be a part of the process by guiding us towards a balanced park system in your community and ultimately across the County.

Mt. Vernon District Supervisor Gerald Hyland and Park Authority Board Member Gilbert McCutcheon will host two *Great Parks, Great Communities* workshops for the Mt. Vernon Supervisory District. The first workshop will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 at 7 p.m. at the Newington Forest Elementary School cafeteria located at 8001 Newington Forest Avenue in Springfield. The second workshop will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2008 at 7p.m. at Whitman Middle School located at 2500 Parker's Lane in Alexandria.

Please join us for one of these kick-off meetings at which the planning process will be introduced and baseline information about the existing park system will be presented. You will have the opportunity to learn more about the parks in your district, ask questions to park staff, and share your ideas on how we can strengthen our park system for the future. If you can't join us in person, consider sharing your thoughts with us online. You will find an overview of our countywide *Great Parks, Great Communities* initiative, informative maps and district specific information, schedule of upcoming meetings and opportunities to provide feedback at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/greatparks.htm. For more information please contact Senior Park Planner Scott Sizer at 703-324-8725 or send us your questions/concerns online at Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov. If you love parks, can envision the protection of natural and cultural resources and believe that your quality of life is enhanced by a healthy environment, please take some time to share your opinions, great ideas and your enthusiasm!

HUNTINGTON DISCUSSION BOARD

Visit www.HuntingtonOnline.org to sign up for the community's discussion board featuring:

- Messages arranged by topics
- The ability to watch & be notified of topics
- The ability to set up issue-specific discussion space, such as the Huntington Garden Club discussion forum

2008 General Assembly Update

by Del. David Englin, 45th District

As this year's General Assembly session begins winding down, I wanted to update you on some of the issues I have been working on in Richmond.

My top legislative priority this year was defeating the effort to dismantle the Air Pollution Control Board so we can continue working with the board to rein in pollution from the Mirant Plant. As a result of intensive lobbying and negotiations, the House Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources Committee turned the initial, objectionable bill into legislation that preserves the board's full power and authority and actually strengthens financial conflict of interest rules for board members. The transformed bill passed both the House and the Senate with unanimous support. This is a significant victory in our fight against the Mirant Plant that could not have been achieved without the hard work of local officials and citizens working together. Thank you to everyone who played a role.

Working across the aisle, I co-sponsored a bipartisan \$1.2-billion bond package that will fund higher education construction projects, mental health facilities, and parks projects. The package is designed to allow projects to begin as soon as possible, serving as an immediate economic stimulus for the Commonwealth. Many of the projects included in the package focus on research and high-tech workforce development, which are critical investments that will produce long-term economic growth.

Unfortunately, there have also been some disappointments. The General Assembly must pass a constitutional amendment two years in a row to put it before the people. While the Homestead Exemption

Amendment to allow local governments to exempt up to 20 percent of your home's value from taxation passed both chambers overwhelmingly last year; Senate Republicans changed their votes this year and killed the effort. Additionally, despite overwhelming public support for legislation to create smoke-free restaurants and workplaces, the House Republican leadership killed all of those bills in a six-person subcommittee with no recorded vote.

Responding to problems and needs in our community, I have been working on an ambitious slate of legislation to strengthen our community, defend our progressive values, and invest in our future. Five of my bills have passed both the House and the Senate outright and are on the way to Governor Kaine for his signature:

HB 805 is an instrument to provide equal legal protection to all Virginians, including gay and lesbian couples, during medical emergencies. The bill establishes a medical registry for living wills and advanced medical directives so medical professionals and emergency responders can access these documents when they are needed most. This system will enable gay and lesbian Virginians to designate their partners as the people to make medical decisions on their behalf -- a legal power married couples enjoy by default.

HB 806 protects vulnerable citizens in assisted living residences, adult day care centers, childcare centers, and certain other licensed group homes from infectious disease outbreaks by requiring these facilities to immediately report outbreaks to the Department of Health. Currently there is no such requirement, which last year resulted in a serious outbreak of norovirus going unreported for nine days, delaying the

appropriate response and resulting in 85 elderly people getting sick.

HB 798 makes it easier for military and overseas voters to exercise their right to vote even when they are deployed to far-flung locations by allowing them to receive absentee balloting materials electronically.

HB 800 solves a problem that arose during the special election for Alexandria City Council in July, where absentee balloting procedures changed in midstream during that election. This bill ensures that if a special election is called when new election laws are about to go into effect, then the preexisting election laws will remain in effect for that special election.

HB 1084 strengthens the ability of communities and local governments to negotiate proffered pedestrian improvements from developers by preventing VDOT from blocking those improvements after the fact. This comes out of two cases in the Fairfax County part of the 45th District where VDOT refused to issue permits for previously negotiated pedestrian improvements, causing neighborhoods to miss out on tens of thousands of dollars worth of street-level improvements that would have come at no cost to taxpayers.

The final challenge this session is crafting the state's \$78-billion biennial budget. The current \$2-billion revenue shortfall makes this an especially difficult year to come up with a budget that balances important competing needs in areas like education, health care, public safety, transportation, and the environment.

There are many aspects of the proposed House budget that I support, such as a significant investment in services for the intellectually disabled, some reasonable

steps to reign in growing college tuition, and an expansion of pre-kindergarten -- albeit more modest than Governor Kaine proposed.

The biggest problem with the proposed House budget is language that would result in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of state money from public education in the future. Under the House Republican plan to restructure funding for the Standards of Quality, the state would suddenly ignore the actual cost to localities of hiring enough teachers and staff to provide a quality education for our children. Communities that want to maintain current staffing and quality levels would be forced to come up with the difference on their own, driving real estate taxes through the roof.

As of this writing, conferees are working through this issue. I am hopeful that parents, teachers, property owners, and local officials will make their voices heard so the budget conferees will negotiate a final budget that I can support. However, I will not vote for a policy change that would gut public education and turn it into an unfunded mandate that will drive up real estate taxes.

In addition to working on legislative matters, I always enjoy working with constituents to solve problems and make our government serve you better. If I can ever be of service to you, please contact me at 703-549-3203 or DelDEnglin@house.state.va.us. You can learn more about my work for you and share your views at www.davidenglin.org. Thank you for the honor and opportunity to serve!

=^..^= =^..^= =^..^=
**Shelter Announces Time Changes for
2008 Rabies Clinics**

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter will change the time for each of its remaining 2008 low-cost rabies clinics. **The clinics will now be held from 2 – 4 p.m.** at the animal shelter at 4500 West Ox Road, Fairfax, Va. 22030.

Dates for the 2008 clinics are: Sunday, May 18, Sunday, July 13, 2008, Sunday, Sept. 14, 2008 and Sunday, Nov. 16, 2008

The cost for rabies shots at the clinic is \$10.00. The clinic is held for dogs, cats and ferrets. All dogs should be on leashes and all cats and ferrets in carriers. Fairfax County 2008 dog licenses will be sold separately at the clinic and cost \$5.00 for altered dogs and \$10.00 for unaltered dogs (please bring proof of your pet's spay or neuter).

The clinic is sponsored by the Fairfax County Animal Shelter and Deepwood Veterinary Hospital. For more information, please call (703) 830-1000. For more information about the rabies clinic, visit the Fairfax County Animal Services Division Web site at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices>

**Make a Difference
Join the Huntington Community Association
The 2008 dues (\$10.00) are now payable.**

You can pay at the meeting or mail your check with the payment coupon. This will give you the voting power to make important decisions that affect your community. Residents and business are welcome as members. Complete the form to join and make a difference.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E:Mail _____

Mail to: Huntington Community Association
P.O. Box 7041
Alexandria, VA 22307

Make check payable to Huntington Community Association



President: Mack Rhoades, Jr., PhD, 703-329-9120
Vice President: Vacant Secretary: Georgie Evans
Treasurer: Harry Shepler Editor: Mary Bossom