

January 2002  
Volume I, Issue 2

**Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 20, 2002**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Charles Houston Recreation Center**  
**901 Wythe Street**

The important part of our name is Citizens'. This is an association that welcomes all people living within the boundary of NorthEast, renter and homeowner alike. The apostrophe in our name means it is YOUR association.

## Traffic Management Plan

### Phase I (1996)

Those who are new to the neighborhood will not know there was a previous configuration of Powhatan Street. It was a four-lane collector on which traffic moved at great speed and was pedestrian unfriendly. NECA was concerned about this unsafe situation and formed the Traffic Committee. The group worked for almost a year to devise a street design to slow down traffic. The final proposal was distributed to every household and posted on the NECA web page. Three association meetings were held to discuss the proposal. The meetings (like all NECA membership meetings) were open to anyone who wished to attend. The last meeting was a presentation by Tom O'Kane, former Director of Transportation and Environmental Services, of the final drawing by the City. Because of the number of attendees, the meeting was in the fire truck bay of the old fire station. The vote was taken. The result was an almost unanimous approval with only one person dissenting. What we have is the result.

The following is from the "NECA Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan" as printed in The Northeasterner, July 25, 1996 (Poul Hertel).

The objectives of the traffic management plan is to:

- Protect residents from high-speed commuter traffic diverting from arterial streets onto local streets,
- Maintain accessibility of neighborhood streets for local traffic,
- Make neighborhood pedestrian friendly,
- Design street system to reduce auto speeds and improve safety.

Various strategies were discussed and ultimately consisted of the following:

- Reduce wide radius intersections (neck down),
- Eliminate unneeded travel lanes,
- Selectively prohibit turning movements,
- Post fines for speeding,
- Redesign intersections with continuous right turns,
- Use changes in pavement treatment to signal cars to slow down,
- Demarcate crosswalks.

As you will see by looking at the street, all strategies were not incorporated by the City in the final plan.

The final step in the process was the nine actions that needed to be taken. The first step was the physical changes for Powhatan

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## The Dixie Pig Restaurant

An Alexandria Cultural Landmark

By Bonnie Rideout

Alexandria is a city rich in history and is dotted with many historic landmarks. The Dixie Pig Restaurant is part of this long heritage. Although not associated with any of the more recognizable figures in Virginia history, the Dixie Pig nevertheless embodies an undeniable continuity with the cultural past of the local community.

The first historical reference to the property dates to 1870 when the area was known as the Jefferson District of Arlington. In October, Scott School, a segregated institution for blacks, was established. The school's first principal was Mary A. Nevett. Scott was one of a series of late-nineteenth-century segregated schools organized in Alexandria by Alfred H. Parry. Parry's mother-in-law, incidentally, had been a servant at George Washington's estate, Mount Vernon.

Despite strong local opposition to Parry's places of learning for the disadvantaged, which operated in churches, private homes, barracks, and warehouses, Scott School served the community's black population for many years until its students were eventually dispersed to nearby Parker Gray High School, and the Snowden and Hollowell schools. Alexandria resident [and local historian], Harry Burke, born in the late 1920's, recalls [a story of] the students of Scott and one of their teachers, Mrs. Prichett. "Most of the kids in the school," recalls Mr. Burke, "lived on the other side of the railroad tracks where their fathers worked, while others lived near the power plant."

The next documented structure to appear on the site was a grocery store erected in 1918. It is uncertain whether or not Scott School was torn down at that time or if the store was simply erected on the old foundation of the school. Shortly after the store building went up, this section of Powhatan Street (called Washington Road at the time) became part of the City of Alexandria. Canton and Sarah Johnson ran the store after inheriting it from Kent and Rosa Johnson in 1938. Confirmation of the link between the Johnson's store and Scott School can be found in the 1939 deed to the adjoining property that still referred to the grocery store property as the "old school lot."

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[Traffic Management Plan, continued from page 1]

Street. This required the converting of a four-lane roadway into a two-lane street. Since the original lanes were smaller than what is now considered standard of a traffic lane, two standard lanes were provided. The balance of the "original" road was given to parking and widening the small median between the street and the utility road on the eastside of the street. The ends of the parking at both Bashford Lane and Second Street were provided with a bubble out to not only narrow the visual effect of Powhatan Street but also to protect the cars parked there.

At the north end of Powhatan Street (between Bashford Lane and Slaters Lane) is a townhouse community (Powhatan Gateway) on the west side of the street and small businesses on the east. The solution there was to divide the two travel lanes with a median of brick and trees. The important part of this area was to eliminate the "hot" turn by Powhatan Gateway for traffic turning off Slaters and onto Powhatan. This hot turn encouraged speeding.

The traffic management plan for the south end of Powhatan (Washington Street to Second Street) is considered Phase II and is currently in the hands of engineers finalizing the design.

As well as working on the physical design of the street the committee considered traffic movement. Two options discussed but not implemented were prohibiting left turns at two intersections. One was the left turn for cars driving south and turning on to Bashford and the other was no left turns for cars coming off Slaters onto Powhatan. These two options were considered because of the waiting traffic backup on Bashford

which impeded exiting from Michigan Street for people turning right out of Nethergate or residents turning left out of the Fagelson's development. This situation was recently improved with an adjustment in the timing of the traffic light at Bashford and the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

A third traffic movement was eliminated by the removal of the hot turn mentioned above. It required turning vehicles to continue to the intersection with the stoplight. Having a near normal curb design, it required traffic to slow down before making the turn. The existing configuration was created to allow a safe turning radius for the fire trucks and buses.

A traffic flow problem which is still unresolved is West Abingdon Drive. Unfortunately, a lot of cars use it to simply bypass the traffic on the GW Parkway. Traffic enters West Abingdon Drive at the exit before Slaters and travels to Second Street to merge to Washington Street.

This is just a brief summation of the work done by the Traffic Committee. Much work still needs to be done. There are other concerns. With the development of Potomac Yard, traffic in our area will continue to increase. Currently the majority of the land is still undeveloped. But the plan calls for a dense development of townhouses, office space, a hotel, and other businesses. With the increased density will come increased traffic and some of the traffic will look at Powhatan Street as a means of getting to where they are going. To prevent our neighborhood from again becoming a speedway for cut through traffic, the Traffic Committee needs to continue it work. We need continual vigilance of Potomac Yard, the continued development of land north of Slaters, and the Monroe Avenue Bridge just to name a few.

## Street Improvements

Anyone traveling on Powhatan Street will have noticed all the equipment and work on the eastside between Second Street and Bashford Lane. This is the result of collaboration between our Traffic Committee and the City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES).

In early 2000, Mayor Donley expressed concern for the safety of patrons exiting the Dixie Pig. The Traffic Committee worked on a plan that would address his concerns of pedestrian safety plus safe traffic flow from the access road on the eastside of Powhatan Street and the problem of standing water at the exit off the utility road.

Some of the results of this plan are a sidewalk and an area for landscaping in front of the Pig.

## In Memoriam

**Octavia Brown**, long time resident of NorthEast, passed away this November. Her home was on Second Street. Octavia was in her 90s and was frequently seen driving her 1949 black Plymouth. She remained active, attending association meetings. She was at our October election meeting. Octavia will be missed.

**Randolph Caldwell** - With deep sadness we announce the loss of Randolph Caldwell, husband of Jean Caldwell. He passed away in the early hours Sunday, December 16, 2001, after a long illness. Our sincere condolences are extended to Jean.

## So Long, Farewell, We'll Miss You

For over twenty years Curry Printing has done business in Alexandria. Twelve of those years were at their present location at 1313 Powhatan Street. This property has recently been sold necessitating a move. They are planning to move on January 1, 2002. Fortunately they will not be moving too far. Curry will continue operations at 2619 Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. Curry Printing has been a good neighbor and will be missed.

The new owner of the property is Caffi Plumbing who will operate their business at the site. Caffi Plumbing plans to renovate the building (inside and out) prior to occupancy. We'll tell you more about Caffi (and when to expect them to open) in a future newsletter.

## Re-Dedication of Fire Station 204

Our newly rebuilt fire station was rededicated to the memory of Bernard J. Padgett, Sr., Fire Chief from 1948 until 1970. The event was on Saturday, November 17, 2001 at 8:30 AM. Chief Padgett's family was present for the program and unveiling of the new plaque. Also present were Mayor Donley, Council members Cleveland, Pepper, Speck, Euille, Woodson, and Eberwein, City Manager Philip Sunderland, and our current Fire Chief, Thomas M. Hawkins. Some members of the community also attended.

The current building houses the Fire Department administration offices and the emergency system.

**James Bach** - no bio provided

**Jean Caldwell** is a long time resident of Powhatan Street. She has been actively involved in her neighborhood for many years. This space is too small to do justice to her service to the community. A comprehensive article on Jean will be in a future newsletter.

**Richard Cooper**, chairman of NECA's Traffic Committee and Board member for the last six years, has lived in northern Virginia since 1981. With his wife, Mary Jane Kramer, he has owned a house on Powhatan Street since 1989, and has been active in community affairs since that time. Rick was born and educated in Berkeley, California, receiving undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of California. Since moving to the area in 1981, Rick has worked as an attorney for the United States Postal Service in Washington DC, helping to keep the nation's mail service solvent. He can often be spotted walking his two schnauzers along Powhatan Street.

**Michael Doney** has lived on Devon Place for over 15 years and worked as a civilian Engineer for the US Army at Ft. Belvoir during that time. Since 1990 he has been very involved in fund raising activities in the District, particularly at the Smithsonian Institution, and regards this volunteer work to be among his most challenging and rewarding community based

experiences. Michael has been a member of NECA off and on for many years and has witnessed many changes to our neighborhood and the City as a whole since then. He and his wife (both former New Yorkers) are very excited about the impending arrival of their first child this spring.

**Theresa Forster** - no bio provided

**Poul Hertel** has been a resident of NorthEast since he moved here in 1993 and became a member of NECA in 1994. Born in the UK, he is an economist and has a degree in Political Science. Poul was appointed by City Council to the Ad Hoc Washington Street Task Force, was the chair of the Traffic Committee during fiscal year 1995/1996 and President of NECA from 1996-2001, is a member of the Land Use Committee, and the co-chair of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations.

**Mary Jane Kramer** grew up on a dairy farm in Iowa and later moved to Minnesota for her educational pursuits. She moved to the Washington, DC area in the late 1980's. Mary Jane and her husband Rick Cooper bought their home on Powhatan Street 1989 after Mary Jane fell in love with the charm and vitality of Alexandria. Mary Jane has been a member of the NECA since 1989, a board member for 6 years, and is a member of the Traffic Committee and the Land Use Committee.

**Cyra Lorenzen** was born and lived in the NorthEast from 1970 until 1974 but was raised in Annandale. She returned to the NorthEast in 1996. Her home originally was her grandmother's. Cyra has been a member of NECA since 1996, is a security specialist by profession, and on the Alexandria Auxiliary Police.

**Paul Smedberg** - no bio provided

**Harrison Troop** - no bio provided

**Martha Welch** is from a Navy family and grew up all over the world. She lived in Arlington during junior high and college. Martha moved to Alexandria three years ago and has been a member of NECA since that time. Currently, Martha is a member of the NECA Traffic and Land Use Committees and on the Board for a few years. Other volunteer work is with the League of Women Voters of Alexandria as co-chair for Membership. Martha works out of her home as a pharmaceutical sales rep.

**Claire Whitney** was raised in North Arlington and has lived in Alexandria since 1993, always in NorthEast. This is the first time she has been on the Board of a citizens association.


[The Dixie Pig Restaurant, continued from page 1]

By the 1950's [sometime in 1940's], the grocery store was converted into a diner, beginning the history of the present-day Dixie Pig establishment. The Dixie Pig has long been a fixture in the local community life of the Powhatan Street area. The interior and decor of the building is original [vintage] 1950's.

Beyond the architecture of the building, the unique neon sign is an important artistic and historical artifact. It is one of the oldest neon signs in the [Metropolitan] Washington, D.C. area. Professionals have reflected on the cultural relevance of the landmark. Even artists have taken note of the structure. An art exhibition at the Old Summer School in Washington, D.C. features the work of another Dixie Pig restaurant sign in its display. Also, the picture of the Dixie Pig Restaurant is on display at the Torpedo Factory in Old Town Alexandria.

Our thanks to Ms. Rideout for allowing us to print this article.

Dues are \$5 per household. Make checks payable to NorthEast Citizens' Association

 Send to Sylvia Sibover, Treasurer, 915 Second Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1347 [ Please print clearly ]

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

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## NECA Policy on Confidential Data

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Based on concerns expressed by some members regarding personal information provided to the NorthEast Citizens' Association we are printing our privacy policy. The information that was provided either with your dues or on the meeting sign-in sheet will always remain confidential. It will never be loaned, sold, or given to anyone. It is the policy of the NorthEast Citizens' Association to use the information ONLY for official NECA business or to provide civic information.

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## Contribution Policy

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Charitable contributions are a very important and personal choice. The world is full of good charitable organizations. As such, NECA has no objections to people announcing a need at one of our meetings. However, we feel it is inappropriate to promote any particular group or cause. If you wish to do so, please email the President advising of your wish to speak briefly at an upcoming meeting.

### Potomac Yard Development Information

There will be a community meeting about the Potomac Yard Trunk Sewer Project on Wednesday, January 16, 2002, from 7-8 PM in the Exhibitor's Hall at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street. The public is invited. As near neighbors, the Potomac Yard Development impacts our neighborhood. As possible, additional information will be posted on the web site.

For information on your citizens association call:

Mark Steinberg ☎ 703/684-7814

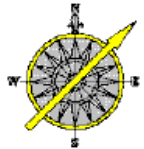
Mariella Posey ☎ 703/549-5842

See our web site for the latest information.

[www.his.com/tmw/alexandria\\_neca.htm](http://www.his.com/tmw/alexandria_neca.htm)

For the newsletter via email send your email address to  
[info@neca-alex.com](mailto:info@neca-alex.com).

**This is your neighborhood. It can only be saved with your help.**



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Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1347