

# ALCOVA HEIGHTS

Arlington, VA



NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2006

## ALCOVA HEIGHTS MEETING REPORT: DEVELOPMENT IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

*By Marie Van Ness, Secretary and Sara Uzel, Treasurer*

Our June 8th meeting focused on the proposed redevelopment of the Littman Law Building, and was attended by approximately 30 people. A presentation explaining the proposed project was given by the attorney for the Toll Brothers developers, who have purchased the Littman Law Office Building. Located at 3717 Columbia Pike, this building is in Alcova Heights, and presents a challenge and an opportunity to our neighborhood.

Toll Brothers is interested in redeveloping the building to add 123 residential condominiums, along with retail tenants. This represents a significant change to the current site, as it is currently zoned for commercial use only. The second big proposed change is to the height of the building: it is currently four stories high, and the developers want to build to six stories. The builder has chosen not to use the form-based code (FBC) for this project because their proposal represents a significant shift from the vision of the code, and is more appropriate for site plan review.

The plan, as presented, included a multi-level building, rising to six stories in the back (which is the part closest to Alcova houses), and included a mezzanine and dormers. There would be limited on-street parking, as most tenants would drive onto Oakland to access a parking garage. Alcova residents asked many questions, and requested a scale model of the project be prepared.

The major issue raised by residents is that the redevelopment does not conform to the FBC. Although site plan review is the acceptable alternative to the FBC, concern was expressed that deviation from the FBC would weaken the vision we have expressed for the Pike. Residents also expressed concern that the building height that faces 9th Street was unacceptable; that traffic-planning was inadequate; and that there was no integration between the project and Alcova Heights, or the rest of the Pike.

On July 8th, the County Board refused to allow the developer to go forward with the current proposal. The general feeling is that the developers were pushing the boundaries to see how flexible the Board was going to be, and the message from the Board is that they are committed to the "look and feel" of the FBC. As a result, the process will be lengthier, and our community will have a greater voice in deciding what happens on this site. The developer has requested to continue with the site plan process, and meetings will be forthcoming.

If you are interested in working on a committee for this development project — please **contact Sara Uzel**. It is critical that we get neighborhood involvement at an early stage, because we have the ability to have an impact on the nature of the project.

## EDITOR'S NOTE



GOT TIME? GOT SOMETHING  
TO SAY?

Then the newsletter needs you! **The Alcova Heights Newsletter needs a new editor, and someone to handle the advertising.** It's a fun job, and puts you in contact with your neighbors in a meaningful way. Susan DuBois' tenure ends with the December issue, and unless someone steps forward, the newsletter will fade away. It is a great venue for promoting our neighborhood and the unique people living here. Get involved and give the newsletter a fresh, new direction!

## NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of every month, except when there are holiday conflicts or a special community event. Potluck dinners will be held when there are general meetings, unless otherwise noted. All general meetings will be held at the Baptist Church (located on the block between 7th Street and 8th Street on Monroe), and will feature a 6:30 pm potluck, with the meeting to start at 7:00 pm. Babysitting will be available during the meetings.

To advertise the meetings, the association will place signs in the traffic circles and the main entrances to Alcova Heights. E-mail announcements will go out the Sundays before the meetings.



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## NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2006

- August 17-20: County Fair at TJ (check out your neighbor's entries!)
- September 14: Neighborhood Meeting and Potluck
- September 28: Deadline for October AH Newsletter
- October 12: Neighborhood Meeting and Potluck
- October TBD: Halloween Parade

## SCHOOL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- August 16: Barcroft Back-to-School Night 7:00 pm
- August 30: Barcroft Ice Cream Social/Bingo/Book Fair 6:30pm

### BARCROFT ELEMENTARY IS BACK IN SESSION!

That school bus you see in the morning isn't a mirage. Barcroft is on a year-round schedule, and the kids started back on August 3rd. Watch for the backpack brigade as you head out on your morning commute!

For more information about events, locations and times, visit the APS website at <http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/>.



## ALCOVA NEIGHBORHOOD INTEREST GROUPS

**NEW RESTAURANTS:** Want to try out new, local restaurants with neighbors? **Contact Rene Jones/Charlie Causey** at 703-892-1317 or email [rjones@fics-llc.com](mailto:rjones@fics-llc.com)

**BOOK CLUB:** Like to read, and share your perspectives? If you are interested in joining the Alcov Heights Book Club, **contact Judy James** at [judyhjames@yahoo.com](mailto:judyhjames@yahoo.com)



**SIMPLICITY CIRCLE:** Interested in a forum to discuss the choices we make every day? Wondering why it is so hard to let go of stuff? If you say 'I'm working for my family', but you don't spend much time with them, what's the point? If you're interested in exploring this topic further, **contact Elly Merica** at [merica@erols.com](mailto:merica@erols.com).

**TODDLER GROUP:** For parents of the 0-2ish set, get out for a little while and to connect with other parents in the neighborhood at a toddler play group. If you are interested, **contact Maura McMahon** at [pawmer2@starpower.net](mailto:pawmer2@starpower.net) or 703-979-9321 for information.

**WELCOME GROUP:** Meet new neighbors and invite them into our community! Anyone interested in helping out, please **contact** the Welcome Group coordinator, **Michelle Larsen** (703-920-1050; [webmonkey@alcovaheights.com](mailto:webmonkey@alcovaheights.com)).

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## ALCOVA HEIGHTS PARK CLEAN UP

The Alcova Heights Park Clean-Up held Sunday, June 11th, was a huge success! We had an overwhelming response from our community, with 25 adults and 18 kids attending. Our trash collectors collected almost 20 bags of trash from the park and stream, and our gardeners added many donated plants to the beds made in last years park clean-up. Let's keep up the momentum and pick up trash in the park when we see it!

Thanks to the planners, Mark and Suzanne Manlove, and Steve Schaible and Kevan Miller; and also to our sponsors, the Alcova Heights Babysitting Co-op and Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment. Also, a special thanks goes to Cecil Lunsford for use of his pickup for the mulch run.



Left: Alcova kids help clean up the park. Right: Dana and Charlie Pulley weed and plant.



### AMAZING BARGAINS



### MEGA CHILDREN'S CONSIGNMENT SALE

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Fri. Sept. 22 10am – 9pm

Sat. Sept. 23 9am – 12pm

1/2 Price: 12:30pm – 5pm

No Strollers Allowed



Arlington Forest United Methodist Church  
4701 Arlington Blvd-Rt 50 & Henderson Rd

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Details available at [www.nvce.org](http://www.nvce.org) or join our yahoo group  
at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NVCE41>.



## NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION UPDATE, OR "THE SIDEWALK REPORT"

The big news from the Neighborhood Conservation (NC) program is that as of this spring, all proposed NC projects countywide are on hold. The County Board has recently approved a short-term belt-tightening strategy with regard to capital improvement projects.



As a result, our neighborhood's next approved project — the long-awaited sidewalks on both sides of 7th Street between Oakland and Quincy Streets — will remain in limbo. It turns out that our sidewalks do have a lot to do with the price of steel in China. Construction costs (including, yes, the price of steel) have risen and so have interest rates. As a result of these increased costs, certain capital improvement projects have been put on hold, including NC projects countywide.

How long? Good question. NC funds could be increased during the next bond cycle in 2008. However, things are very up in the air right now. In the interim, the NC program is doing an inventory of all capital improvement projects in each neighborhood in the county. The purpose is to get a handle on the scope and type of projects out there, and consider alternative ways to approve and fund them. In the coming months, we will develop an inventory of capital improvement projects, like sidewalks, parks improvements, etc., that need to be done in Alcova Heights to submit to NC for its comprehensive inventory. Please contact me with suggestions, as well as any concerns or comments, as we move forward in a different budget environment. Your opinions are extremely valuable for ensuring that our neighborhood's voices get heard. I'll pass on more info as it's available.

**Karla Hagan, Alcova Heights NC Rep**

3908 South 7th Street

703-979-1959

[hepcats@comcast.net](mailto:hepcats@comcast.net)



## ARLINGTON COUNTY FAIR!

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## ALCOVA HEIGHTS SEED SWAP

by Martha Gibbons

Lots of neighbors in Alcovia Heights share seeds on an informal basis. I want to organize a seed /plant swap for our annual fund raising effort next spring. If you are interested in being involved, please harvest the seeds from your favorite plants to share with neighbors and friends in the next growing season. Once you have decided which plants you want to use, gathering the seeds is generally easy.



What can you save? Standard or heirloom varieties that are not cross-pollinated by nearby plants are good candidates. Many gardeners successfully keep beans, tomatoes, lettuce, and peppers. Plants you know are heirloom varieties are easy to save. When saving seed, always harvest from the best. Look for the most flavorful vegetables or beautiful flowers.

Always harvest mature seed. For example, cucumber seeds at the eating stage are not ripe and will not germinate if saved. Because seed set reduces the vigor of the plant and discourages further fruit production, wait until near the end of the season to save fruit for seed.

How do you save the seeds? Beans, peas, most flowers and herb seeds are prepared by a dry method. Allow the seed to mature and dry as long as possible on the plant. Complete the drying process by spreading on a screen in a single layer in a well-ventilated dry location. An alternative method for plants that form seeds pods on stalks, like columbines, is to put a small paper bag over the seed head and clip the stem, catching all of the seeds in the bag.

Seed contained in fleshy fruits should be cleaned using the wet method. Tomatoes, melons, squash, cucumber and roses are prepared this way. Scoop the seed masses out of the fruit or lightly crush fruits. Put the seed mass and a small amount of warm water in a bucket or jar. Let the mix ferment for two to four days. Stir daily. The fermentation process kills viruses and separates the good seed from the bad seed and fruit pulp. After two to four days, the good viable seeds will sink to the bottom of the container while the pulp and bad seed float. Pour off the pulp, water, bad seed and mold. Spread the good seed on a screen or paper towel to dry.

How do you store seeds? Seeds should be stored dry. Place in glass jar or envelopes. Make sure you label all the containers or packages with the seed type or variety, and date. Put in the freezer for two days to kill pests. Then store in a cool dry location like a refrigerator. Seed that molds was not sufficiently dry before storage.

Folks are also welcome to swap bulbs, lilies, hostas and other easy-to-split perennials. If you are interested in helping plan the swap, please contact me at [mgibbons49@yahoo.com](mailto:mgibbons49@yahoo.com)

## NEW CONGREGATION BEING LAUNCHED AT ARLINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

by Abi Foerster

Arlington United Methodist Church (AUMC) is launching a new congregation that is called Faith Renaissance to better meet the spiritual needs of the surrounding community. AUMC is located on the corner of Glebe and 8th Street, and has been a vital part of the Alcovia Heights community for nearly 150 years and offers traditional worship and programming. Already, it is the home of three distinct faith communities that worship simultaneously at 11:00 am on Sunday mornings. The new congregation, which is being funded by a grant from the larger United Methodist Church, will seek to offer more progressive worship and programming as a complement to what's already happening.

To this end, AUMC is now in the process of establishing a permanent artist's studio and an artist-in-residence program to begin offering Art and Spirituality classes for all ages beginning mid-fall. There is also a free outdoor comedy and music festival, "Front Porch Fest" being hosted on the weekend of Sept. 30 – Oct. 1 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm on the lawn in front of the church's front porch! The Front Porch Fest will offer a variety of different music genres — blue grass, rock, jazz, etc. — and would be very appropriate for anyone with kids (please feel free to bring a picnic basic & blanket to enjoy). This venue is in conjunction with New Creations Café, a coffee house that has been hosted periodically for the past year. For booking information for this or future events, please contact Shelby Sours, [shelbysours@yahoo.com](mailto:shelbysours@yahoo.com).

For more information about Faith Renaissance, please **contact Pastor Abi Foerster**, [pastorabi@arlingtonumc.com](mailto:pastorabi@arlingtonumc.com) or by cell, (703) 887-6952.

## OTHER COLUMBIA PIKE DEVELOPMENT

Updates by Lander Allin

The first major development on the Pike in over 30 years has just broken ground. Named 'Hallstead at Arlington', the condo project on the site of the old Arlington Hardware is now underway. It's the first form-based code project to begin construction on the Pike. The fact that it's going forward at a time when projects County-wide are stalling due to a drop in the condo market and very high construction costs is very good news for the Pike.

The Penrose Square Project (the site of the old Giant) is now going through the site plan process — and is no longer a form-based code project. This change came about primarily because the County Board was not willing to make the changes to the FBC that were required for this project to proceed. So at the last minute, the developer withdrew his application, and the Board acted to advertise the project for a site plan Board hearing in October. The next site plan review meeting, which is open to the public, is scheduled for August 17th, and the last one is September 11th.

## MILESTONES: WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND ALCOVA HEIGHTS

**Suzanne Lazarus and Marty Gold**, of 7th St. S., were married on July 9, at Congregation Etz Hayim here in Arlington. A good time was had by all. The following day, they left for a honeymoon to Peru. Congratulations, newlyweds!

Congratulations to **Scot Hoffman** on his new writing and editing position at National Geographic. Scot is currently working on revamping the Animals section on the website [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

**Erin and Eric Owen**, of 7th Street, are proud to announce that their two sons James and David have arrived home. David was born November 21 and James just 7 hours later on November 22, both in Guatemala. Erin had been foster parenting the boys in Guatemala since March 1, prior to the adoptions. The elated family of 4 flew to Arlington together July 1st. Welcome home!

**Allison D'Errico** of 6th Street, who graduated in June from H.B. Woodlawn High School, will be enrolled in the fall in the pastry program at the prestigious Johnson and Wales University in Providence, RI. Way to go, Allison!

Any news to report? **Call or email Lisa Cherkasky** at (703)731-6575, or [spudnut59@comcast.net](mailto:spudnut59@comcast.net).

## RECIPE CORNER

by *Zuraidah Hoffman*

### CANDLELIGHT CORN SALAD

I discovered this recipe recently when the power went out at a small dinner party, and we couldn't cook the corn to make corn salad. Results? Delicious, crispy, and a very fresh tasting salad. Great to mix into a chopped green salad the next day.



Kernels from 5 ears of corn (uncooked)

1/2 pint of grape tomatoes, sliced in half

1/2 small red onion, diced

A large handful of fresh basil, chopped

1 tsp kosher salt

1/4 - 1/2 cup of balsamic vinegar (to taste)

1/4 cup olive oil (or less, according to taste)

Mix all ingredients together, adjust seasonings accordingly, and enjoy!

## FOURTH OF JULY PARADE



*Spirited Alcovia Heights revelers joined the Barcroft Parade again this year — and took home the ribbon for “Most Colorful Float”.*



*Alcovia Heights kids: Alexander Al-Hujazi, Teddy Telzrow, Katy & Nicky DuBois*



*Michele & Annie Chaves celebrated with friends at a neighboring parade.*



*Katy DuBois & Lisa Cherkasky ham it up for the camera!*

## FOOD DONATIONS

Arlington Baptist Church, where we hold our association meetings, operates a Food Pantry for members of the community. The church has been very generous to the Alcovia Heights Civic Association by allowing us the use of their facilities for our general meetings at no cost. Let's show our appreciation by bringing a non-perishable item to the next meeting to donate to the pantry. Donations can also be dropped off at the church (S.Monroe St side, ring bell for administrator) on Mon., Wed., Fri. from 9:30AM to 2:30PM.



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## 9 Buyer Traps and How to Avoid Them

**No matter which way you look at it, buying a home is a major investment. But for many homebuyers, it can be an even more expensive process than it needs to be since they fall prey to at least a few of the many common and costly mistakes which trap them into either:**

- \*paying too much for the home they want, or
- \*losing their dream home to another buyer or,
- \*(worse) buying the wrong home for their needs.

## 9 Buyer Traps

This important report discusses the 9 most common and costly homebuyer traps, how to identify them, and what you can do to avoid them:

### 1. Bidding Blind

What price should you offer when you bid on a home? Is the seller's asking price too high, or does it represent a great deal. If you fail to research the market in order to understand what comparable homes are selling for, making your offer would be like bidding blind. Without this knowledge of market value, you could easily bid too much, or fail to make a competitive offer at all on an excellent value.

### 2. Buying the Wrong Home

What are you looking for in a home? A simple enough question, but the answer can be quite complex. More often than not, buyers have been swept up in the emotion and excitement of the buying process only to find themselves the owner of a home that is either too big or too small. Maybe they're stuck with a longer than desired commute to work, or a dozen more fix-ups than they really want to deal with now that the excitement has died down. Take the time upfront to clearly define your wants and needs. Put it in writing and then use it as a yard stick with which to measure every home you look at. For the entire report, get a Free copy by visiting our new web site: [www.caseyonealteam.com](http://www.caseyonealteam.com)

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## ALCOVA HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Newsletter	Susan DuBois (dougnsusan@msn.com)	Special Events	Dellyn Periandri and Lynn Gant
		Environment	Sue Johnson

## DUES ARE DUE

Have you paid your civic associations dues yet? Many of you must have that check sitting on the mantle waiting for the next time you take a run or walk the dog. The dues are \$10.00 per household payable to AHCA. You can drop them off at our Treasurer's house or mail them to Sara at 3709 South 6th Street (side door).



## VISIT THE ALCOVA HEIGHTS WEBSITE

Check out the Alcova Heights Citizens Association website at [www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/7326/](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/7326/). You'll find past issues of the newsletter, a calendar of events, interesting information about our neighborhood, and some great photos. Please send your comments, suggestions, photos and hellos to our web mistress, Michelle Larsen, at [reg3504@att.net](mailto:reg3504@att.net).

## The Real Estate Market in Alcova Heights

In the first quarter of 2006, sales in Alcova have been strong. Homes have sold on average in 24 days for 99.4% of list price. Average price was \$618,848.

This is great news, as the number of listing on the market has increased 442% over this time last year.

Call for a free market analysis of your home. I will give you tips for how to market your home in this changing and challenging market. As a resident of Alcova Heights, my goal is to get you the best price for your home in the shortest amount of time.

## Recent Alcova Heights Sales 2006

842 Monroe	\$445,000	2BR , 1BA	4,792 SF
3901 6th St.	\$572,000	2BR, 2BA	10,890 SF
3712 7th St.	\$515,000	3BR, 1BA	8,276 SF
3831 6th St.	\$561,000	3BR, 2BA	10,890 SF
3924 8th St.	\$575,000	3BR, 2BA	6,558 SF
3611 6th St.	\$629,000	3BR, 2BA	8,712 SF
3616 7th St.	\$630,000	3BR, 2BA	8,276 SF
844 Lincoln	\$626,000	4BR, 2BA	6,098 SF
3708 5th St.	\$799,000	4BR, 2BA	6,534 SF
3704 5th St.	\$799,000	5BR, 2BA	7,841 SF

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