



**Supervisor John T. Stirrup
Gainesville District**

THE GAINESVILLE EXPRESS

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**May 2007
Volume 13**

Dear Gainesville Resident,

My office has been very busy this year. Several contentious issues have arisen which will affect Gainesville residents. I would like to take a moment to discuss two issues, on which I have spent a great deal of time. The first is the proposed transmission lines and the second is the intersection of Heathcote Boulevard and Catharpin Road.

Transmission Lines

Last year, Dominion Power announced its intention to build a 500 kilovolt transmission line. The original proposed route would bring a new transmission line through the Gainesville District affecting properties along Antioch Road, Route 15, Silver Lake, and Dominion Valley. Earlier this year, Dominion Power announced they have selected an alternate route as their preferred route. This route would take the line further south and west of the original proposed route, while still significantly affecting communities in the Brentsville Magisterial District, the Manassas Battlefield, and properties along Pageland Lane and Sanders Lane.

Many have come to believe Dominion's newly proposed route is a victory for Prince William County. Nothing could be further from the truth. The State Corporation Commission (SCC), not Dominion will make the final choice of alignment. The SCC could choose any of the routes included in Dominion's application. The SCC has an obligation both in statute and in its own policies to select the shortest alignment with the lowest cost, meaning that the original proposed route could be selected.

In conjunction with the proposed transmission lines, PJM Interconnection, a regional transmission organization of which Dominion is a member, has applied for a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) designation. Known as the Allegheny Mountain NIETC, it includes Prince William County, as well as 14 other Counties in Virginia. If approved by the Department of Energy, Dominion would be able to invoke Federal eminent domain powers if SCC denies Dominions application or does not act within one year of the filing date. On May 15, 2007, the Department of Energy held a public meeting on Docket NO. 2007-OE-01 (the Draft Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor Designation) in Arlington, Virginia. I, along with Congressman Davis, Congressman Wolf, Delegate Marshall, Chairman Stewart, and several residents from the Gainesville District spoke at this meeting. Written comments on this issue can be submitted through July 6, 2007 by going to the following website: <http://nietc.anl.gov/>.

On May 3, 2007, I attended a press conference in Washington D.C. Congressman Frank Wolf, along with several other legislators, has introduced bipartisan efforts to block the funding of the U.S. Department of

Energy's power line plan. For more information, please view the press release on Congressman Wolf's website: [Press release](#)

My concern with this transmission line is that Dominion Power has not demonstrated that all alternatives short of building this transmission line have been exhausted. Currently, Virginia ranks last in the nation for energy efficiency. One measure which has not been adequately addressed and may affect the need for these lines is demand response and load management programs designed to reduce energy consumption, particularly during peak demand periods. At this time, Dominion Power does not have a load management program. In addition to these programs, Dominion could add generation facilities which would further reduce the need for a new transmission line.

In response to the need for energy efficiency, I offered a resolution, which was adopted by the Board of County Supervisor (BOCS), to promote energy efficiency through demand response and load management in Prince William County government buildings. Several other Counties are expected to follow suit. I would like to thank Tom Brunn, Matt Groff and the Public Works team who are doing an excellent job leading the County toward participation in energy efficiency programs.

NOVEC has a load management program and provides numerous incentives towards participation. I have personally enrolled in the load management program and would encourage all who are interested in this program to contact NOVEC at (703) 392-1503.

Heathcote Boulevard and Catharpin Road

On March 29, 2007, I held an information meeting on the intersection of Heathcote Boulevard and Catharpin Road to update residents on its status. This meeting took place at the Heritage Hunt Club House. Helen Cuervo, P.E. with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Ricardo Canizales with the Prince William County Transportation Department, Philip Barber and Michael George with Lennar Homes, Michael Lubeley, Attorney for Lennar, as well as Joseph W. McClellan, P.E., D.P.E. and Martin Johnson, P.E., D.P.E. of William H. Gordon and Associates – the engineering firm employed to redesign the intersection, were present to answer questions.

My presentation began with a discussion of how roads are built in Northern Virginia. Roads are constructed by one of three methods: they are built by VDOT, they are built by the County through the issuance of bonds, or they are proffered and built by developers as a part of a development project. A proffer is a voluntary contribution from the developer to offset the impact of a development on the existing community. Heathcote Boulevard was the latter of these possibilities.

Lennar Homes proffered to build Heathcote Boulevard from Route 29 to Catharpin Road. In a project like this, VDOT and the County have a limited roll in the process. At the beginning of the project, VDOT and the County review the plans of the proposed project, but once it is approved, it is the developer's responsibility to construct. Once construction has been completed, VDOT inspects the work. If the road complies with VDOT standards, it will be accepted into the VDOT system. At this point VDOT will take over the maintenance responsibilities of the facility.

The problems at Heathcote began last year during the final VDOT inspections. At that time, the VDOT inspector discovered a design flaw which would have to be rectified before Heathcote would be accepted into the VDOT system. When my office was notified of the problem, I called for a meeting between VDOT and Lennar to develop a solution to the problem. Since this initial meeting, the scope of the problem has increased as well as the complexity of the proposed solution. At this point, the engineers have developed a solution that I have a high degree of confidence will correct the issues stated by VDOT.

The redesign process has three basic stages. The first is a conceptual design, which consists of a rough drawing explaining the proposed solution. The second is a more in depth design which demonstrates that the proposed solution corrects the through movement of traffic. The third stage is the full intersection design which includes drainage details. Due to the time constraints of the project, a solution had to be developed that would be safe, but does not fully comply with standard VDOT requirements and will require a design exception from VDOT. The design exception review will insure that the design will be safe even though VDOT requirements are not fully met. VDOT has granted the design exception and Lennar is currently preparing the full intersection design.

The County usually does not become actively involved in a situation like this because, as a proffered road, it is the responsibility of the developer to resolve the issue. However, this project will have a great impact on the quality of life for the Gainesville District so I have remained actively involved in this process, working closely with representatives of Lennar and VDOT, to help streamline the process to bring the intersection online as soon as possible. VDOT has greatly reduced the turn around time for their reviews of the plans and elevated the priority of this project, receiving the same level of attention as the Wilson Bridge and Springfield Interchange projects. I would like to thank Helen Cuervo and Dennis Morrison of VDOT who have been instrumental in reducing VDOT review time and elevating the priority of this project.

In closing, I would invite everyone to visit my website, www.GainesvilleSupervisor.com, for more detailed information on these topics. Also, please feel free to contact my office by phone at (703) 792-6195 or by email at Gainesville@pwcgov.org.

Sincerely,

John T. Stirrup



March 29, 2007, Heathcote Boulevard and Catharpin Road meeting

May 17, 2007 Next Gainesville District Quarterly Town Hall Meeting:

Please join Supervisor Stirrup for his next Town Hall Meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 17, 2007 at Alvey Elementary School, located at 5300 Waverly Farm Drive, Haymarket, Virginia, 20169.

This meeting will be a follow up of the previous Town Hall Meeting on the transmission lines. Updates will be given on the issue and staff members from the SCC will attend to present background information on their review process and procedures.

Recap of the January 24, 2007 Town Hall Meeting:

On January 24, 2007, at 7:30pm, I held an Emergency Town Hall Meeting on the proposal of a new 500 kilovolt (500KV) transmission line, in the Battlefield High School Auditorium. The theme of the meeting was "What Can You Do Now" which was intended to inform residents of the proposal, as well as present information on how residents could become actively involved in the process. An all-star panel of guests which included Congressman Davis, Congressman Wolf, Delegate Marshall and Chairman Stewart were present to speak on the actions they were taking, with a Question and Answer panel who included Jeff Brown - energy economist who has testified before Congress, Chris Miller – President of the Piedmont Environmental Council, and Jim Feeney – a recent retiree of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). State Senator Colgan was unable to attend due to his responsibilities in Richmond, however, did send a statement which was read by Supervisor Stirrup. The event was well attended with approximately 850 people attending.

The evening began with my presentation giving the background of the proposal, including information on Dominion Power and their affiliation with PJM Interconnection, a regional energy transmission organization. I then gave a brief overview of the State Corporation Commission (SCC) process. The SCC is responsible for determining if the transmission lines are needed, and if so, they would determine the route. Supervisor Stirrup concluded the presentation by presenting a list of five things residents could do to become involved in the process.

Congressman Davis and Congressman Wolf followed the Supervisor by announcing their opposition to the transmission lines. They felt the proposal was unacceptable and announced that they would be working towards developing new energy policy which emphasized energy efficiency. They also announced their intentions to develop legislation to remove Dominion Power's opportunity to go to the federal government if the SCC refuses to grant their application for a new transmission line. If successful, this would essentially strip the eminent domain powers from power companies who enjoy NIET corridor status. Delegate Marshall, who drove up from Richmond to attend the meeting, spoke after the Congressman. Delegate Marshall spoke on several bills which were before the legislature sponsored by himself, Senator Colgan and other legislators. Delegate Marshall requested that all present contact their legislators and get their friends and neighbors to do the same. Next, Chairman Stewart addressed the audience stressing that this is a countywide issue. If a NIET corridor is granted, power companies would be able to invoke eminent domain and place transmission lines anywhere in the County with little or no public process.

Key concerns that were mentioned during the question and answer period centered on, health effects of the transmission lines, the proposal's lack of innovation (the proposal uses 1930's technology), the new lines could be a terrorist target, and the proposal's lack of investigation into alternative measures.

Please visit my website, www.GainesvilleSupervisor.com for more information on this topic. As we move forward in this process it is important that Dominion provides more information justifying the need of this line. Up to this point, Dominion has provided little evidence to support their claim that load management and demand response programs would be insufficient to reduce or eliminate the need for the transmission line. It is important to remember that Dominion needs to demonstrate that every possible measure short of taking private property has been exhausted. It is my opinion that they have fallen far short of this threshold.

Transportation Updates

I-66 HOV Lane Extension (Route 234 Bypass to Route 29): Under Construction

Phase II of the I-66 widening project will construct two lanes in each direction, one regular and one HOV lane, from the Route 234 Bypass to Route 29. The median will be preserved to accommodate future barrier-separated HOV lanes or transit. Right-of-way acquisition for this project is fully funded, two full years ahead of schedule. This project needs to be completed in order for the Gainesville Interchange project to move forward.

Prince William County Park Authority-Sudley Park Public Hearing May 23, 2007:

The Park Authority Board voted at their May 9, 2007 board meeting to authorize a public hearing to allow the public to comment on the plans for Sudley Park. The public hearing will be held on May 23, 2007 starting at 7:30 p.m. located in the Boardroom at Hellwig Administration Building, 14420 Bristow Road, Manassas, VA 20112. Citizens wishing to speak should sign-up at the meeting. Speakers shall have three (3) minutes each for their presentation. Persons representing and speaking on behalf of a recognizable organization shall have five (5) minutes for their presentation. Please view their website for more information: [About Park Authority Board Meetings](#)

FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW

Virginia State Code requires that a county review its Comprehensive Plan every five years. The Prince William County Planning Commission has begun this process with a Technical Update. Each chapter of the Plan is being brought up to date with current legislation and circumstances.

The review is different this time in that it will be a "rolling" review. After the Technical Update and then the Land Use, Housing, and Transportation Chapters, the Environment Chapter and Mass Transit follow. This is a staggered, on-going schedule rather than the traditional review of the entire document all at once.

Committees of eight citizens each have been formed for the Land Use and Transportation Chapters. Those chapters, as well as the Housing Chapter, need to be brought up-to-date at least to conform to new state legislation. Dave Christiansen is the Gainesville representative for Land Use and Charlie Grymes represents Gainesville for Mobility. Those committees will be getting underway this month.

The Planning Commission has been meeting at the new Development Services building at the McCoart Center on the second Wednesday and on many fourth Wednesdays with work sessions on the Plan. These meetings are open to the public. Citizens can also follow the process on the County's web site at www.pwcgov.org. To reach the page devoted to the Comprehensive Plan review:

1. click on *Government*,
2. on the right side of page click on *Planning Office*,
3. on the left side of page click on *Projects*,
4. at the bottom of page click on *2008 Comprehensive Plan Update Process* in bullet "1." Technical Update at end of paragraph, click on "*Click Here*"

A point to remember is that while State Code requires a review of the Comprehensive Plan every five years, it does not require that it be changed except to reflect new state legislation. We hope Gainesville residents will be following this process and providing input.

Looking forward to hearing from you,
Martha Hendley
Gainesville Representative to the Planning Commission
and 2007 Planning Commission Chairman

**Tee Off Verizon Wireless Ribbon Cutting
Heritage Hunt Retail Center April 27, 2007**



Tina & James DuBrule, owners; Stephanie Keyes, Membership Development Manager & Rebecca Barnes, Chairman, PW Regional Chamber of Commerce; John Stirrup, Supervisor Gainesville District; Leo Prosser, Verizon Wireless Account Manager

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