

**McLean Community Center**  
**GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**  
**April 25, 2007**  
**1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA 22101**

**Board Present:** Sean Dunn, Board Chair; Katherine Armstrong, Jan Auerbach, Jennifer Bainbridge, Nyka Feldman, Charisse McElroy, Jessie Richardson, Edwina Rogers, David Sanders, Ed Shahin

**Board Absent:** Hilary Sanders

**Staff Present:** Michael Cadwallader, Executive Director; Clare Kiley, Acting Deputy Director; Carol Pardon, Administrative Assistant

**Guests Present:** Susan Baumel, McLean Drama Company; 3403 Lakeside View Drive, Falls Church, 22041  
Cheryl Patten, Beverly Manor Homeowners Association  
Jonathan Braswell, McLean Youth Athletics; 6323 N. Kensington, McLean, 22101  
Mike Clancy, McLean Youth Athletics; 6520 Engle Drive, 22101  
Eddie Eitches, 6528 Old Chesterbrook Road, McLean, 22101  
Casey Hanes, Dranesville Supervisor Joan DuBois' office  
Nancy Perry and Karen DuVal, McLean Project for the Arts  
Monte Tayloe, *Fairfax Times*

- Convened: 7:38 p.m.
- Agenda Adopted.
- Citizen Comment (non-expansion-related): None.
- Minutes of March 28, 2007, approved.

**Capital Facilities Committee:**

**Citizen Comment:**

- **Eddie Eitches** introduced himself as the immediate past Chair of the MCC's Capital Facilities Committee. He said he was never consulted by the current Board on its current proposal. He expressed the opinion that the Committee appears to have ignored the community in coming up with two very flawed choices. He said a gym was the overwhelming first choice of residents who responded to a survey on Election Day in 2002. At the last meeting he chaired in April 2006 a proposal to build a full-size gym at Spring Hill in a joint venture with the Park Authority and McLean Youth was discussed and apparently never brought up again. [See Auerbach's comments under "Gym" in the Committee Report, below.] He said the MCC's neighbors should have representatives on the Capital Facilities Committee. He recommended rejecting both of the current proposals, holding a meeting in which choices are not limited, and lowering the tax rate substantially until the MCC is ready to build and the revenue is needed.
- **Jonathan Braswell**, representing McLean Youth Athletics (MYA), said he would like the Board to reconsider building a facility that would accommodate a wide range of activities, including athletics. The Spring Hill Recreation Center is an obvious choice for a gym, and it is already on the master plan. MYA would strongly support looking at that option. MYA is in a position to contribute a significant amount of money.

- **Susan Baumel**, representing Rachael Bail of the McLean Drama Company, said the reports from the Capital Facilities Committee were quite rudimentary and did not cover everything. She submitted copies of letters-to-the-editor printed in the *McLean Connection* critical of the proposed MCC expansion. One of the letters was from a couple (the Sapersteins) who lived in an area within the tax district that was not included in the public survey at all, making the survey illegal, according to Baumel. [See Auerbach’s comments under “22066 Representation” in the Committee Report, below.] The Sapersteins wanted more activities and programs for the extremities of the tax district, she said. The other letter was from Rachael Bail. Baumel summarized Bail’s letter, which recommended working within MCC’s current space rather than expanding, at a savings of more than \$2M; bringing class and activity fees down to a flat \$5-10 charge; providing more support for arts groups; and supporting an indoor sports facility. Baumel said that people who live in this area are taking second place to people who do not because of cost. For a fraction of the cost of what is proposed, everything could be renovated, everybody could have more space and new space, and fees could be cut for teens and seniors, etc.
- **Mike Clancy** said the MCC has a multi-million surplus that is derived from tax revenues on homeowners. He urged the Board to consider a facility that would provide the broadest usage for the most people who actually fund the surplus. He said he favors a multi-use facility that also provides a gym for basketball, volleyball, wrestling, and other sports. He said he serves on the MYA board and on the McLean Citizens Association’s Education and Youth Committee.
  - McElroy asked him where he would want the sports facility. He answered, at Spring Hill, which is already zoned for it. Bainbridge said there is opposition within the Spring Hill community to expanding the facility.
- **Cheryl Patten**, representing Beverly Manor Homeowners Association, said she adamantly opposes any expansion along Ingleside Avenue because of cost and the impact on the neighborhood. She said the money would be better spent either renovating the main MCC facility and the Teen Center, or pursuing some other option downtown, although she wasn’t hopeful that the downtown facility will get through the County and all the required special exceptions.

**Committee Report:** Jan Auerbach, Chair

- Auerbach summarized the results from the four meetings held with the public regarding facility expansion, what the Board is doing to respond to some of the other problems that were brought up in the meetings, what the Committee is recommending to the Board regarding expansion, and what the next steps would be if the Board adopted the Committee’s recommendation.
  - Neighbors’ Concerns: MCC’s neighbors expressed concern over expansion of the Ingleside “campus,” and opposition to expanding the MCC facility is part of that. Last month the Governing Board approved an engineering study to look at ways to improve safety and traffic flow associated with entering and exiting the MCC’s parking lot, improve pedestrian safety, and improve MCC’s storm water management. The Board also approved the Committee’s recommendation to ask the neighbors to provide suggestions for beautifying the grounds and exterior of the MCC building. The Potomac School has been contacted regarding safety issues associated with the busing and pickup of Potomac School students from the MCC’s parking lot. The Program Committee is recommending that advertising rental space in national magazines be stopped.

- Gym Space: The community's desire and need for more physical recreation space is recognized and options are being explored. Residents along Lewinsville Road recently met with Park Authority liaison Kevin Faye, and he said the \$3M cost estimate to put in a gymnasium at Spring Hill Recreation Center is low by at least 50%. Although a gym is in the Spring Hill Master Plan, the Park Authority does not expect that a gym will ever be built there.
- Expansion Proposal: The Committee is proposing to expand its facility in downtown McLean and work with the McLean Planning Committee and other relevant entities to determine if it is feasible. Informal meetings have been held with members of the McLean Planning Committee, and they are very excited about the possibility of having an expanded community presence downtown. The McLean Revitalization Corporation has already taken a position in support of the proposal. The MCC will present its proposal to the Planning and Zoning Committee of the McLean Citizens Association at the end of May. There is a lot of support from the community concerned about revitalization to have an expanded MCC presence downtown, Auerbach commented.
- Conceptual Programming of New Facility: The satellite facility would enable the MCC to expand its programming in all areas. The cornerstone would be a large, multi-use space that would offer the local community a gathering place in downtown McLean. This space would be smaller than the Alden Theatre but larger than most of the meeting rooms in the main MCC facility. It could accommodate a wide range of activities; e.g., community organization speaker programs, children's shows, experimental theater, high school comedy club and coffee house events, expanded youth activities, etc. Other new space in the facility could accommodate expanded fitness programs, indoor sports, classes, etc. The new facility would also include a dedicated space for a Teen Center.
- Main MCC Facility: The Committee is recommending that expansion of the MCC's main facility not be considered, but that internal modifications be made to the building while the downtown facility is going through the approval process.
- Justification: A space utilization analysis conducted in the fall showed a clear upward trend in the use of existing space. Demand for fitness/dance and art classes already exceeds capacity. The 2006 survey and the four 2007 public meetings expressed strong support to keep the Teen Center downtown and maintain a strong teen program. More than half of the residents surveyed in 2002 and 2006 expressed the desire to increase some types of space and add some new kinds of space. Collectively, the four 2007 public meetings demonstrated more support for expansion downtown than for any other option, including an option not to expand or renovate at all.

Auerbach summarized: Expansion downtown will add to McLean revitalization, increase MCC visibility, and provide greater ease of access for McLean residents. The facility could be an environmentally "green" building, consistent with Fairfax County's green building environmental initiative.

- Next Steps with McLean Planning Committee (MPC): At their May meeting, the MPC will be voting on revisiting the Main Street portion of the revitalization plan that was passed ten years ago. In 2008 McLean will be considered in Fairfax County's comprehensive five-year plan cycle, so it would be good if the MPC had its revitalization plan updated by the end of this year, Auerbach explained. Landowners could apply for

comprehensive plan changes in the March-April 2008 timeframe to conform with the revitalization plan. Assuming the Governing Board approves the Capital Facilities Committee's proposal, the Board would then be working with the MPC in their review of the Main Street concept and how the MCC would fit into that. The process the MPC would use to consider the MCC's expansion proposal includes holding hearings at which the public can provide further comment. The rezoning process would take place after the completion of the comprehensive plan cycle. It is a long process, Auerbach said, but the proposal has the support of key people in the community, and she believes an expanded MCC building downtown will be realized sometime in the future.

- 22066 Representation: Auerbach said that the raw data from the public survey on expansion conducted by George Mason University has been received, and that one person who responded to the survey gave a residential zip code of 22066 (Great Falls). She said there was no way to know how many from that zip code were contacted and did not respond, or if any of the 52 people who did not list their zip codes were from 22066, but it is clear that the area was included in the survey. She said she has written to the Sapersteins to let them know that. The Great Falls portion of MCC's tax district is only about 2% of the total. The one known 22066 resident who responded to the survey mentioned the convenience of coming to the MCC, in contrast to the Sapersteins' comment that it was difficult to get to the MCC. Auerbach added that among those who register for MCC classes, 22066 residents are overrepresented in proportion to the makeup of the rest of the tax district.
- Discussion:
  - Gym: There was further discussion about the need for gym-type space. Auerbach said there would be a physical recreation space in the downtown facility but it would not be a gym. Braswell said non-gym type space is not his preference. Clancy said he wants a facility for basketball and volleyball. Casey Hanes said that McLean has the biggest deficit for gym-type space in Fairfax County. Shahin said the Fairfax County Park Authority should be taking the lead in providing gym space. Since Spring Hill neighbors do not support expansion of the recreation facility, it would take a fight to get a gym built there. Dunn said a balance needs to be drawn between what is the responsibility of the Park Authority and what is the responsibility of the MCC. He said the Dranesville Supervisor has already indicated her lack of support for a gym on the MCC's grounds. Further discussion about a gym will take place outside of planning for expansion.
  - Expansion/Renovation: McElroy asked for more information about the Committee recommendation. Auerbach said that once the expansion proposal goes into the hands of the McLean Planning Committee, the ball goes into their court. The Board will work with them, but the MPC will take the lead. However, the MCC can proceed with renovations to the main facility. McElroy asked what the more important priority was, and Auerbach responded, the downtown facility. Feldman said while the process moves forward regarding the downtown facility, there is much to be done with internal renovations at the MCC, including better space utilization. In addition, the MCC and the Board would look to working with the neighbors on beautification and working with the MYA in looking for ways to meet the need for recreational space. McElroy said she wanted to make sure that improvements needed at the main building are not neglected.

Clancy asked what the downtown facility would cost. Dunn said that cost estimates are very rough. Auerbach said around \$6-7M, and that the estimates would go down if underground parking is not required. Dunn said that since this is only the conceptual phase, the Board does not have numbers or budgets, just vague estimates. Patten asked if the option of just renovating the existing space and lowering the tax rate was pursued by the Capital Facilities Committee. Auerbach responded that those options were addressed in the third and fourth public meetings. Taking all four meetings together, the only option that garnered a considerable number of votes was to pursue building a downtown facility.

➤ ***Recommendation: Move forward with the preferred option to expand downtown. Determine if this option is feasible by entering into discussions with the McLean Planning Committee and other relevant entities.*** Approved by the Board. (McElroy opposed, Bainbridge abstained).

- Bainbridge said that while she supports the option in theory, she thinks it is premature. McElroy said she supported the concept of building downtown but felt the priorities had not been adequately ironed out. Armstrong said she is interested in the gymnasium concept, but that it is not intricately tied into the preferred option of building downtown. Shahin, with whom the idea of a multi-use downtown facility originated, said he hopes it will be realized and give people a cultural reason to go downtown. Working with other community groups gives it the best chance to happen, he said. Bainbridge expressed her appreciation to Auerbach for all her hard work in building consensus and using a methodical approach. The rest of the Board concurred.

#### **Chair's Report:** Sean Dunn

- Dunn referred to a letter in the Board folders from the mother of a contestant who did not make the finals of the MacDonald competition. He said she was quite upset, but that the decisions of the judges are final.
- Dunn referred to a letter not in the Board folders which was a complaint from a Great Falls taxpayer about the MCC's tax rate. The letter was sent to the Dranesville Supervisor and forwarded by Casey Hanes.

Dunn turned the meeting over to Jan Auerbach, who acted as chair for the remainder of the meeting.

#### **Executive Director's Report:** Michael Cadwallader

- Cadwallader did not comment on his written Executive Director's Report and Project Report, sent earlier to the Board and placed in the Board folders.
- Class Donation Request: Auerbach noted that the MCC had received a request to donate space in an MCC class as part of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter's silent auction. Auerbach said the legality of doing this was uncertain, and that Cadwallader has been asked to contact the County Attorney for an opinion. Several months ago the MCC did allow the Girl Scouts to use space in the facility for no cost, but that was not a class. McElroy commented that even if it is legal to donate free space, it could open up the door for numerous other requests. The issue was referred to the Program Committee.

**Executive Committee:** Jan Auerbach for Sean Dunn

- Donor Wall: Auerbach asked Perry for a progress report on getting the names of MCC donors on the wall in the outer lobby. Perry said she is waiting for Cadwallader to give her the names.
- Strategic Plan: A formal vote was called to approve the Strategic Plan:
  - *Accept the proposed 2007 Strategic Plan.* Approved by the Board.

**Communications/Election Committee:** Charisse McElroy, Chair

- Candidates: McElroy reported that there are three candidates running for the adult positions and one student for the youth position representing Langley High School. There is no candidate representing McLean High School, but she said she is optimistic a representative can be found. [This would have to be a write-in candidate.]
- Tellers: McElroy sent around the signup sheet around the table for McLean Day election tellers. She said there are still slots that need to be filled.

**Program Committee:** Nyka Feldman, Chair

- *Committee Recommendation*: *That all paid advertising for rental space in MCC facilities be suspended.* Approved by the Board.
- *Committee Recommendation*: *Approve the Committee recommendation that staff will try to avoid scheduling one-time special events on major religious holidays. Should a potential situation arise where there is a significant scheduling conflict or question, it shall be brought to the Board for a decision.* Approved by the Board.
- *Committee Recommendation*: *That the staff proposal for changes to Teen Center programs be adopted. Staff will present a timeline and evaluation criteria.* Approved by the Board.
- Pricing Differential: The Program and Finance Committees need to meet to resolve the issue of the differential between resident and non-resident fees charged at the MCC. Auerbach added that the Program, Finance, and Capital Facilities Committees will be working on refining expansion/renovation needs and cost estimates and getting projections of the revenue surplus in order to know what can be afforded. This will have an impact on whether or not class prices can be lowered and a contribution can be made toward a physical recreation space. Shahin said that he will continue to press on the pricing differential in the absence of Bainbridge, who first brought it up and is going off the Board. He said he also will be pressing for better pricing for seniors. Bainbridge said it was her impression that everyone is in favor of increasing the differential; it is a matter of coming up with the best way to do it.

**Finance Committee:** David Sanders, Chair

- Sanders said the Committee will be working on revenue projections and expansion/renovation cost projections, and looking at the tax rate.

**Liaison to Friends:** Katherine Armstrong. No report.

**Continuing Business:** None.

**New Business:**

- Shahin is continuing to look at ways to get information about MCC activities to senior citizens in the tax district. He has a list of 50 e-mail addresses of senior citizens for the MCC's e-mailed weekly newsletter. He was advised to get their permission, and then their e-mail addresses can be added to the distribution list. Shahin also said he also wants to get the Widowed Persons Service exempted from MCC's booking policies so that the organization does not have to pay a rental fee. He will take this to the Program Committee.
  
- Committee Meetings Schedule:  
Executive Committee: May 3, 7:30 [Subsequently canceled]  
Program & Finance: May 17, 7:30 p.m.  
Capital Facilities: May 21, 7:30 p.m.
  
- Motion: *Move into Executive Session for the performance evaluation of the Executive Director.* Approved.
  
- Motion: *Move into Public Session.* Approved.

There being no further action to be taken, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nyka Feldman,  
Secretary