



Southampton Citizens Association
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Membership in the Southampton Citizens Association is only \$15 per year. Please join today!
Your \$15 fee secures membership for the calendar year in which you paid. Your address label will indicate this.

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Over the Fence

The Newsletter of the Southampton Citizens Association Summer 2006

New Possibilities

Our Neighborhood Schools

Over the years many families have passed over Richmond Public Schools as an option for their students. But times are changing. The opportunity to transform our area schools comes from the development of the Mayor's "City of the Future Plan," which will see the end of megazone transportation, and the recent formation of the District Four Schools Group. Add to that combination a councilman who sees the value of neighborhood schools and a school board representative who is supportive of neighbors in their quest for great schools, and we have the perfect time to push for change.

In June, Mayor Douglas Wilder presented the "City of the Future," a revitalization plan for Richmond. A key component of this plan is schools — closing some schools, building new or renovating schools, and revising student attendance zones.

The schools that currently serve our area give parents many choices. Our elementary schools are Fisher or Southampton. Our neighborhood middle school is Thompson. Current middle-school alternatives are the International Baccalaureate Program at Lucille Brown and, across the river, Albert Hill and Binford. Choices for high school include Huguenot, Thomas Jefferson, Open High School, Community High School, Franklin Military, and the two regional Governor's Schools, Maggie Walker and Appomattox.

In the Mayor's original plan, Binford and Albert Hill would be closed, and combined on the site of Maymont Elementary School, which would be closed. As of this newsletter, they will not be closed. Instead, the School Board is considering a campus-style high school on this site that would house Community, Open and the Real School separately. A new middle school would be built on the Elkhart Middle School site. Students from Elkhart and Boushall would attend, as well as some students from Lucille Brown, which is now overcrowded. Huguenot High School would be rebuilt at its existing location. The fate of Thompson — whether it is renovated or replaced — has not been determined.

The plan is in its early stages so it is difficult to determine how it will all play out. Fisher and Southampton Elementary Schools are not mentioned in closings or renovations, but they would be affected by rezoning. The "megazone," which was designed to help keep Fisher and Southampton full when our residents chose not to use these schools, is on the chopping block because of transportation costs. Can our neighborhoods fill the spots vacated by the change in zoning?

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Mark Your Calendars!

Upcoming SCA Meetings

Held at SRA, 3201 Chellowe Rd.
Meetings begin at 7:15 p.m.

- **Tuesday, August 15**
- **Tuesday, September 19**
- **Tuesday, October 17**
Annual Meeting - Speaker to be announced.

Proposed Ordinances

Council Member Kathy Graziano has introduced the following proposals to City Council.

- To place traffic calming devices along Riverside Drive west of the Pony Pasture in order to slow speeders through that section.
- To place a four way stop at Cheverly and Prairie Roads.
- To create a scenic byway designation for certain streets and roads in the city, to permit enhanced enforcement tools for illegal speeding and parking, to encourage the creation of viewscapes of especially scenic areas, and to encourage safe use of streets not designed to be major commuter routes. Although signs in several areas tout "Scenic Byways," there is no official city designation or description for such areas.

scarichmond.com

Missed a newsletter or want to check out what is happening with James River Park? Check out scarichmond.com. Here you will find the latest bulletins, photos from Riverfest, and links to City Council, Richmond Public Schools, James River Parks, and other important sites. This is just one more tool for keeping neighbors informed.



(Continued from, page 1)

On July 11, a group of parents, and interested parties met with School Board member George Braxton and City Councilman Kathy Graziano to discuss neighborhood schools. The possibility of rezoning Westover Hills Elementary to accommodate the growing population south of Forest Hill has Westover Hills parents looking for a school to send their students. They are being guided to look at Southampton or Fisher.

Out of this meeting came the creation of a District Four Schools Group. Its mission is to work to improve Richmond public schools in this district. In the short term, the group plans to serve as a resource to residents about public school options and developments, and work closely with our district principals, PTAs, and residents to begin the improvement process. A yahoo group site has been set up to facilitate communication, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/districtfourschools>.

Opportunities have never been greater for the community to influence the direction of our public schools. Let's use this time of change to voice our thoughts and get involved. Kathy Graziano's office number is 320-2454, George Braxton's contact information is braxton4rps@comcast.net or (804) 503-1777, and District Four Schools Group Chairperson, Erin Bishop can be reached at erinbishop@gmail.com, or 377-6906.

Transportation Safety

In response to neighbors' requests, the SCA agreed earlier this year to circulate petitions seeking input concerning proposed safety improvements at three locations.

Riverside Drive

In June, the SCA board voted not to circulate a petition asking if residents support or oppose closing Riverside Drive on weekends from dawn to dusk year-round, as a large group of neighbors who live in that area had already expressed strong opposition in a petition of their own.

In proposing a petition in February, the SCA was responding to neighbors' concerns about too many cars (especially "cruising" traffic) and excessive speed on a scenic road where the number of pedestrians and bicyclists has grown considerably in recent years.

These problems will continue to grow. Absent a full-time police presence, which is unlikely, the safety problem on Riverside Drive between the Pony Pasture and Huguenot Road also is likely to grow.

Cherokee Road

As of this printing, results were not yet available from a petition asking if residents support or oppose increasing by \$200 the fine for speeding on Cherokee Road. As reported to the board earlier this year, a traffic survey found 85 percent of Cherokee traffic exceeded the posted speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour, with 67mph the maximum speed recorded. Average traffic volume during the survey was 200 vehicles per hour.

Prairie & Cherokee Roads

Residents are currently working with Councilman Kathy Graziano on having 4-way stop signs at Prairie and Cheverly Roads beside Southampton Elementary School.



RIVERFEST 2006!

Some sun but a lot of fun

Although rain threatened to dampen festivities Saturday, June 3rd, it didn't stop neighbors and friends from coming out and making Riverfest 2006 a success.

The day started with the second running of the 5K Wicked River Run/Walk. Eighty runners and walkers took to the streets — twice as many as last year's race. The top three male runners were Henry Scott, Alex Fuqua and Casey Kreger. The top female runners were Nicole Unice, Jennifer Harrell and Katie Harrell.

The excitement continued with the parade of decorated bicycles, wagons, tricycles, and scooters escorted by one of Richmond's bicycle patrolmen.

Blue Line Highway's blue grass music set a relaxed tone for the activities centered on the the Meadow, located west of the Pony Pasture. Festival goers were treated to a deluxe climbing wall, a unique tree climbing experience from Riverside Outfitters, and Appomattox River Company's kayak demonstrations at the Z-dam. The Richmond River Rescue showed off its state of the art equipment. Ralph White's River Critters and birdwatching with Mary Arginteanu and Larry Robinson provided a glimpse into the lives of our park creatures.

We greatly appreciate each of our major sponsors for this year's Riverfest, including The Positive Vibe Cafe, BB&T, Ukrops, Harper Associates LLC, and Stewart Green Associates.

We also thank all of the other businesses that supported our community event with services, supplies and gift certificates, including Ukrops, Phoenix Massage, Five Guys Burgers and Fries, Rockfalls Tavern, O'Charley's, Riverside Outfitters, Appomattox River Company, Roadrunners Store, Richmond Road Runners Club, Southampton Recreation Center, Maymont Park, River City Rickshaws, Richmond Fire Department, Richmond Police Department, Richmond Parks Manager Ralph White, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities, the Richmond Audubon Society, and Print Shack.



Broadcast E-Mail

Keeping Neighbors Informed

In November, the SCA introduced a broadcast e-mail service to alert neighbors about criminal activity and provide meeting reminders. In June, we issued our first crime alert, which included a suspect's description and a photo of a car thought to be involved in a home break-in on Butte Road.

Notified by Councilwoman Kathy Graziano's office, we issued the alert to neighbors who have requested this service, which is offered at no charge to every homeowner in our area who registers for it on our Web site — scarichmond.com.

In June, the board adopted a policy statement to help us provide this service in a consistent appropriate manner. Here, in brief, is the policy:

The system is operated by the SCA Secretary, who, after receiving information from board members and neighbors, determines whether it falls within the policy. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no more than three messages per month will be sent, although two messages per month is our preferred maximum.

SCA meeting reminders, notice of guest speakers, and significant information raised in a previous meeting may be accompanied by special messages about other public meetings and Southampton area community events that will occur before the next regular SCA meeting, as well as SCA community-related meetings about zoning, public safety, and Southampton, Fisher, Thompson and Huguenot public schools.

E-mails also may solicit community input for SCA board members, and correct any errors in previous e-mails. We hope this service will help raise community awareness and help keep our neighborhoods safe.

Don't Forget to Lock-Up!

Summer has not seen a decrease in car burglaries, which have all involved unlocked vehicles and, more often than not, the target was loose change. This recurring crime has been reported to the Police Department, but many victimized neighbors are not reporting these incidents. Many are embarrassed to report that they left their vehicle unlocked or consider the crime trivial or believe that no good will come from reporting the crime.

Please report any vehicle theft to the Police Department. The police can not direct appropriate resources to our area unless they know that the crime is occurring. We are fortunate to reside in a safe area, but these incidents demonstrate that crime can occur here. Be on the lookout for suspicious behavior and or persons. According to reports, an individual either on foot or on bicycle may be involved in many of the thefts. An additional report suggests a couple of young persons in a vehicle may be involved. Do not be reluctant or embarrassed to call the Police Department. The Police Non-Emergency number is 646-5100.

Help protect yourself and your neighbors. Report any thefts, lock your vehicles at all times, and call about suspicious activity.



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