

Waverly Hills  
Neighborhood  
Conservation  
Plan



Arlington, VA  
September, 1998

# Waverly Hills Neighborhood Conservation Plan

Presented by:

Waverly Hills Civic Association  
WHCA  
An Arlington Neighborhood

September 28, 1998

Cover:

### The Glebe House

The Glebe House, a major landmark of Arlington County, located in the Waverly Hills neighborhood, was established as a 500 acre farm and provided for the rector of Fairfax Parish, which included both Christ Church, Alexandria and the Falls Church. The Glebe House, built in 1775, burned in 1808 and was rebuilt in 1820 as a hunting lodge. Subdivision of the Glebe lands began in 1846. The octagon wing was added about 1850. A hand carved teakwood eagle sits atop the octagon wing.

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The Waverly Hills Civic Association would like to thank the Waverly Hills residents who put extraordinary time, effort and concern into the formulation and adoption of the Waverly Hills Conservation Plan:

Dick Bauder  
Lewis Bromberg  
Sandi Chesrown  
Xiomara Creque  
Pamela Gillen  
Maude Hales  
Stuart Hales  
Christina Klinger  
Puwen Lee  
Paul Manning  
Christine Malone  
Don Mazingo  
Larry Mellon  
Susan Schultz  
Jerry Talbot

Other neighbors who made contributions:

Mike Chambers  
Adrienne Chute  
Jim Dinan  
Rosemary Gilead  
Leah Homes-Bonilla  
Nancy Horan  
Jim Mason  
Mary Marks  
Don Partlan  
Jerry Scheehan  
Karen Thompson  
Mary Van Cleve  
Michael Vegarson

The Waverly Hills Neighborhood would like to thank Willard J. Webb, a historian and resident of Waverly Hills for researching and writing a thorough history of our area, excerpts of which are used in this plan. Mr. Webb's history of Waverly Hills titled "The Waverly Hills Neighborhood" was published in the Arlington Historical Magazine in 1997.

Waverly Hills wishes to acknowledge the Arlington County Staff members who have assisted with this plan, especially Tony Lee and Chris Nixon.

# Neighborhood Conservation Plan Summary

## **Background and History of Plan Development**

This plan proposes general suggestions for improvements to the Waverly Hills community. With an approved neighborhood Conservation Plan, Waverly Hills may apply to Arlington County (NCAC Program) for funding of neighborhood projects such as park improvements, traffic calming, street lighting, sidewalks, curbs and gutters as well as tree planting and neighborhood signage. Individual projects are proposed and become well defined through neighborhood input. Projects will be pursued only if a majority of the neighborhood agrees to the improvement. Those residences directly affected by a proposed change will be involved in the project development process.

The Waverly Hills Civic Association notified Arlington County of its intent to complete a Neighborhood Conservation Plan (NCP) for the Waverly Hills area in 1992. The Waverly Hills Civic Association reestablished itself in support of the creation of the Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Walking surveys of the neighborhood were conducted and maps were prepared showing neighborhood conditions. A neighborhood questionnaire, which the county reviewed, was distributed. The Waverly Hills newsletter, including a Spanish version, informed residents of the Neighborhood Conservation plan process and of the progress of committees working on various sections of the plan. Neighboring civic association conservation plans were reviewed. Comments were received from Arlington County staff and the final draft of the plan was prepared as more community residents became involved in 1998.

In preparation for the adoption of the plan, the neighborhood input gathering procedures were organized and the information distribution methods were reviewed. Updated maps were prepared to account for new construction and changes in neighborhood conditions. An updated Waverly Hills mailing list was produced in preparation for contacting residents about potential neighborhood conservation projects and a distribution scheme was created to include all residents in the activities of the Civic Association including private homes, townhouses as well as apartments. The association makes information available to the residents in the following ways: signs posted on utility poles, an internet web site - <http://www.architrave.net/waverly/>, mailings, personal inquiries about opinions on proposed actions and posting of information at selected Waverly Hills businesses. In addition, a community bulletin board has been approved for Woodstock Park.

## **Neighborhood Description**

Waverly Hills occupies the area bounded by I-66, Lee Highway, Glebe Road, and Utah Street. The neighborhood consists largely of single-family dwellings. Multi-family housing units including apartments, condominiums, and townhouses are located in the northern section of the neighborhood, adjacent to the shopping areas. As of the 1990 census, there are 2,455 residents of Waverly Hills. Among the features that attract residents of Waverly Hills are the peacefulness of the neighborhood and the well-established trees. Another attractive quality of Waverly Hills is its proximity to major commercial areas, the District of Columbia, National Airport, and Metrorail. Waverly Hills neighborhood is popular among pedestrians, bicyclists, and joggers.

## **Neighborhood Goals**

Waverly Hills residents are most concerned with preserving and enhancing the quality of life in the neighborhood.

## **Land Use and Zoning**

Although most current zoning and land use designations are appropriate, the neighborhood is concerned about in-fill housing. Waverly Hills expects future development to be sensitive to the existing fabric of the community.

## **Traffic**

Continual problems with high-speed, stop sign violations, and pedestrian safety exist on certain streets in Waverly Hills. While the neighborhood wants these problems addressed, there is opposition to any actions that would significantly alter the fundamental traffic flow for the residents of Waverly Hills.

## **Neighborhood Streets and Lighting**

Most of Waverly Hills has adequate curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Where they do not exist or are in need of improvement, the neighborhood supports the installation of street features, including street lights, for the safety of the neighborhood in locations where such a change is agreeable to the residents.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Woodstock Park, at 20th Rd. between Vermont and Woodstock streets, is the only county park or public open space in Waverly Hills. The park enjoys heavy use and is in need of grading to improve drainage as well as additional recreational facilities and landscaping to meet the ever increasing demands of the residents of Waverly Hills as well as the many residents of other communities that enjoy the park.

## **Beautification**

Waverly Hills would like to develop a program to work with the neighborhood, property owners and the county to add trees and improve the facades of unused property. The neighborhood would like to install "Waverly Hills" signs at key locations to identify the neighborhood. In the interest of aesthetics and maintenance, Waverly Hills suggests that the overhead utility and telephone wires be removed and replaced with an underground system and the relocation of utility poles where appropriate. Waverly Hills would like to remove signs wherever possible and coordinate one pole systems for signage with the county.

# HISTORY OF WAVERLY HILLS

## **Early Land Grants**

Throughout most of the 17th century all of Northern Virginia remained Indian territory until the restoration of King Charles II to the English throne in 1660. The majority of Waverly Hills was included in a land grant to James Brechin, rector of St. Peter's Parish in New Kent County in 1716. Brechin never lived on his Arlington holding and upon his death in 1721, Daniel Jennings, the surveyor of Fairfax County (in which Arlington was then included), purchased the land. A small portion in the northwest corner of the Waverly Hills area, was part of a grant in 1731 to James Robertson, a large landholder in what is present-day Arlington.

## **The Glebe House**

Colonial Virginia law required each parish to have a glebe (a farm or plantation) to provide the rector a living. In 1770, Fairfax Parish, which contained Christ Church in Alexandria, the Falls Church, and all of present-day Arlington, purchased 517 acres from Daniel Jennings for its glebe. The land lay midway between Christ Church and the Falls Church, making it a convenient location for the rector, who served both churches. The vestry of Fairfax Parish directed a house to be built on the glebe and the Reverend Townshend Dale was the first to occupy the house from 1775-1778. Dale was succeeded by the Reverend Bryan Fairfax, later the 8th Lord Fairfax. In the early 1800s the Christ Church vestry sold the glebe to Walter Jones, an eminent Washington attorney and John Mason, a younger son of George Mason of Gunston Hall. Mason took the half of the land that adjoined property he owned along the Potomac, while Jones took the half with the ruined Glebe House which had burned in 1808. He rebuilt the house about 1820, but lost the property by default in 1829. It was purchased by Washington Mayor John Peter VanNess. Mason sold his portion of the former Glebe property to VanNess in 1836 and the Glebe lands were reunited. VanNess used the Glebe House as a summer retreat and hunting lodge before selling the property in 1846.

John Brown owned the Glebe House during the 1850s. He rebuilt the house after a fire and probably added the octagonal wing. In 1870 General Caleb Cushing purchased the Glebe House and accompanying land, which had now dwindled to about 100 acres. Cushing had been a member of Congress, a soldier in the Mexican War, and attorney general under President Franklin Pierce. Cushing sold the Glebe in 1879. In 1893, John P. Willett, the postmaster of Washington, bought the Glebe House and its 100 acres. Following Willett's death in 1899, his widow Laura lived in the house for almost 20 years.

**Map #1 Alexandria County**

## **Jurisdictional Changes**

By 1801 Virginia had ceded the present area of Arlington County and the town of Alexandria to the federal government, to be combined with land from Maryland to form the capital city of Washington. The Maryland portion was known as the County of Washington; the Virginia portion, which had been part of Fairfax County, was designated Alexandria County. With the creation of the capital city, dissatisfaction grew among residents of Alexandria County who felt their area was not being used for the purposes of the capital and was not likely to be. In 1846, following an act of Congress which provided for a referendum by the inhabitants and a vote for retrocession, President Polk issued a proclamation of retrocession and the returned area was divided between Alexandria City and Alexandria County. Confusion between a city and county with the same name resulted in the name change to Arlington County in 1920.

## **Improved Transportation**

Although located just across the river from the nation's capital, Arlington remained rural countryside in 1900. Development was hindered by poor transportation and the absence of paved roads. The arrival of electric railroads, or trolleys, occurred during the last years of the 19th Century and the early years of the 20th. The Great Falls and Washington Railroad, later the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD), started in Rosslyn, passed north of Waverly Hills, and finally ended at Great Falls. Today, Old Dominion Drive follows the right of way west of Glebe Road. Interstate 66 follows the right of way of another line that cut through the southern part of Waverly Hills.

With the railroads came early signs of development. Villages grew up at Rosslyn, Clarendon, Cherrydale, and Ballston. But Waverly Hills remained countryside relatively free of development. The Glebe House remained the major landmark of the area. Another landmark was Mt. Olivet Methodist Church. The first Mt. Olivet church was built in the late 1850s; the present neo-colonial church is the fourth building on the site and dates from 1948.

## **Development Begins**

Laura Willett began the subdivision of the Glebe property that developed into the Waverly Hills neighborhood. In May 1915, Mrs. Willett sold 79 acres of land and the Glebe House. Part of that property was laid off in lots titled Willette Heights, a subdivision that included the area bounded by Glebe Road, Utah Street, 15th Street, and the south side of 18th Street.

In 1926, Frank and Marie Ball purchased a lot containing two acres and the Glebe House--the largest single unit in Willette Heights. Frank Ball was the former county commonwealth's attorney and served in the Virginia Senate from 1924 to 1932. Senator and Mrs. Ball made the Glebe House renowned for gracious hospitality. They also had a keen interest in

**Map #2 Arlington Streets 1925-1938**

Arlington history, and hosted the meeting at the Glebe House in 1956 which established the Arlington Historical Society. The Glebe House remained the Ball home until Mrs. Ball's death in 1980.

Willette Heights began a series of subdivisions during the 1920s and 1930s. These included Clarendon, bounded by Washington Boulevard, Glebe Road, and 15th and Utah Streets; Waverly Hills Section 2, between 15th and 18th Streets, Utah Street, and the east side of Taylor Street (an area now outside Waverly Hills); and Waverly Hills Section 3, between the north side of 18th Street and 19th Street and Glebe Road and Utah Street.

A 1929 map labels the area Waverly Hills, but no indication has been found for the origin of the name. With the subdivisions had come many new streets, some with duplicate names. Arlington adopted a new system for street names in 1934 when the County was divided into north and south designations by what would eventually become Arlington Boulevard. Also included was provision for systematic house numbering. Although there was little traffic, the county installed a traffic light at the Glebe and Lee intersection in 1935. It was the only light on Lee Highway between Rosslyn and Falls Church. A grocery opened on Glebe Road at Lee Highway in 1936, and other stores soon followed. By 1940, all four corners had stores and shops.

### **Post-war Development**

World War II interrupted the building in Waverly Hills, as it did throughout Arlington. But the end of the war brought renewed development to meet the demand for housing in the growing Washington area. M.T. Broyhill & Sons, which developed much of postwar Arlington, built Broyhill's Addition to Waverly Hills, bounded by 19th Road, 20th Street, and Woodstock and Vermont Streets in 1949. Other developments nearby were already in progress or followed rapidly thereafter. These included: Hines Addition, bounded by Upton, Utah, and 20th Streets and 19th Road; Waverly Village East, bounded by Vermont, Upland, and 20th Streets and 19th Road; and Wundoria, bounded by Woodstock and Woodrow Streets and Glebe and 20th Roads.

A 1952 map of Arlington shows Waverly Hills in essentially its current state. All the new development lots had houses. The Parkland Gardens Apartments on Glebe Road opposite 21st Street had been constructed, as had the Lorcom Apartments on the west side of Woodstock at 20th Road (but not the apartments on the east side of Woodstock).

The 1950s and 1960s saw Lee Highway become largely commercial, as businesses and small apartments replaced homes. The construction of Interstate 66 in the mid-1970s cut off the lower portion of Waverly Hills, which was then incorporated into the Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed construction of townhouses along both the upper part of the Glebe boundary and Lee Highway. During the 1990s, a number of large lots have been divided and new houses in-filled.

**Map #3 Subdivision 1920's – 1930's**

Following Mrs. Ball's death in 1980, the Ball family sold the Glebe House and its two acres to Arlington developer Preston Caruthers. The Glebe House was donated to the National Genealogical Society for its headquarters while the gardens behind the house were replaced with the Glebe House Mews townhouses, despite neighborhood opposition.

Source: "The Waverly Hills Neighborhood" by Willard J. Webb, historian and Waverly Hills resident. The full text was previously published in the Arlington Historical Magazine of October 1997.

## **Photo of Lee Heights Shops**

# NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

## **The Waverly Hills Neighborhood**

Waverly Hills occupies the area bounded by Interstate 66, Lee Highway, Glebe Road, and Utah Street. Both Glebe Road and Lee Highway are old roads dating to the late colonial period. The lower part (the area south of 19th Street) grew in the period between World Wars I and II, while the area north of 19th Street was developed in the years immediately after World War II. The neighborhood is largely a mixture of modest brick and frame colonials, Cape Cods, and one-story bungalows, although several townhouse developments and garden apartment complexes have appeared over the last 40 years. The oldest and most significant building in Waverly Hills is the Glebe House, originally built in 1770.

Waverly Hills is bounded on three sides by: 1-66 (south), Glebe Road (west), and Utah Street (east). On the north, Waverly Hills is bounded by: Lee Highway from the corner of Glebe Road east to Old Dominion Drive, east on Old Dominion Drive to of Taylor Street, south on Taylor Street to Lee Highway; west on Lee Highway to Utah Street. Among the features which attract residents to Waverly Hills are the peacefulness of the neighborhood and the well established trees. Another attractive quality of Waverly Hills is its proximity to major commercial areas, the District of Columbia, National Airport, the Pentagon, and the metro.

## **Present Status**

As of the 1990 census there were 2,455 residents of Waverly Hills. While residents between the ages of 35 and 54 represent the largest age group in Waverly Hills, there are significant populations of children, teenagers, and the elderly. Most of the neighborhood consists of single-family dwellings, with 45% of the houses built between 1940 and 1960 and 25% of the housing built before 1940. The single family houses occupy approximately 97 acres of the 137 acres of Waverly Hills. Multi-family housing units (multi-story apartments, condominiums and townhouses) are located in the northern section of the neighborhood, adjacent to the shopping areas.

The neighborhood's commercial area is located along Lee Highway, from Glebe Road to Woodstock Street. Within walking distance, neighborhood commuters are served by the Ballston Metro station. Metrobus lines operate along Glebe Road and Lee Highway. Waverly Hills has quick, easy access to the George Washington Parkway and I-66. Lee Highway serves as a major commuter route between the District of Columbia and the Virginia suburbs.

Most of the local neighborhood streets are in good condition and are well signed. The Waverly Hills neighborhood is popular among pedestrians, bikers, and joggers. The I-66 bike path, which passes through Waverly Hills, is used by weekday bike commuters, recreational bicyclists, pedestrians, and joggers.

### **Community Services**

No community services (schools, churches, libraries, police, or fire stations) are housed in Waverly Hills. Many such services, however, are located close by in neighboring Cherrydale and Ballston. Glebe Elementary School and Washington & Lee High School are within walking distance. Several churches, including St. Agnes Catholic Church, Calvary Gospel Church, United Pentecostal Church, and Mount Olivet United Methodist Church, are located within walking distance for most residents. Libraries are also located nearby: the Central Library on Quincy Street and the Cherrydale Branch Library on Military Road. The major drawback of having no community service facilities is that there is no public meeting place within the boundaries of Waverly Hills.

Due to the lack of public indoor space within Waverly Hills, the civic association has held most of its meetings at Glebe Elementary School, located just outside the Waverly Hills neighborhood.

# NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS

Waverly Hills residents are most concerned with preserving and enhancing the quality of life in the neighborhood. The most important goals are:

- Preserve the neighborhood's essential character as an area of single-family homes.
- Preserve the open, uncrowded nature of the neighborhood by monitoring in-fill development and making sure that it is consistent with the fabric of the surrounding area.
- Enhance Woodstock Park for maximum enjoyment by residents.
- Protect the neighborhood from cut-through traffic and speeding while maintaining convenient residential access to and across major streets.
- Ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety by focusing on areas where sidewalks, curbs and gutters, or street lighting may be inadequate or poorly maintained.
- Support the renovation of run down property in line with the character of the area.
- Improve the appearance of streetscape with additional landscaping or street improvements.
- Promote broader recognition of Waverly Hills' name with appropriate signs in the neighborhood and along the perimeter.
- Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors which make Waverly Hills an attractive place to live.

**Map #4 Existing Zoning**

# LAND USE AND ZONING

Waverly Hills residents believe the majority of current zoning and land use recommendations are appropriate and should remain. However, in-fill development continues to occur on older subdivided lots during the mid-1990s. The neighborhood is very concerned about in-fill housing. Recognizing the possibility of by-right development, the neighborhood expects developers to meet the following minimum standards:

1. New houses will be architecturally scaled, and sensitive to the existing fabric of the neighborhood.
2. Newly developed properties will be landscaped. Landscaping will include street trees. Developers will be sensitive to and attempt to preserve existing vegetation, especially established trees. Developers should refer to the County's "Urban Forest Management Plan". Developers should coordinate with the County's Urban Forester.
3. Street lighting will be as detailed in the County's "Street Light Policy and Planning Guide", specifically the Hollophane Granville Luminaire.

Along Lee Highway there is a significant amount of land, either vacant or older single-family homes, that could be consolidated and redeveloped, such as occurred with the Tazewell Court Townhouses (which were built in the early through mid-1990s). In areas in which multi-family housing may be appropriate, the neighborhood supports townhome or mid-rise (as opposed to high-rise) development. When building townhomes, the developer should orient at least some with a street frontage, to integrate the new homes with the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, parking should be in the rear or otherwise out of sight from the street, and should be done in several small lots, rather than one large lot. Development should also consider the impacts on the neighborhood of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access to Lee Highway.

## **Residential**

The Zoning Ordinance and Map shows the majority of Waverly Hills from Glebe Road to Utah Street and from I-66 to 20th Road zoned "R-6", a zoning district that requires a minimum of 6000 square foot lots (unless grandfathered) or 7 dwelling units per acre. The General Land Use Plan (GLUP), Arlington County's primary policy guide establishing the "overall character, extent and location of various land use", shows this area as low residential (1-10 units per acre).

The northern portion of Waverly Hills consists of low-medium density residential land use designated on the GLUP as 16-36 units per acre. The zoning categories that are consistent with the low-medium density GLUP are R15-30T, RA14-26, and RA8-18. The zoning in two areas of Waverly Hills conflicts with land use policy as designated in the GLUP.

- The west side of Thomas Street is zoned R-5 (low residential land use). The neighborhood supports changing the GLUP to reflect low density for this area, to bring the GLUP into conformance with the zoning designation.
- The northeastern most block of Waverly Hills is zoned RA6-15 (a medium density GLUP rating). Waverly Hills is concerned about a group of vacant properties located along the north side of Lee Highway between Taylor Street and Thomas Street. We request the area be designated Low-Medium density on the GLUP. Between 20th Road and Old Dominion Drive, there is a residential zoning mix of "R-5", "R-6", "RA6-15", and "RA8-18". The west side of Thomas Street is zoned "R-5". However, the GLUP indicates a Low Medium land use, which is a density of 16-36 units per acre. The inconsistency between the GLUP and zoning should be resolved by changing the GLUP to "Low".

Vacant or abandoned property along Lee Highway is both an eyesore and a safety hazard to Waverly Hills residents. The house at 4346 Lee Highway, which once was used for a barber shop and other neighborhood services, is "RA8-18". However, the property is too narrow for any residential development and has been sitting vacant since 1992. In its current state of disrepair, it has become a haven for gang-style graffiti.

Recommendation 1: Support townhome development in the Low-Medium density designated areas of the General Land Use Plan. Work with townhome developers to locate parking away from the street in order to maintain a residential appearance to Lee Highway. Encourage developers to provide tree-planted strips in front of developments, and to coordinate with the County's Urban Forester.

Recommendation 2: Change the GLUP designation to "Low" residential, with densities of 11 to 15 units per acre for the section of single family homes located on Thomas Street between Lee Highway and Old Dominion Drive.

Recommendation 3: The neighborhood is concerned about in-fill single-family detached houses that stretch the zoning envelope and tower over their neighbors. Waverly Hills supports working with developers and the County so that in-fill development is designed and built with sensitivity toward its context in the surrounding neighborhood, in terms of both architectural style and building materials. Every effort should be made to encourage developers to preserve existing mature trees and plants.

## **Commercial**

The commercial areas in Waverly Hills are zoned Service Commercial (C-0) or Service Commercial Community Business District (C-2), which facilitates personal and business uses. Generally, buildings in this C-2 district are 1-4 stories. The current commercial zoning matches the GLUP, which indicates a land use of service commercial with a maximum 1.5 FAR (floor area ratio).

Recommendation 1: Some neighborhood recreational uses may be appropriate. The County's new Economic Development strategy should encompass this area, as Waverly Hills

is interested in exploring the possibility of neighborhood businesses that could positively contribute to the ambiance and enjoyment of the community as current C-2 uses do. The neighborhood would not be in favor of fast food restaurants with drive-through windows or used car lots. This could be accomplished by amending the C-2 district to make used car lots permitted by use permit only.

Recommendation 2: Encourage the use of offices in homes. Many citizens believe that progressive zoning encourages home offices where there is not a negative traffic impact on neighborhoods. Home offices are seen by law enforcement officials as an effective policing method during the day when many homes are empty.

Recommendation 3: The neighborhood supports effective screening, including landscaping with evergreens and aesthetically attractive fencing, that can buffer negative impacts from lights, traffic, and to a limited extent, noise. Residential areas that abut commercial areas should be connected by pedestrian access, but should also be buffered where the adjacencies can create negative visual impacts. Public safety will be considered, so that "hiding places" are not created as a result of the landscaping process.

Recommendation 4: Work with the County and the property owner to find an appropriate use of the vacant property located at 4346 Lee Highway. This property has become an eyesore, a haven for gang-style graffiti, and a dangerous area for children.

## **Map #5 Traffic Management**

# TRAFFIC

The high level of development from both infill expansion and the rapidly expanding Ballston corridor has led to increased concern in the community regarding traffic patterns in the area and their effect on Waverly Hills. Cut-through traffic has long been a concern for certain streets in Waverly Hills. For example, commuter and truck traffic cut through Waverly Hills from Lee Highway to access Glebe Road and visa-versa. The volume of such traffic and the excessive rate of speed of many vehicles has led to concerns regarding safety of both pedestrians and neighborhood traffic. Several rolling hills within our community also contribute to the dangerous conditions by increasing the number of blind spots in roads and intersections which are especially dangerous given the high speeds of some vehicles. Also of concern is the level of noise generated by vehicles greatly exceeding the speed limits on residential streets. The traffic problems faced by Waverly Hills are only expected to increase as Arlington and surrounding areas continue to expand.

The Waverly Hills Neighborhood Conservation Plan provides a place for the community to register areas of concern with Arlington County, suggesting both improvements to the neighborhood and recommendations against changes that do not fit the desired characteristics of the community. Based on interest within the community, the County will work with The Waverly Hills Civic Association and the residents of Waverly Hills to plan improvements to the neighborhood, which must then be approved by the community at large before implementation. This section of the Neighborhood Conservation Plan provides several goals to be met in any traffic modification plans within and around the Waverly Hills community. First, the community would like to increase safety for local residents, both pedestrian traffic and vehicular. Second, reduction of noise from cut-through traffic, caused by both excessive speed and commercial vehicles is considered desirable. Finally, Waverly Hills asks the County to recognize that the needs of the local residents are paramount in any future traffic plans. A major goal is to minimize changes that will adversely affect our community.

In meeting the above goals, the Waverly Hills community wishes certain standards to be met to ensure that the character and fabric of our neighborhood are maintained. The community in general is opposed to traffic calming measures which will significantly impede local traffic or increase the noise pollution from traffic. In particular, the community is opposed to increasing the number of stop signs and speed bumps. Traffic calming measures such as traffic circles, street narrowing, and curb nubs are considered preferable in the majority of cases. However, we recognize that in limited instances stop signs may be required to adequately address safety concerns, especially in the case of blind spots and hazardous intersections. Finally, we recognize that a primary cause of cut-through traffic is the clogged intersection of Lee Highway and Glebe Road. The Waverly Hills community is strongly opposed to increasing the width of the Lee and/or Glebe traffic corridors, but may consider improvements to the Lee/Glebe intersection intended to reduce the need and thus the volume of cut-through traffic through our neighborhood.

## **Potential Improvement Areas**

The traffic section of this document lists a number of potential areas for improvement that our community has considered. It is important to note that this is *not* a plan of actions to be implemented, but rather a list of study areas which the county, the Waverly Hills Civic Association and affected residents will address over time. Many items will undoubtedly be dropped after further consideration, and others are likely to be modified or expanded. Also note that no specific actions are contained within this document. County planners and community residents will study each issue and prepare a recommended plan of action. Each plan will be presented by the civic association and approved by the community before any action will be taken. Approving a plan does not necessarily imply that it will be implemented. Plans are funded on an individual basis by the county based on availability of resources and priority of plans within each community and across all Arlington communities which participate in the Neighborhood Conservation Program.

## **Traffic Background**

Serving as a major arterial street for cross-county traffic traveling north-south, Glebe Road is especially busy during rush hour and after school hours. Glebe Elementary School is situated directly across Glebe Road from the Waverly Hills neighborhood. 15th Street is a neighborhood principal street which connects Glebe Road to Quincy Street. It is used by commuters to and from Washington-Lee High School and the Clarendon-Virginia Square-Courthouse area, as well as by students walking to and from school, and people working along Quincy Street, Wilson Blvd, etc. According to a Arlington County traffic survey, 15th Street carries 3000 vehicles per day. Utah Street is a neighborhood-minor street used mainly by both local residents and commuters to travel between Lee Highway/Old Dominion Drive and the Ballston commercial area. Utah Street is wide and hilly and short-cutting commuters often speed along its entire length. According to the Arlington County traffic survey Utah Street carries 2000 vehicles per day.

Waverly Hills' traffic problems fall into several categories. Some problems result from the volume of traffic created by increased building and business outside the boundaries of Waverly Hills in the Ballston area and the I-66 interchange. Some problems result from commuters "short-cutting" (often above the posted speed limit) through the neighborhood. Other major concerns among residents are speeding on the major streets within the neighborhood, and poor visibility at certain intersections, which pose hazardous conditions for pedestrians and vehicles. While the neighborhood wants to have these problems addressed, residents are opposed to any actions which would significantly alter the fundamental traffic flow (e.g., closing off streets, restricting streets to one-way traffic).

## Traffic Problems and Recommendations

Concern Area: 15th Street is rated as a neighborhood principal street. Many commuters use 15th Street between Glebe Road and Quincy Street as an alternative route to avoid heavy traffic and congestion on Glebe Road and through the Ballston area.

Recommendation 1: A four-way stop was created at the intersection of 15th and Utah Streets (the only four-way stop within the neighborhood). It has proven very effective in preventing collisions. Safety has improved significantly since installation of the multi-way stop sign. The community recommends keeping the four-way stop at the intersection of Utah and 15th Streets.

Concern Area: 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th Streets between Glebe Road and Utah Street are used as shortcuts by drivers trying to avoid the intersection of Glebe Road and Lee Highway. Some of the traffic appears to exceed the posted speed limit. The lack of sidewalks along most of the length of 16th through 19th Streets between Glebe Road and Utah Street, in conjunction with excessive speed, poses a safety threat to pedestrians, especially school children.

Recommendation 2: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study traffic calming methods on 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th Streets between Glebe Road and Utah Street. The purpose of such methods should be to decrease the safety hazards to pedestrians. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: Utah Street is a broad, hilly road. Residents along Utah Street often complain of vehicles traveling in excess of posted speeds, endangering children playing in front yards, pedestrians and their pets, and cars pulling out from driveways, garages, and side streets.

Recommendation 3: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study traffic calming methods at the intersections of 16th and Utah Streets, and 18th and Utah Streets. Work with affected neighbors in both Waverly Hills and Cherrydale to determine other potential solutions to slowing traffic. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: Utah Street is particularly dangerous between 19th Road and 20th Street where an "S" curve in the road has been the cause of several recent vehicular accidents, with cars frequently coming to rest on private property. Residents have observed a number of incidents in which joy riding drivers turn circles and figure 8's in the intersection. The County recently painted a double yellow line in the middle of Utah Street in the area of the

"S" curve. The street grade drops without warning after North 20th Street followed by a curve. There are no sidewalks along Utah Street between 18th Street and just south of Lee Highway, creating an unsafe situation for pedestrians.

Recommendation 4: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study traffic calming measures and produce a plan intended to reduce the dangers and/or increase visibility at these intersections. Methods to increase safety of pedestrians along this strip should also be considered. If the addition of sidewalks is a recommended action of the study, said sidewalks should be installed in the existing roadway, not on resident's property. Note that the County requires 60% approval by affected residents, as a portion of sidewalk installation costs are borne by the residents themselves. Continue the sidewalk on the west side of Utah Street from 18th Street north to Lee Highway. The sidewalk should be installed in the existing roadway (not on private property), in order to narrow the street. This would have the double benefit of increasing pedestrian safety and calming traffic. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: Woodstock Street is defined as a minor-arterial street and is the only straight through street in the neighborhood connecting Lee Highway and Glebe Road. Residents have complained about vehicles speeding along Woodstock Street. Commuters, 'joy riders' and commercial traffic are all constant sources of high-speed traffic. Woodstock is another wide, hilly street which is used by commuters to bypass the busy intersection at Glebe Road and Lee Highway, and also to travel to and from the Lee Heights Shops. It also provides short-cut access to Lorcom lane and thus the GW Parkway. Drivers pulling out of side streets and driveways onto Woodstock often have problems seeing cars coming over the hills of Woodstock. This lack of visibility is worsened by vehicles traveling well in excess of the posted limit. In some locations along Woodstock, it is not possible to see oncoming traffic in either direction at a safe distance. There is also a safety issue at Woodstock Street and 20th Road because of the pedestrian traffic (especially children) entering and leaving Woodstock Park. Finally, the volume of traffic at the intersection of Glebe and Woodstock, combined with the hilly nature of the intersection and the rate of speed of Glebe Road traffic provides a very hazardous situation for residents attempting to leave or enter Waverly Hills at this junction.

Recommendation 5: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study traffic calming measures and produce a plan intended to reduce the volume and speed of traffic along Woodstock Street. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: Vehicles frequently speed and run red lights on Glebe Road, including right turns on red from the Route #66 exit without a stop. These problems create safety concerns for children crossing Glebe Road to and from Glebe Elementary School as well as residents attempting to enter Glebe Road from neighborhood streets and driveways.

Recommendation 6: Increase police surveillance along Glebe Road, especially near Glebe Elementary School; determine whether means are available to deter speeding and red light running along Glebe Road. Work with other communities bordering on Glebe Road to address this problem.

Concern Area: Visibility is poor at the intersection of Upton Street and 19th Road. There are high embankments on the northwest and northeast corners of the intersection, and shrubs that obstruct visibility.

Recommendation 7: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study methods and produce a plan to increase safety and visibility at this intersection. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: Lee Highway and Old Dominion Drive are heavily used during the rush hours. Crossing the streets for either pedestrian or automobiles is difficult. The traffic light at the corner of Old Dominion Drive and Lorcom Lane has a very short duration for the "walk" signal for pedestrians to cross Old Dominion Drive on Lorcom Lane.

Recommendation 8: Re-time the lights when the "walk" button is pushed to assure pedestrians can get across Old Dominion Drive with a margin of safety.

Concern Area: The planted triangle at the intersection of Woodrow Street, Lee Highway, and Old Dominion Drive is cluttered and confusing. Some drivers unfamiliar with the intersection have difficulty in determining the appropriate lane(s) to use.

Recommendation 9: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study approaches and produce a plan intended to improve the intersection of Woodrow Street, Lee Highway, and Old Dominion Drive such that the intersection is less confusing, in order to improve traffic safety and flow. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: The intersection of Woodstock Street, Lee Highway and Old Dominion Drive is confused by the ¼ block of Upton Street between Lee and Old Dominion. It may be possible to streamline traffic flow through this area while increasing green space and parking for the shops in the vicinity.

Recommendation 10: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study approaches and produce a plan intended to improve the intersection of Woodstock Street, Lee Highway, and Old Dominion Drive. This plan should attempt to increase parking and green space without restricting access to local shops. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Concern Area: The intersection of Lee Highway and Glebe Road is clogged by the lack of turn lanes from Glebe onto Lee and the volume of traffic from Lee into Glebe. This traffic congestion is likely a major contributor to the cut-through traffic problems associated with several Waverly Hills streets.

Recommendation 11: The County and Waverly Hills residents should study the Glebe Road and Lee Highway intersection to determine if improvements to the intersection would reduce traffic volume through Waverly Hills. As noted elsewhere in this document, this community is strongly opposed to widening either the Glebe Road or Lee Highway traffic corridors. This resolution should be maintained in any plan produced by the County and the community. No action shall be taken on these streets prior to the production of an action plan by the County and the community, and approval of said plan by the community residents.

Items 12 and 13, below, do not address existing problems. They are recommendations to maintain the status quo in Waverly Hills.)

Recommendation 12: Metrobus and the County should maintain existing bus service to Waverly Hills to allow convenient access to public transportation.

Recommendation 13: The neighborhood is opposed to any plans for street widening, especially along Glebe Road, or Lee Highway, which would disrupt the character of the neighborhood. In this regard, special concern is paid to Lee Highway, which will likely see the potential development of multi-family housing units. Any future plans by developers and the County for multi-family housing on Lee Highway should be discussed with Waverly Hills. Such developments will have a serious impact on the safety of travel on this street, as well as the character and quality of life in the neighborhood.

**Photo of Woodstock Street**

## Map #6 Street Lights

# NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS & LIGHTING

## **Streets and Alleys**

Three alleys exist in Waverly Hills: one connects 18th and 17th Streets between Wakefield Street and Glebe Road; one between 16th and 15th Streets connecting Glebe Road to Wakefield Street, and one between 16th and 15th Streets connecting Wakefield Street to Utah Street. No issues currently exist regarding alleys.

## **Curbs, Gutters, Sidewalks, and Lighting**

Concern Area: Most of Waverly Hills has adequate curbs and gutters. The County performed its 15-year maintenance of curbs and gutters in the neighborhood in 1996. The majority of owners of property where curbs and gutters do not exist do not desire to have them installed. However, the neighborhood supports installation of gutters for any owner who desires them. More than half of the streets have sidewalks. A majority of property owners not having sidewalks do not desire to have sidewalks constructed adjacent to their property.

Recommendation 1: Study the need for sidewalks on streets where none exist. Study areas may include the west side of Utah Street from 19th Road to 18th Street; the east side of Woodstock Street between 19th Road and Glebe Road; and 20th Road between Glebe Road and Albemarle Street. Sidewalks will not be installed in areas where the residents do not wish them to exist. The neighborhood supports the installation of curbs, gutters, sidewalks and street lighting in any location where it is supported by residents through submission of qualifying petition (or compliance with Neighborhood Conservation procedures).

**Photo of Woodstock Park**

# PARKS & RECREATION

Waverly Hills public areas consist of the bicycle/pedestrian trail paralleling I-66 and Woodstock Park located at 2049 N. Woodstock Street.

Woodstock Park, bordered by Vermont and Woodstock Streets between N. 20th Road and Lee Highway, is 1.25 acres. The topography is split between a narrow flat area with recreational equipment accounting for half the space and a steep hill, popular for sledding in the winter. The recreational equipment consists of a basketball court, swing set, and playground. The park contains two picnic tables, four single benches, two double benches, and three trash cans. There are two pole lights, one at either end of the park. An Arlington County small parks program provided for the water fountain and paved pathway through the park. The park is heavily used, primarily by residents of the adjacent single family homes, apartment, and condo complexes, but also by residents on the edges and outside of Waverly Hills. The park is used by children of all ages especially by mothers with young children.

Concern Area: The major park related problems include: drainage in the heavily used areas of the park as well as run-off behind the houses at the south side of the park, unauthorized nighttime use of the park, and the placement of the swing set which is separated from the other recreational equipment for young children by the basketball court.

Recommendation 1: Provide proper drainage throughout the park, especially to the areas surrounding the recreational equipment and to control run-off to the houses that face N. 20th Rd. at the south side of the park.

Recommendation 2: Study the possibility of relocating and upgrading the existing swing set to be closer to the existing play equipment and to provide for more swings and styles that meet county code and accommodate children of various age groups.

Recommendation 3: Continue to improve the landscaping by adding low-maintenance plantings including shrubs and trees that enhance the landscape but do not obstruct views of the park.

Recommendation 4: Maintain current amenities in the park, especially the water fountain. Work with the county to establish a trash pick up schedule that meets the needs of the neighborhood and recommend periodic trimming of trees for safety purposes. Consider adding general amenities, such as additional seating, table, sidewalks, etc. to the Woodstock Park that provide for families but do not encourage misuse of the park property or facilities.

Recommendation 5: Accelerate the county's time table for replacing the sand base with approved bark chips that will be used at all Arlington County Parks by the year 2001. In addition to improving sanitary conditions, this will greatly improve the maintenance issues of the water fountain which is constantly clogged by sand.

# BEAUTIFICATION

Waverly Hills favors the preservation of trees and green open space along streets, the bicycle/pedestrian trail, commercial sites, main thoroughfares, and entrances to the neighborhood.

Concern Area: A number of areas could be improved by plantings. Native plants and those which will support wildlife should be used wherever possible. Given the lack of public parks in Waverly Hills, the streets become a particularly important component of the open space structure of the neighborhood as well as the character of its landscape.

Recommendation 1: Encourage landscaping by commercial, apartment, and condominium complexes.

Recommendation 2: Consider the removal of overhead utility and telephone wires and replacing them with an underground system in order to preserve the natural shapes of trees that otherwise would need to be severely trimmed.

Recommendation 3: Work with the utility companies to minimize tree hacking.

Recommendation 4: Work with the neighborhood, property owners, and the county to plant trees along the front property line wherever residents wish. Work with the property owners that have had established trees removed to replace trees if desired by the residents. Work with residential complex managers to add plantings and/or trees to unused/unplanted green areas. Encourage tree planting that won't interfere with power lines.

Recommendation 5: Encourage neighborhood awareness on county codes for tree and shrub maintenance where growth hangs over and grows close to public areas.

# NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Concern Area: Because Waverly Hills is largely residential, most people passing through the neighborhood are not aware of the neighborhood's identity.

Recommendation 1: Provide neighborhood sign identification with plantings at designated entry points into the community and/or at public space within the neighborhood.

Recommendation 2: Consider adding a neighborhood bulletin board in Woodstock Park to encourage neighborhood information sharing. Such a structure should be placed where it would not obstruct views of the park.

Concern Area: Lee Highway lacks architectural cohesiveness and has little urbanscape amenities such as street furniture, except for two bus shelters. The Lee Highway revitalization plan adopted by Arlington County in 1994 includes a portion of the Waverly Hills neighborhood. The plan boundaries begin at the intersection of Lee Highway and Woodstock Street and continue east into the Cherrydale area. Recommendations in the plan that affect Waverly Hills are as follows:

- Develop an attractive walkway system to link residential and commercial areas.
- Promote neighborhood identity, neighborhood conservation, historic preservation, apartment and housing preservation programs, and appropriate in-fill development.
- Implement the recommended streetscape plan designed to foster the creation of unified, pedestrian scale, streetscape improvements.
- Construct distinctive crosswalks at major intersections to encourage pedestrians to cross at appropriate locations and to increase driver attentiveness.
- Coordinate the undergrounding of overhead utilities along Lee Highway; encourage the undergrounding of transformers, or their placement behind property lines with adequate screening.
- Convert overhead traffic signals to a mast arm system.
- Consider the development and adoption of a "sign overlay district" to provide consistent design regulation for business, information and identification signs.

Recommendation 3: Consider certain aspects of the Lee Highway Revitalization Plan which improve Lee Highway such as the installation of sidewalk brick-edged treatment near commercial zones and mast-arm traffic lights. Support the undergrounding of utility poles along Lee highway or the relocation of utility poles with the widening of sidewalks wherever possible.

Recommendation 4: Replace worn, faded, or illegible signs.

Recommendation 5: Support county efforts to standardize bus stops. Request metrobus to install a new bus shelters, possibly with a brick plaza and concrete pads with bolts for a newspaper box, garbage cans and a mailbox. Request metrobus to allow "Waverly Hills" signs on the shelters.

