

**DOUGLAS PARK**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION**  
**PLAN**

**FINAL DRAFT**

**September 1998**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## GOALS

The residents of Douglas Park seek to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhood by encouraging civic participation from all segments of our diverse community of young and old, singles and families, and people of all ethnic backgrounds. Our most important goals are to:

- Balance the neighborhood's current mix of residential choices and densities by emphasizing lower density owner-occupied residences, by discouraging inappropriate development and by carefully managing commercial rezoning. The neighborhood is not in favor of higher residential densities, through rezoning or other means, because of the stress existing density has placed on schools, County infrastructure and services, and on property values.
- Foster a family-friendly environment in our neighborhood and support Randolph Elementary School as our neighborhood school.
- Ensure neighborhood safety and security by encouraging residents' participation in community policing programs and by encouraging a County focus on crime-reduction measures in our community.
- Expand and improve the neighborhood's sidewalk network and improve street lighting where it is inadequate.
- Improve the appearance of Douglas Park's streetscape with additional landscaping, street improvements, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.
- Improve pedestrian safety and protect the neighborhood from cut-through traffic, speeding, and other traffic safety hazards by immediately initiating the County's Residential Traffic Management process.
- Encourage the revitalization of Columbia Pike and its businesses and promote a blend of services and retail stores that the neighborhood needs, with a scale and density compatible with community desires.
- Promote the identity of Douglas Park and create visual gateways by placing identification signs and landscaping at appropriate neighborhood entrances.
- Protect, improve and expand our neighborhood's natural assets--its parks and open spaces.
- Work in conjunction with Arlington County Government to assure planning and receipt of County services and amenities that help create strong neighborhoods.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

COUNTY SERVICES:

1. The County should continue its present refuse collection service, brush pickup, and appliance pickup. Douglas Park opposes any reductions in these services.
2. The County should continue its leaf collection service, extensively publicizing when collection will occur.
3. The County should act to control litter near commercial areas through increased enforcement of littering laws and through the placement of attractive waste receptacles in appropriate locations on streets leading from these areas.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

4. The County should increase its police protection in the Douglas Park neighborhood, with particular attention to patrolling the neighborhood's three parks: Douglas Park, Doctor's Run Park, and Monroe Park, especially at night.
5. The County should work with neighborhood residents to initiate traffic-calming measures, especially enforcing existing speed limits and parking restrictions.

HUMAN SERVICES:

6. The County should carefully evaluate any plans for placement of future residential care facilities. The first priority should be equitable distribution of these facilities, not the relative affordability of a property.
7. The County should require, as part of the process for Use Permits and reviews for these facilities, that service providers work with neighborhood residents on issues such as liaison, traffic, staffing, program hours, external appearance, and any other factors that relate to the assimilation of the residential care facility into the neighborhood.
8. The County should notify the neighborhood well in advance of any proposal for additional human service facilities and that the establishment of additional facilities be part of a comprehensive countywide study and plan.

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### **RANDOLPH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

9. An above-street warning light alerting traffic about the blind approach to the intersection of South Quincy Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street South should be installed, and all traffic should be required to stop at this intersection by installing either a traffic signal or three-way stop signs.
10. Sidewalks should be insulated from roadways through installation of nubs or planting strips to improve the safety of major walkways to Randolph School on South Quincy Street and 16th Street South.
11. Nubs should be installed at the intersection of 16th Street South and South Quincy to shorten crossing distances. (Other measures may also be acceptable when identified.)
12. Paths through the wooded areas behind Randolph School leading down to Doctor's Run Park should regularly be cleaned of underbrush.
13. Lighting should be installed on the path behind Randolph school leading down to Doctor's Run Park.
14. The play field behind Randolph School should be properly drained, seeded, and marked as a soccer field.
15. The County should commit to a maximum enrollment at Randolph Elementary School and take steps to permanently end overcrowding by redistricting school boundaries, opening an additional K-5 elementary school in South Arlington, and ending support for increased housing densities.

### **PARKS & RECREATION**

#### **DOUGLAS PARK:**

16. Community members should be included in master planning of both the newly acquired properties and the existing portion of Douglas Park. County planning should recognize the community's strong desire to leave this land undeveloped.
17. All walking trails should be restored to their original state. This should include replacement of the timber steps, which have seriously deteriorated.
18. The Douglas Park dry streambed should be periodically inspected and trash and dangerous debris removed. As part of this inspection, an assessment to determine if soil erosion can be prevented or slowed should be conducted.
19. Split rail fencing with fine mesh wiring along the bottom should be installed at the top of the dry streambed on the north side of the park as a safety measure.
20. Additional benches should be installed on both the north and south sides of the park.

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### **MONROE PARK:**

21. The County should provide additional benches for Monroe Park, especially near the playground equipment.
22. The playground area should be cleaned of grass and other debris.
23. The County should provide a low planting along the park property line behind the playground.

### **DOCTOR'S RUN PARK:**

24. A split rail fence with fine mesh wiring along the bottom and open gate entrances at appropriate intervals should be installed along the length of the George Mason Drive property line. Such a fence would keep small children from running into oncoming traffic and prevent events such as a ball rolling out into the street. It would visually enhance the park area as well.
25. Additional benches should be installed, especially in the southern end of the park.
26. The existing water fountain, which currently does not drain properly, should be repaired.
27. The County should develop options for dealing with worsening soil erosion along the walking paths in the wooded areas of the park.
28. The large, dead tree behind the evergreen plantings at the north end of the park should be removed and a replacement tree considered.
29. The County should restore the Doctor's Run watershed by day-lighting Doctor's Run Branch stream and create in the neighborhood an artificial wetland that would serve as an aesthetic, environmental and recreation resource.

### **DOG PARK:**

30. The County should establish a managed-access dog park at the water tower site at Ft. Barnard under the sponsorship of the Douglas Park Civic Association.

### **OFF-STREET BIKE TRAIL:**

31. The County should create a bike trail loop through the six neighborhoods of the east end of Columbia Pike (Central Arlington, Arlington Heights, Alcova Heights, Douglas Park, Columbia Heights and Arlington View) by acquiring properties along the routes described and constructing an off-street bike trail.

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### **COMMUNITY APPEARANCE**

#### UTILITY LINES:

32. The County, in concert with the telephone, cable, and power providers, should research approaches to moving utility lines underground.

#### LITTER:

33. Appropriate trash receptacles should be placed at intervals along South Monroe Street.
34. The County should enforce litter ordinances and communicate the County-wide desire for litter free streets and property by posting “No Littering” signs prominently.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD LIGHTING:

Possible areas for new or additional lighting are:

35. South Quincy Street from Columbia Pike to 13th Street South
36. South Quincy Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South
37. South Monroe Street from Columbia Pike to 14th Street South
38. 17th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
39. 14th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
40. 16th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
41. 16th Street South from Four Mile Run Drive to South Stafford Street
42. South Highland Street from Columbia Pike to Walter Reed Drive
43. South Randolph Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South
44. Path from Randolph School to Doctor’s Run Park.

#### LANDSCAPING:

45. The County should work in concert with school planners and other concerned citizens to develop a safe and attractive landscape and lighting plan along South Quincy Street in front of Randolph Elementary School.
46. The County should inspect South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and 14th Street South and develop options for landscaping, to include planting strips, and trees.
47. The County should provide planting strips along sidewalk areas wherever possible. Also, the median strip dividing Walter Reed Drive between Columbia Pike and 13th Road South needs additional landscaping, similar to that on Walter Reed Drive just south of this area.

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### GRAFFITI:

48. Police and community residents should work together to develop a system of increased patrols designed to prevent additional graffiti incidents.
49. The County should enact legislation designed to beautify the community by requiring businesses and public entities (e.g., Metro) to remove graffiti as soon as it occurs.
50. The County should enact or enforce legislation to discourage graffiti writing through stiff penalties and other deterrent measures.

### NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTIFICATION:

51. The County should install community identification signs at appropriate intersections. Recommended locations include: South George Mason Drive where it borders Doctor's Run Park, South Walter Reed Drive and South Four Mile Run, 12th Street South and South Quincy Street, 12th Street South and South Monroe Street, South Highland Street and South Walter Reed Drive and South Randolph Street and South Walter Reed Drive. A maximum of four sites are allowed under the ordinance; the neighborhood will select the four sites at a later time.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

#### *52. Curbs and Gutters-*

- 19th Street South between South Oakland and South Pollard Streets
- 18th Street South between South Walter Reed and South Monroe Street, and also between South Nelson and South Quincy Streets
- 17th Street South between South Glebe Road and South Lincoln Street
- 14th Street South between South Monroe and South Pollard Streets
- 13th Street South (right of way) between South Monroe and Glebe Road -- also paving f street
- 13th Street South between South Monroe and South Norwood Streets
- 13th Street South between Glebe Road and Walter Reed Drive
- 13th Road South west of South Highland Street
- 12th Street South between South Highland Street and Walter Reed Drive
- South Irving Street
- South Lowell Street
- South Oakland Street between 16th Street South and 14th Street South
- South Pollard Street between 16th and 14th Streets South
- South Quebec Street west of South Randolph Street
- South Randolph Street between 16th Street South and Douglas Park

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South Stafford Street between 16th Street South and 16th Road South

### *53. Storm Drains:*

The intersection of South Quincy Street and 19th Street South

The rear property line of residences on the north side of 13th Street South

The intersection of 13th Street South and South Monroe Street

South Monroe Street between 12th and 13th Streets South (west side)

### *54. Sidewalks:*

13th Street South and South Monroe Street -- overhanging brush on the south side of 13th Street South

South Monroe Street between 13th Street South and 14th Street South -- a Mulberry tree on the east side of the street has droppings that are slippery and which force pedestrians into the street, which has a high volume and speed of traffic.

South Highland Street between 14th Street South and 13th Road South has overgrown shrubbery on the west side that forces pedestrians into South Highland Street, which has a high volume and speed of traffic.

## LAND USE AND ZONING

### DELICATE BALANCE:

55. The County should not allow relatively lower-priced property in the neighborhood to become a self-fulfilling rationale by approving higher density plans simply because the neighborhood is not overwhelmingly single-family residential. The County should carefully evaluate proposals for land uses in the neighborhood for compatibility with County goals for optimal ratios in all neighborhoods. The County should resist the polarizing practice of achieving optimal ratios county-wide by overloading Douglas Park with certain land uses because zoning has mitigated against those land uses in other neighborhoods.

### UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE – SOUTH STATION SITE:

56. The County should ensure that details of the South Station Post Office site plan are implemented by the USPS as approved.

### CODE ENFORCEMENT:

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

57. The County should work aggressively with the neighborhood to enforce the zoning ordinance, occupancy code, noise ordinance, care of premises ordinance, building code and other quality-of-life ordinances.

### HOUSING:

58. The County should take actions to increase the rate of owner-occupied dwellings in Douglas Park.

59. The County should reduce its reliance on older rental complexes in the affordable housing stock by requiring new construction set asides from developers where possible in the site plan process.

60. The County should emphasize affordable ownership units, rather than rentals, as a means to achieving its affordable housing goals.

### COLUMBIA PIKE REVITALIZATION:

61. The County should follow through with the revitalization of Columbia Pike consistent with the *Columbia Pike 2000 Plan* to make both the business and residential communities in this area more attractive as a place to work, shop and live.

KEY ISSUE I: No left turn lanes on Glebe Road increases delays and traffic congestion on Glebe Road:

62. Create a left-turn lane on northbound Glebe Road at the intersection with 16th Street South.

63. Create a left-turn lane on northbound Glebe Road at the intersection with 16th Street South.

KEY ISSUE II: Inadequacy of Columbia Pike - Glebe Road intersection forces high traffic flow through the neighborhood

64. Create left turn lanes and signals from northbound Glebe Road onto westbound Columbia Pike. Recently, left turns have become legal at this intersection for traffic traveling westbound on Columbia Pike without creating problems.

65. Allow left turns from southbound Glebe Road onto eastbound Columbia Pike.

66. Restrict parking on South Monroe Street within 30 feet of the intersection of S. Monroe Street at the northeast corner.

67. Paint markings on S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street -- at, and in approach to, the intersection of S. Monroe Street-- to encourage a full stop.

68. Install nubs onto 14th Street South to reduce the width of the street and to control speeding.

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69. Improve Columbia Pike and Glebe Road intersection and reduce traffic diverted through the neighborhood along 14th Street South and South Monroe Street.

**KEY ISSUE III: Traffic Volume and Speeding on South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and South Walter Reed Drive**

70. Improve traffic flow along Glebe Road and at the Columbia Pike/Glebe Road intersection.

71. Install nubs along all intersections of South Monroe Street which currently allow parking.

72. Narrow the entrance to South Monroe Street from Walter Reed Drive using nubs or otherwise discourage high-speed turns from northbound Walter Reed Drive traffic onto South Monroe Street.

73. Require traffic to stop in additional locations.

74. Increase enforcement of speeding laws.

75. Install "No Through Trucks" signs on along the length of South Monroe Street.

76. Prevent access to the proposed post office parking lot from South Monroe Street to ensure that traffic intending to go west on Columbia Pike is not routed through the neighborhood via South Monroe Street or other neighborhood streets -- in particular, the right-of-way for the unopened portion of 13th Street South between Glebe Road and South Monroe Street should not be opened to traffic.

**KEY ISSUE IV: Use of 16th Street South from Glebe Road to South Four Mile Run Drive as Cut-through Route**

77. Install nubs, traffic humps, and traffic circles at appropriate intersections along 16th Street South to reduce the width of the street and thereby reduce speeding.

78. Increase enforcement of the speed limit.

79. Install caution signs alerting drivers to children, the hill, and dangerous intersections.

80. Reduce the unbroken length of road by installing stop signs at several intersections.

81. Install "No Through Trucks" signs along the length of 16th Street South.

**KEY ISSUE V: Safety Hazards on South Quincy Street from Columbia Pike to South Walter Reed Drive**

82. Install nubs, traffic circles and traffic humps at appropriate intersections along South Quincy Street.

83. Install 3-way stop signs at the intersections of South Quincy and South 14th Street and South Quincy and South 13th Street to protect Randolph students and to make South Quincy Street less attractive to cut-through traffic.

84. Install several school caution lights near the school on South Quincy Street.

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85. Ensure that the children cross South Quincy Street only at the most highly visible and designated areas.
86. Install signs that alert traffic to areas of low visibility in on South Quincy Street.
87. Plant trees between the sidewalks and curbs along South Quincy Street to create a physical buffer from traffic for the children.
88. Install "You Are Speeding" signals for both northbound and southbound traffic near Randolph Elementary School on South Quincy Street.
89. Install "No Through Trucks" signs along South Quincy Street.
90. Monitor and study traffic congestion resulting from the student drop-off lane at Randolph Elementary School, and devise solutions to ensure smooth and safe traffic flow during peak times.

### KEY ISSUE VI: Excessive Speeding on Glebe Road between South Walter Reed Drive and Columbia Pike

91. Create left turn lanes in both directions on this road.
92. Create a left turn lane for access to the new postal facility for northbound Glebe Road traffic.
93. Install a traffic light at the entrance to the new postal facility at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South and Glebe Road with protective left turn signals both into and out of the postal facility.
94. Establish a more frequent police patrol/radar presence to reduce speeding.

### KEY ISSUE VII: Dangerous intersection at South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike

95. Create left-turn arrow signaling for all directions.

### KEY ISSUE VIII: Dangerous intersection at Glebe Road and South Walter Reed Drive

96. Install highly directional traffic lights which cannot be seen by traffic approaching from adjacent streets.
97. Clearly mark lanes, and indicate what turns are permitted with street markings and signs.
98. Extend the timing of the traffic lights in some directions to ensure that late traffic has time to clear the intersection before opposing traffic starts.
99. Make southbound traffic on Glebe Road aware that northbound traffic may be crossing in front of it to turn left onto 17th Street South and that "Right Turn on Red" is not permitted onto southbound Walter Reed Drive from Glebe Road.

### KEY ISSUE IX: The intersection of 13th Street South and South Quincy Street

100. Install an above-street warning light alerting traffic to the blind approach to this intersection, and require all traffic to stop at 13th Street South by installing either a traffic signal or three-way stop signs.

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KEY ISSUE X: The intersection of 16th Street South and South Quincy Street

101. Retain four-way stop sign at this intersection.
102. As noted above, install nubs on South Quincy Street and 16th Street South.
103. Install caution signs for eastbound traffic on 16th Street South.

OTHER ISSUES:

South Highland Street:

104. Narrow the south entrance to South Highland Street and other portions of the road using nubs.
105. Install caution signs alerting drivers about children and cross traffic at the south entrance of South Highland Street.
106. Reduce the uninterrupted unbroken length of road by installing at least one stop sign.
107. Create a left turn signal for northbound traffic on Walter Reed Drive turning onto Columbia Pike.

19th Street South from Walter Reed Drive to South Quincy Street:

108. Install caution signs, painted crosswalks at intersections, and sidewalks on the south side of the street to reduce speeding and provide a safer path for pedestrians.

South Randolph Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South:

109. Reduce the width of the intersection at South Walter Reed Drive and South Randolph Street, including possibly constructing a traffic island.

12th Street South between South Monroe Street and South Quincy Street:

110. Install "No Trucks" signs on 12th Street South as well as on South Quincy Street and South Monroe Street.

The intersection of 12th Street South and South Monroe Street:

111. Improve visibility by using nubs on South Monroe Street to allow cars to pull out further without being in the path of traffic.

The intersection of 12th Street South and South Highland Street:

112. Construct nubs on South Highland Street to allow traffic on 12th Street South to pull out farther into the intersection without being in the path of oncoming traffic.

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The intersection of 13th Road South and Glebe Road:

113. Make clearer the one-way markings at this intersection.

The intersection of 13th Street South and South Monroe Street:

114. Reduce the visual and physical obstruction created by the brush.
115. Use nubs on South Monroe to Street to protect vehicles trying to enter safely onto South Monroe Street.

The intersection of 16th Street South and South Monroe Street:

116. As noted previously, install nubs on South Monroe Street and 16th Street South.
117. Restrict parking within 10 yards of this intersection on 16th Street South.

The intersection of 16th Street South and South Stafford Street:

118. Protect vehicles on South Stafford Street by installing nubs on 16th Street South.
119. Mark in some manner the blind spot at the crest of the hill on South Stafford Street.

The intersection of 18th Street South and South Monroe Street:

120. Install nubs on South Monroe Street.
121. Narrow the entrance to South Monroe Street at South Walter Reed Drive.
122. Prohibit parking within 10 yards of the intersection of South Monroe Street and Walter Reed Drive.

The intersection of 19th Street South and South Nelson Street:

123. Use signs and/or street markings to indicate that this is a blind intersection.
124. Signs should also alert South Nelson Street traffic to the poor visibility or blind spot at this intersection.
125. A crosswalk should be installed on 19th Street South as far to the west of this intersection if possible.

The intersection of 19th Street South and South Quincy Street:

126. Install a 4-way stop sign at this intersection.

The intersection of South Highland Street and Columbia Pike:

127. Install caution signs for the corner retail use and South Highland Street traffic. If the service station proposes any modifications, traffic flow should be improved as part of the modification plans.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### I. The Historical Setting of New Arlington - Douglas Park

Earliest land ownership in Arlington County by Europeans can be traced to the turbulent period of Charles II, The Virginia Company, Cromwell and the English Commonwealth, Thomas Lord Culpepper, and the first Fairfax in America. According to a land ownership map of 1669 - 1796, researched by Donald A. Wise in 1976, the major portion of New Arlington - Douglas Park was part of a 1,215-acre estate granted in 1719 and owned by John Todd and Evan Thomas.

In the middle 1800's, New Englanders were attracted to Arlington and Fairfax Counties by a combination of better climate and inexpensive land temporarily worn out by tobacco farming. Arlington was, of course, agricultural in nature at that time. After the disruption and devastation of the Civil War, what is now Arlington County recovered slowly and remained essentially an agricultural community until 1900.

The Civic Association takes its name from two separate housing developments of the same names. A map study of 20th century Arlington shows no urban development in our community in 1925. In 1928, the Douglas Park housing development appears on maps north and south of present day Walter Reed Drive. While laid out, there is no detail showing actual construction. By 1938, the map shows Douglas Park and New Arlington running together. In 1938, Douglas Park temporarily takes on the spelling of 'Douglass Park.' Maps from 1938 show New Arlington expanded by Hunter's addition from 17th to 19th Streets South and from South Monroe Street on the east to South Quincy Street on the west. At that time, the entire New Arlington development is only lightly built. Douglass Park to the south is even more lightly populated from 17th Street South to a point above 22nd Street South and on the west from South Randolph Street and the Washington & Old Dominion Railway to the community of West Nauck on its east. Most of Douglass Park of that day is now included in the Nauck Civic Association. Other later tracts now included in our community between South Monroe Street and Walter Reed Drive are the Corbett tract, John Travers's addition, and subdivision of Joel Whitehead's estate, C.B. Munson's 3d addition, Munson's 2d addition, the A.E. Dye Plan, and the R.R. Dye Plan Subdivision. West of South Monroe Street were farms belonging to the Hall, Corbett, and Nicholson families north of 12th Street and south of Columbia Pike; and the Luther Wise addition and the farms of Edward Chewning and Lydia J. Warner South of 12th Street. The 'Douglass Park' spelling appears on maps from 1938 to 1952 after which the original spelling is resumed.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **II. Community Services**

Douglas Park residents are generally satisfied with County-provided services, with a few exceptions, according to the neighborhood survey conducted by the New Arlington - Douglas Park Civic Association prior to developing this Neighborhood Conservation Plan.

Survey respondents indicated significant concern about crime in Douglas Park. Neighborhood residents generally agree that an increase in police visibility would greatly enhance the safety of people and property.

Respondents expressed particular concern about the activities in the neighborhood's three parks. The parks are often the locations for underage drinking parties and are strewn with broken bottles and other litter, making the parks inhospitable for small children and other neighborhood residents.

Pedestrian safety threatened by speeding on neighborhood streets is also viewed as a critical area in need of immediate County action. Neighborhood residents are very concerned about the enforcement of existing traffic rules as can be seen in the Douglas Park recommendations regarding general traffic issues.

Douglas Park is home to several residential care facilities. Residents are concerned that County officials not concentrate a disproportionate number of residential care facilities in our neighborhood.

Randolph Elementary School is the only school located within the boundaries of the Douglas Park neighborhood. Randolph School serves as a community center in many respects. The Douglas Park Civic Association holds its meetings there, as well as fundraising events such as the neighborhood flea market in the Spring. It also serves as a polling place for elections. The school personnel work with the Civic Association during the holiday season to identify needy families in the neighborhood to be recipients of gifts through the holiday gift drive. It is this cooperative spirit that Douglas Park residents wish to promote and perpetuate in their neighborhood school.

Since renovation of the building during the 1992-93 school year, Randolph's lot has less room for outdoor activities. The only flat space on the lot large enough for a formal playing field has only recently been seeded. For days after a rainstorm, the muddy field inhibits children from crossing it to use the playground at the far end during recess or after school. The playground too, built new during the 1992-93 renovation, suffers from poor drainage, resulting in large areas of mud and standing water which must be navigated to access the playground equipment. Proper

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

seeding, drainage, and marking of the play field would reclaim this now-unusable spot and make it both an elementary school and neighborhood resource.

Despite being the smallest geographic elementary school district, Randolph Elementary School ranks among the top three elementary schools for population and overcrowding. Capacity studies completed by Arlington Public Schools in early 1998 show Randolph's capacity to be 410 students given the site, the configuration of the facility, and the large number of special programs and services needed to serve our student population. Randolph's enrollment fluctuates between 560 and 600 students during a typical school year. Five-year projections published by the Arlington Public Schools in April 1995 predict an enrollment of 735 students, a 24% increase, by September 1999. Residents are concerned that overcrowding will deteriorate the quality of education offered to neighborhood children who attend Randolph.

Randolph Elementary School is located on South Quincy Street, a relatively broad and uninterrupted stretch of road. The current design of South Quincy Street encourages cut-through traffic -- including trucks -- and is especially prone to speeding. Hills in several places reduce visibility, and the street intersects with several other busy streets. Of special concern is the confluence of high-volume, speeding traffic, and low visibility due to hills in the vicinity of Randolph Elementary School. Many school children cross South Quincy Street and use the sidewalks on South Quincy Street with little protection from speeding traffic. Cars picking up and dropping off children add to the congestion.

### **III. Parks and Recreation**

Douglas Park has three public parks within its boundaries: Monroe Park, Douglas Park, and Doctor's Run Park. These parks are used frequently by the residents of Douglas Park. Functions include picnics, volleyball games, using playground equipment and general recreation.

Douglas Park originally contained extensive walking paths defined by treated lumber, and a wood chip base. Large portions of the walking trails have become completely overgrown and are essentially unusable. Included on these trails is a pair of steps, which have deteriorated over time and have become unusable. The walking trails which remain usable lead to two wooden and metal bridges that span an essentially dry streambed. While the bridges are in good repair, the streambed is subject to increasing soil erosion, stagnant, mosquito-breeding water, and gathering trash. A steep drop-off into the dry stream bed on the north side of the park is also an area of concern, since this is clearly unsafe for children, especially younger ones.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

New Arlington - Douglas Park residents are concerned that the many small children who use Doctor's Run Park are at risk from traffic on heavily traveled South George Mason Drive. Also of concern is extensive soil erosion along the formal and informal paths leading from Randolph School.

### **IV. Community Appearance and Identification**

Douglas Park currently has aboveground utility lines supported by metal and wooden poles. This type of system, while cost effective, is very unsightly. Replacement of this system with underground utility lines, while quite expensive, would represent a major improvement to the streetscape.

Street lighting is a concern in various parts of the community. The community is supportive of the use of the Hadco Luminaire style street lights, particularly those areas of New Arlington - Douglas Park that residents have identified as gateway areas to the neighborhood.

The large majority of planting strips, sidewalk, and median strip areas in Douglas Park have little in the way of landscaping provided by the County. In general, residents would appreciate having the County install trees in the planting strips and provide appropriate landscaping in any public areas where feasible.

There is a notable Holly tree, believed to be the largest and oldest Holly tree in Arlington, located on the Travers Cemetery Historic district site. The community is very interested in and committed to maintaining and protecting this notable tree.

The community is supportive of community identification signs being placed at major thoroughfares entering the community.

### **V. Land Use and Zoning**

Douglas Park includes a portion of the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District (from South Courthouse Road to South Oakland Street, and south of Columbia Pike to 13th Street South). This area constitutes the principal commercial precinct in the neighborhood. The community is generally very supportive of business conservation efforts. Douglas Park wants to

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work with the County and local businesses to maintain commercial areas that are attractive, convenient, and successful to serve the community and its neighbors.

The strong sentiment of the Douglas Park community is to preserve the character of the neighborhood. This sentiment has been frequently expressed in Civic Association meetings and reflected in responses to a neighborhood survey. By more than 3 to 1, survey respondents said they approve of the current land use in the neighborhood. By more than 2 to 1, they indicated reluctance to change the current land use pattern. Eighty percent of respondents said that the commercial establishments in and near the neighborhood met their daily shopping needs.

While recognizing that by-right prerogatives pertain to existing parcels, residents want to preserve the low-density atmosphere of the neighborhood and strongly urge that all future site planning decisions preserve existing density. Whenever possible, the County should strive to enhance existing open space, common areas, and buffers, through land acquisition if necessary.

According to the 1990 Census, Douglas Park has approximately 850 single-family residential units and 2800 multifamily units, the vast majority being affordable to those below median income levels. Approximately 80% of all dwelling units in the neighborhood are rentals. Residents of Douglas Park believe that higher rates of owner-occupied units are necessary to give a community strength. HUD's 1995 National Homeownership Strategy encourages homeownership as a commitment to personal financial security, public safety, sense of community and economic growth. The National Homeownership Strategy sets a goal for the nation of 67.5% of residential units to be owner-occupied in 2000. Douglas Park supports moving towards this goal.

Residents have expressed concerns about possible violations of current zoning in the Douglas Park Area. Allegations include illegal auto repairs and other commercial ventures in strictly residential areas. The community wants to work with the County to enforce the zoning laws and to clean up any illegal commercial uses.

The Douglas Park community is concerned about the trend towards higher density land use. While residents embrace the benefits of all aspects of diversity that our neighborhood provides, they caution that the combination of a mixed neighborhood and attractive land prices not be misconstrued as an invitation or opportunity for excessive concentrations of residential treatment programs, low-income rental housing, and high-density zoning creep. Mixed neighborhoods, more than others, are a careful interplay of many factors -- commercial, residential, public service, open space, and human -- that sustain their vitality and that residents want preserved. Although the mosaic is of a mixed neighborhood, the tesserae in that mosaic are the land uses,

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

housing styles and demographics; changing those components will make an indelible change in the community. No less than predominantly single-family neighborhoods, we are concerned that the elements that give a neighborhood strength and spirit not be pushed out of balance.

## **VI. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

The Douglas Park community has identified traffic management as one of its top priorities. Concerns include volume of traffic -- particularly "cut-through" traffic -- speeding, traffic accidents, and hazards to pedestrians and road infrastructure; all of which engender safety and quality-of-life concerns among the residents.

Overall, the Douglas Park community seeks to work in concert with County traffic experts and political leaders to develop a plan which improves traffic management structures for the neighborhood. Suggested actions in this regard include "nubs," increased signage and street-markings, four-way stop signs, and increased police monitoring and enforcement. The Douglas Park community is also interested in other traffic flow regulation devices if other options are available.

Certain streets in the Douglas Park community experience problems such as high-volume and high-speed traffic. While many of these streets are designed to provide primary access to the neighborhood, there is a large amount of traffic which is not neighborhood oriented but rather cut-through traffic. These streets, as they are presently configured, offer attractive opportunities for non-neighborhood traffic to "beat the system" by avoiding congestion on major arterials; avoiding stop lights; and using long, uninterrupted, less frequently patrolled stretches of residential streets on which to speed. A number of intersections in and adjoining the neighborhood also present difficulties, including driver visibility and pedestrian safety.

While the community recognizes the need for a countywide traffic management system, Douglas Park believes it is essential to bring about measures to reduce and control traffic difficulties in order to ensure resident safety and an adequate quality of life for the community. Furthermore, the community is firmly opposed to any measures that would further divide the neighborhood by increasing traffic flow. Douglas Park recognizes several aspects of streets and traffic patterns in the neighborhood which are of paramount importance. These key issues have significant impacts upon the Douglas Park neighborhood in terms of noise, pedestrian safety, motorist safety, neighborhood cohesiveness, and overall quality of life.

## GOALS

The residents of Douglas Park seek to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhood by encouraging civic participation from all segments of our diverse community of young and old, singles and families, and people of all ethnic backgrounds. Our most important goals are to:

- Balance the neighborhood's current mix of residential choices and densities by emphasizing lower density owner-occupied residences, by discouraging inappropriate development and by carefully managing commercial rezoning. The neighborhood is not in favor of higher residential densities, through rezoning or other means, because of the stress existing density has placed on schools, County infrastructure and services, and on property values.
- Foster a family-friendly environment in our neighborhood and support Randolph Elementary School as our neighborhood school.
- Ensure neighborhood safety and security by encouraging residents' participation in community policing programs and by encouraging a County focus on crime-reduction measures in our community.
- Expand and improve the neighborhood's sidewalk network and improve street lighting where it is inadequate.
- Improve the appearance of Douglas Park's streetscape with additional landscaping, street improvements, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.
- Improve pedestrian safety and protect the neighborhood from cut-through traffic and speeding.
- Encourage the revitalization of Columbia Pike and its businesses and promote a blend of services and retail stores that the neighborhood needs, with a scale and density compatible with community desires.
- Promote the identity of Douglas Park and create visual gateways by placing identification signs and landscaping at appropriate neighborhood entrances.
- Protect, improve and expand our neighborhood's natural assets--its parks and open spaces.
- Work in conjunction with Arlington County Government to assure planning and receipt of County services and amenities that help create strong neighborhoods.

## I. The Historical Setting of New Arlington - Douglas Park

### *First Owners and Settlements<sup>1</sup>*

Earliest land ownership in Arlington County by Europeans can be traced to the turbulent period of Charles II, The Virginia Company, Cromwell and the English Commonwealth, Thomas Lord Culpepper, and the first Fairfax in America. According to a land ownership map of 1669 - 1796, researched by Donald A. Wise in 1976, the major portion of New Arlington - Douglas Park was part of a 1,215-acre estate granted in 1719 and owned by John Todd and Evan Thomas. The approximate northeastern corner of today's civic association was among property owned by James Robertson granted in 1730.<sup>2</sup>

In the middle 1800's, New Englanders were attracted to Arlington and Fairfax Counties by a combination of better climate and inexpensive land temporarily worn out by tobacco farming. Among the new settlers were a number of the Corbett family from New York State, who began arriving in 1849. Sewell B. Corbett, who owned property north and south of Columbia Pike and west of Glebe Road, was among these immigrants.<sup>3</sup> Another prominent landowner was Miles Cleveland Munson, whose family owned land within the boundaries of the present Civic Association, and other families such as Travers, Whitehead, Berry, and Grey.<sup>4</sup> Arlington was, of course, agricultural in nature at that time. After the disruption and devastation of the Civil War, what is now Arlington County recovered slowly and remained essentially an agricultural community until 1900.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Arlington County, VA: A History, C.B. Rose, Jr. 1976. This history, available at the Arlington Historical Society, is recommended for those interested in a legal study of land ownership in what is now Arlington County.

<sup>2</sup>Arlington County in Virginia, A Pictorial History, Nan and Rose Netherton, Donning Co., Norfolk, VA. 1987, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>Arlington Heritage, Eleanor Lee Templeman, 1959, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>G.M. Hopkins Atlas, 1878, pp. 66-67.

<sup>5</sup>Netherton, p. 80.

## ***The Civil War***

Few localities were as completely disrupted by the war as was the Arlington area of then Alexandria County and few areas suffered as long.<sup>6</sup> To defend the city of Washington from attack, a series of 68 forts and batteries were erected to surround the city. Forts and artillery sites were connected by trenches, roads, and depots. The needs of the Army destroyed Arlington's woodlands and agricultural economy. Many landowners, who had voted against the Virginia Ordinance of Secession, left Arlington for the safety of Washington and occupied Alexandria.<sup>7</sup>

A chain of defensive forts was constructed in present day Arlington County. One such fort was Fort Berry, located near the site of the pre-war Berry house then occupied by S.B. Corbett.<sup>8</sup> Fort Berry's earthworks were located at what is now the intersection of 16th Street South and South Monroe Street,<sup>9</sup> although today no part of the fort remains above ground. Fort Berry was one of a series of earthen forts built as the outer perimeter of the Washington defensive line. "The outer perimeter of the Arlington Line formed a line of works west of the 'Proper Defenses of Washington' and started with Fort Barnard (south of Walter Reed Drive) and ended with Fort C.F. Smith" in north Arlington.<sup>10</sup> Fort Berry was named for Major General Hiram G. Berry of the 4th Maine Infantry Regiment killed at Chancellorsville, VA on 2 May 1863. The fort was built in 1863 as an "unflanked work of moderate dimensions and ... a prominent point for attack."<sup>11</sup> Guns at Fort Barnard and Fort Richardson (now on Army-Navy Country Club grounds) were arranged to support the guns of Fort Berry. Fort Berry's perimeter measured 215 yards with provision for 10 guns. Actual guns installed were two 8 inch howitzers and two 4.5 inch Rodman guns. The fort was garrisoned by troops from Connecticut, Ohio, and New York at different times.<sup>12</sup> Officers' quarters, troop billets, and storage facilities were outside the fort. Officers' quarters are said to have been located at the site of present day 3225 17th Street South.<sup>13</sup> A Civil War map shows a cemetery north of the fort along the east side of the present 1300 block of South Monroe Street measuring about 100 x 500 feet.<sup>14</sup> A recent study concludes that the Army

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup>Rose, p. 97.

<sup>8</sup>Templeman, p. 82.

<sup>9</sup>Mr. Lincoln's Forts: A Guide to the Civil War Defenses of Washington, Cooling and Owen, 1988, p. 81.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>13</sup>The Defenses of Washington During the Civil War, David V. Miller, Buffalo, NY, MR Copy, 1976, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup>Templeman, p. 82.

laid out a cemetery around the small Travers family cemetery to be used for military burials if necessary.<sup>15</sup> The troop billets and messing facilities lay between the fort and the cemetery.

### ***Historic Houses and Places***

Since our community was sparsely settled during the 19th century, few houses remain from that period. While there may be others, the following documented houses are of interest:

- The Corbett Plantation overseer's house, also known as the Kallmeyer House, at 1708 South Lincoln Street is believed to have been a part of the Sewell B. Corbett Plantation and reputedly was used as an Army hospital during the Civil War<sup>16</sup>. The antebellum house has lost much of its architectural character through frequent remodeling.
- The house at 4100 18th Street South commands the best view of any in our Civic Association. It is frequently referred to as the Symond's House after an owner at the turn of the 20th century. It is perhaps noteworthy among the neighborhood of recently built homes because of its location and its construction, estimated at 1888 or before<sup>17</sup>.
- There is considerable local interest in Sears, Roebuck Company mail-order houses. Examples are common in Arlington. The house at 1216 South Monroe Street, built in 1930, is an example of one of the many styles offered by Sears. There may be many more in the community. The Arlington County Historic Preservation Program has completed a Historic Resource Survey for the area through 1936. Several other Sears houses were documented.

Cemeteries constitute places of special historical interest. One marked family cemetery remains in the community. The Travers Cemetery at 1307-1309 South Monroe Street contains between 13 and 23 graves from burials dating from 1830 to 1927<sup>18</sup>. It is one of three known family cemeteries in the Civic Association and has been declared a historic district. There are two other known family cemeteries in the community dating back to the 19th century that may still contain graves but which are no longer marked. The Corbett Cemetery runs through the center of the

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<sup>15</sup>"Report to Ted Mann Regarding Feasibility of, and Options Available for, Reinterment of the Burials at 1309 S. Monroe St., Arlington, VA." Bruce G. McCoy, December 1988, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Historic Landmarks Commission Survey Form No. 60-42.

<sup>17</sup> Arlington Journal, May 6, 1988, p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> Report to Ted Mann Regarding Feasibility of, and Options Available for, Reinterment of the Burials at 1309 S. Monroe St., Arlington, VA. Bruce G. McCoy, Dec. 1988.

block between 16th and 17th Streets South and South Quincy Street to South Randolph Street. Now part of Douglas Park, the cemetery originally measured 477 feet long and 116 feet wide<sup>19</sup>. According to the Arlington Historical Society, "a nearby resident is said to have destroyed the tombstones about 1957 and used the lot to pasture his horses<sup>20</sup>." Until 1958, a third cemetery containing remains of the Berry and Whitehead families could physically be seen at the corner of South Randolph Street and 17th Street South. Only the Travers and Corbett cemeteries show on any known maps<sup>21</sup>.

### ***New Arlington and Douglas Park Early Residential Developments***

The Civic Association takes its name from two separate housing developments of the same names. A map study of 20th century Arlington shows no urban development in our community in 1925<sup>22</sup>. In 1928, the Douglas Park housing development appears on maps north and south of present day Walter Reed Drive. While laid out, there is no detail showing actual construction. By 1938, the map shows Douglas Park and New Arlington running together. In 1938, Douglas Park temporarily takes on the spelling of 'Douglass Park.' Maps from 1938 show New Arlington expanded by Hunter's addition from 17th to 19th Streets South and from South Monroe Street on the east to South Quincy Street on the west. At that time, the entire New Arlington development is only lightly built. Douglass Park to the south is even more lightly populated from 17th Street South to a point above 22nd Street South and on the west from South Randolph Street and the Washington & Old Dominion Railway to the community of West Nauck on its east. Most of Douglass Park of that day is now included in the Nauck Civic Association. Other later tracts now included in our community between South Monroe Street and Walter Reed Drive are the Corbett tract, John Travers's addition, subdivision of Joel Whitehead's estate, C.B. Munson's 3d addition, Munson's 2d addition, the A.E. Dye Plan, and the R.R. Dye Plan Subdivision. West of South Monroe Street were farms belonging to the Hall, Corbett, and Nicholson families north of 12th Street and south of Columbia Pike; and the Luther Wise addition and the farms of Edward Chewning and Lydia J. Warner South of 12th Street.

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<sup>19</sup> Templeman, p. 82.

<sup>20</sup> The Arlington Historical Magazine, vol 8, no. 2, Oct 1986, p. 35.

<sup>21</sup> Map of Alexandria County, VA. G. M. Hopkins' Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, DC, 1878, pp. 66-67. Map prepared from original surveys in The Engineer Department (U.S. Army), sheet no. 8, 1862. Intensive research in Arlington County fails to disclose any evidence that the Corbett graves were disinterred.

<sup>22</sup> Arlington County, VA map compiled in Engineer's Office, Arlington County, August 1935, Sheet 4.

The ‘Douglass Park’ spelling appears on maps from 1938 to 1952 after which the original spelling is resumed. Research has yet to determine who Douglas was.

### ***Boundaries and Street Names***

The community lies at a crossroads of early South Arlington settlement. A capsule summary of boundary streets gives an interesting glimpse into the development of this area.

Columbia Pike (State Highway 244) roughly follows the route of the Columbia Turnpike, a toll road begun in 1808 by the Columbia Turnpike Company of the District of Columbia. It was to run from the Potomac River bridge (apparently the railway bridge over the Potomac) in Arlington to Little River Turnpike in present-day Annandale. The portion of the turnpike in present-day Arlington County was completed by 1812<sup>23</sup>. A Virginia law of 1817 required the Pike to be “well covered with good gravel or stone...”<sup>24</sup> and it remained so until 1926 or 1927 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture added concrete experimental paving from its connection with U.S. Route 1 to South Taylor Street<sup>25</sup>. The Pike was continually used by federal forces during the Civil War from Washington to Bailey's Crossroads. At the close of the War in April 1865, Camp Bailey's Crossroads became a large separation station. It was mainly from Bailey's via the Columbia Pike that the great military marches up Pennsylvania Avenue originated as the Army paraded past the White House in Washington<sup>26</sup>.

Four Mile Run Drive follows the course of the stream of that name and marks the southern boundary of our community. George Washington bought timber land along Four Mile Run from James and George Mercer in 1774 at the suggestion of George Mason. Washington himself visited the tract beginning in 1774 and returned after service in the Revolutionary War to personally lead survey parties in 1785<sup>27</sup>. These lands passed to George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Washington and builder of Arlington House<sup>28</sup>. The Washington and Old

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<sup>23</sup> “Why Do We Call It ...?” Special Publication No. 1, Arlington Historical Society, 1960, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Rose, p. 77.

<sup>25</sup> Two Hundred Years of Transportation; Historic Columbia Pike in 2008, A Preservation Plan. University of Virginia Project Plan 830, Spring 1988.

<sup>26</sup> Elephants and Quaker Guns; Northern Virginia: Crossroads of History, Jane Chapman Whitt. 1966. p. 65.

<sup>27</sup> George Washington’s Four Mile Run Tract, Donald A. Wise, Arlington Historical Magazine, vol 5, no 3, October 1975.

<sup>28</sup> Netherton, p. 47.

Dominion Railway tracks formerly followed Four Mile Run from Falls Church to Alexandria<sup>29</sup>. The railway ended service on 27 August 1968 and its roadbed was converted to the present W & O D Regional Park Trail in 1969<sup>30</sup>.

Walter Reed Drive is a principal arterial road marking our community's eastern boundary. The name honors Major Walter Reed, the Army surgeon whose research and resulting death conquered yellow fever<sup>31</sup>. In our community, Walter Reed Drive roughly follows the route of the Washington, Arlington and Falls Church Railway which ran streetcars from Rosslyn to Nauck from 1901 until approximately 1941<sup>32</sup>.

George Mason Drive, our western boundary, is one of Arlington's major north-south urban highways. It is named for the Virginian responsible for drafting the Virginia Bill of Rights.

Early Arlington grew as separate unincorporated communities and housing developments such as New Arlington and Douglas Park. Each had its own set of street names, many of which duplicated names in other communities. Arlington County rationalized the street name and number pattern in 1934<sup>33</sup>. Since then, named streets in New Arlington - Douglas Park run north-south beginning alphabetically in the two syllable series from Highland Street on the east through Taylor Street on the west. Numbered streets run east-west starting with 11th Street South on the north through 19th Street South.

## **II. Community Services**

### ***County Services***

Douglas Park residents are generally satisfied with County-provided services, with a few exceptions, according to the neighborhood survey conducted by the New Arlington - Douglas Park Civic Association prior to developing this Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Survey

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>31</sup> Pamphlet. Arlington County Street-Naming System, Arlington County Department of Public Works, September 1984.

<sup>32</sup> Old Dominion Trolley Too, A History of the Mt. Vernon Line, John E. Merriken, Published by Leroy O. King, Jr., Dallas, Tx, 1987, p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> Op Cit. (Pamphlet has no page numbers.)

respondents were satisfied with existing curbside refuse collection, including brush and appliance pickup.

The survey indicated there are problems with some services, such as leaf collection in the fall. Because the pickup schedule was uncertain, leaves were raked into the streets early in the season and left there to blow through the neighborhood or take up scarce parking spaces. The County can improve this service through better communication with the community by advertising a leaf collection schedule well in advance and adhering to it.

There is also a problem with litter, especially in the parks and along streets leading from commercial areas, such as South Highland Street, South Monroe Street, South Quincy Street, and 16th Street South. The Community would like more attractive waste receptacles, similar to the type used on Columbia Pike, placed along these routes. A receptacle placed at the corner of 12th Street South and South Monroe Street had improved this situation, but that receptacle was removed and additional receptacles are necessary. Stricter enforcement of the litter ordinances is also needed to discourage littering in these areas.

#### Recommendations

1. The County should continue its present refuse collection service, brush pickup, and appliance pickup. Douglas Park opposes any reductions in these services.
2. The County should continue its leaf collection service, extensively publicizing when collection will occur.
3. The County should act to control litter near commercial areas through increased enforcement of littering laws and through the placement of attractive waste receptacles in appropriate locations on streets leading from these areas.

#### **Public Safety**

Survey respondents indicated significant concern about crime in Douglas Park. Neighborhood residents generally agree that an increase in police visibility would greatly enhance the safety of people and property.

Respondents expressed particular concern about the activities in the neighborhood's three parks. The parks are often the locations for underage drinking parties and are strewn with broken bottles

and other litter, making the parks inhospitable for small children and other neighborhood residents.

Pedestrian safety threatened by speeding on neighborhood streets is also viewed as a critical area in need of immediate County action. Neighborhood residents are very concerned about the enforcement of existing traffic rules as can be seen in the Douglas Park recommendations regarding general traffic issues.

Survey respondents indicated a widespread interest in establishing a network of neighborhood watch programs throughout Douglas Park. To ensure the continued safety of the neighborhood, the Community would like to work with County staff to set up and maintain active neighborhood watch programs.

#### Recommendations

4. The County should increase its police protection in the Douglas Park neighborhood, with particular attention to patrolling the neighborhood's three parks: Douglas Park, Doctor's Run Park, and Monroe Park, especially at night.
5. The County should work with neighborhood residents to initiate traffic-calming measures, especially enforcing existing speed limits and parking restrictions.

Douglas Park residents should initiate and participate in neighborhood watch programs, with assistance and support from the County.

#### ***Human Services***

Douglas Park is home to several residential care facilities. Since 1990, the Arlington Alcohol Rehabilitation Center has been located at 3717 Columbia Pike. There is also a halfway house at 1212 South Irving Street which accommodates 8 people suffering from mental illness.

In operation since April 1988, Demeter House is a project of Vanguard Services Unlimited and occupies two homes at 1301 and 1305 South Monroe Street. Demeter House provides housing for 18 women who are recovering from substance abuse. Children of these women, who are 12 years of age and younger, may also reside at Demeter House. The relationship between Demeter House and the Douglas Park Civic Association has been a good one. The administrators for Demeter House have informed the Civic Association in advance of meetings which might result in more automobile traffic and parked cars on neighboring streets; of staffing changes; and of

issues affecting their special use permit. The Civic Association established a liaison committee to work with Demeter House and, in the Association's newsletter, publishes updates on the program as well as requests for volunteers and donations.

Douglas Park envisions a similar neighborhood relationship with the other existing facilities, such as that at 1212 South Irving Street Neighborhood residents believe that it is incumbent upon service providers to initiate this dialogue.

In neighboring areas, there are also group homes on Walter Reed Drive and 19th Street South and one in the 3100 block of 16th Street South. Properties in Douglas Park are more affordable than in many other parts of the County. Douglas Park residents are concerned that County officials not concentrate a disproportionate number of residential care facilities in our neighborhood.

#### Recommendations

6. The County should carefully evaluate any plans for placement of future residential care facilities. The first priority should be equitable distribution of these facilities, not the relative affordability of a property.
7. The County should require, as part of the process for Use Permits and reviews for these facilities, that service providers work with neighborhood residents on issues such as liaison, traffic, staffing, program hours, external appearance, and any other factors that relate to the assimilation of the residential care facility into the neighborhood.
8. The County should notify the neighborhood well in advance of any proposal for additional human service facilities and that the establishment of additional facilities be part of a comprehensive countywide study and plan.

#### ***Randolph Elementary School***

Randolph Elementary School is the only school located within the boundaries of the Douglas Park neighborhood. Geographically it is the smallest elementary school district in Arlington County, drawing students from Douglas Park west of South Glebe Road and east of South Thomas St. The school first opened its doors for the 1947-48 school year and has seen many changes, with additions built in 1950 and 1960 and a major renovation in 1974. Randolph School was closed for the 1992-93 school year while a major expansion was under construction. The school re-opened for the start of the 1993-94 school year.

Randolph School also serves as a community center in many respects. The Douglas Park Civic Association holds its meetings there, as well as fundraising events such as the neighborhood flea market in the Spring. It also serves as a polling place for elections. The school personnel work with the Civic Association during the holiday season to identify needy families in the neighborhood to be recipients of gifts through the holiday gift drive. It is this cooperative spirit that Douglas Park residents wish to promote and perpetuate in their neighborhood school.

### **Randolph Elementary School Site**

Since renovation of the building during the 1992-93 school year, Randolph's lot has less room for outdoor activities. The only flat space on the lot large enough for a formal playing field has only recently been seeded. For days after a rainstorm, the field remains muddy and inhibits children from crossing it to use the playground at the far end during recess or after school. The playground too, built new during the 1992-93 renovation, suffers from poor drainage, resulting in large areas of mud and standing water which must be navigated to access the playground equipment. Proper seeding, drainage, and marking of the play field would improve this spot and make it both an elementary school and neighborhood resource.

### **Randolph Elementary School Overcrowding**

Despite having the smallest geographic elementary school district, Randolph Elementary School ranks among the top three elementary schools for population and overcrowding. Capacity studies completed by Arlington Public Schools in early 1998 show Randolph's capacity to be 410 students given the site, the configuration of the facility, and the large number of special programs and services needed to serve our student population. Randolph's enrollment fluctuates during the school year between 560 and 600 students, almost 200 students over capacity. Five-year projections published by the Arlington Public Schools in April 1995 predict an attendance of 735 students, a 24% increase, by September 1999. Residents are concerned that overcrowding will deteriorate the quality of education offered to neighborhood children who attend Randolph.

School system actions to reduce enrollment and mitigate the effects of overcrowding in recent years have been less than effective. As mentioned, the school was expanded through a full scale renovation and rehabilitation in 1992-93, with a larger school opening in September 1993 to accommodate the burgeoning population. Although overcrowded when it re-opened, its density was much less than before the reconstruction. A larger facility notwithstanding, overcrowding quickly became a critical problem again in the first year after reopening. A redistricting plan

implemented by the School Board, effective September 1994, re-drew Randolph's geographic boundary, making it the smallest elementary school district in Arlington. Nevertheless, by September 1995 overcrowding was again a rapidly growing problem. In Spring 1996, the Citizen's Committee on Overcrowding in South Arlington Schools was formed comprising parents, teachers, school staff, and County staff to understand the problem and recommend a solution to the School Superintendent. In their final report in Spring 1997, the Committee's primary recommendation was to open a new elementary school to serve the South Arlington population. Additional recommendations were to modify many existing school facilities to accommodate current and projected enrollments.

### **Randolph Elementary School Safety**

Randolph Elementary School is located on South Quincy Street, a relatively broad and uninterrupted stretch of road. The current design of South Quincy Street encourages cut-through traffic -- including trucks -- and is especially prone to speeding. Hills in several places reduce visibility, and the street intersects with several other busy streets. Of special concern is the confluence of high-volume, speeding traffic, and low visibility due to hills in the vicinity of Randolph Elementary School. Many school children cross South Quincy Street and use the sidewalks on South Quincy Street with little protection from speeding traffic. Cars picking up and dropping off children add to the congestion.

As one of only two "walk-in" elementary schools, Randolph needs a safe network of sidewalks and crossings. In addition to the crossing guards and safety patrols used throughout the areas adjacent to the school, sidewalks on major routes to the school, such as South Quincy Street and 16th Street South should be insulated from traffic by nubs and/or planting strips. The installation of nubs at the intersection of 16th Street South and South Quincy Street to narrow the distance a child has to travel to cross the street would be a major improvement. Despite the relocation of the crosswalk to the crest of the hill on South Quincy Street, uphill from the intersection of South Quincy Street and 13th Street South, and the use of crossing guards and safety patrols, the crosswalk remains hazardous for students crossing South Quincy Street to Randolph School because of the traffic. (also see VI. Traffic Management, Key Issues IX & X.)

The woods behind the school leading down the hill to Doctor's Run Park present a difficult security problem. Many children use the paths through the thick woods on their way to and from school and there is considerable concern for their safety. Regular clearing of underbrush to eliminate hiding places is imperative. While the student safety patrol has a generous presence all along the path to Doctor's Run, they are only there for a half hour before school and ten minutes

after school, only on school days and only during the school year. Many adults and children are on that path in darkness without benefit of safety patrol presence. This path needs lighting to improve security for all users.

### Recommendations

9. An above-street warning light alerting traffic about the blind approach to the intersection of South Quincy Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street South should be installed, and all traffic should be required to stop at this intersection by installing either a traffic signal or three-way stop signs.
10. Sidewalks should be insulated from roadways through installation of nubs or planting strips to improve the safety of major walkways to Randolph School on South Quincy Street and 16th Street South.
11. Nubs should be installed at the intersection of 16th Street South and South Quincy to shorten crossing distances. (Other measures may also be acceptable when identified.)
12. Paths through the wooded areas behind Randolph School leading down to Doctor's Run Park should regularly be cleaned of underbrush.
13. Lighting should be installed on the path behind Randolph school leading down to Doctor's Run Park.
14. The play field behind Randolph School should be properly drained, seeded, and marked as a soccer field.
15. The County should commit to a maximum enrollment at Randolph Elementary School and take steps to permanently end overcrowding by redistricting school boundaries, opening an additional K-5 elementary school in South Arlington, and ending support for increased housing densities.

## **III. Parks and Recreation**

Douglas Park has three public parks within its boundaries: Monroe Park, Douglas Park, and Doctor's Run Park. These parks are used frequently by the residents of Douglas Park. Functions include picnics, volleyball games, use of playground equipment and general recreation. In

addition, the Ft. Barnard triangle, the green space bordered by South Walter Reed Dr., S. Pollard Street and 19th Street South hosts a variety of uses.

### ***Douglas Park***

Douglas Park has public access on South Quincy Street, South Randolph Street, South Stafford Street and on 16th Street South, with a small parking area accessible from the South Randolph Street entrance. The park adjoins numerous residences on each of these streets, as well as on 18th Street South. There is one playground for young children, a separate swing area, a volleyball court, one small gazebo and one larger picnic pavilion, two barbecue grills and several benches.

The County recently acquired two residences on South Quincy Street which directly adjoin the current park entrance closest to 18th Street South, and also acquired the Hillenbrand property at the corner of South Quincy Street and 16th Street South. All structures on these properties were demolished and the land was added to Douglas Park.

Douglas Park originally contained extensive walking paths defined by treated lumber, and a wood chip base. Large portions of the walking trails have become completely overgrown and are essentially unusable. Included on these trails are a pair of steps which have deteriorated over time and have become unusable. The walking trails which remain usable lead to two wood and metal bridges that span an essentially dry stream bed. While the bridges are in good repair, the stream bed is subject to increasing soil erosion, stagnant, mosquito-breeding water, and gathering trash. A steep drop-off into the dry stream bed on the north side of the park is also an area of concern, since this is clearly unsafe for children, especially younger ones.

Despite the concerns outlined, Douglas Park currently provides the community with an attractive, open, and uncrowded parcel of greenery which everyone can enjoy. The community is pleased with the acquisition of properties adjoining Douglas Park and community consensus favors retaining the passive recreation character of much of the rest of the park. Ideas for improvements in the former Hillenbrand area include a large gazebo, a butterfly garden, benches and walking paths.

### Recommendations

16. Community members should be included in master planning of both the newly acquired properties and the existing portion of Douglas Park. County planning should recognize the community's strong desire to leave this land undeveloped.

17. All walking trails should be restored to their original state. This should include replacement of the timber steps, which have seriously deteriorated.
18. The Douglas Park dry stream bed should be periodically inspected and trash and dangerous debris removed. As part of this inspection, an assessment to determine if soil erosion can be prevented or slowed should be conducted.
19. Split rail fencing with fine mesh wiring along the bottom should be installed at the top of the dry stream bed on the north side of the park as a safety measure.
20. Additional benches should be installed on both the north and south sides of the park.

### ***Monroe Park***

Monroe Park is easily accessible from either South Monroe Street or 14th Street South. It adjoins residential properties which face 14th Street South and South Nelson Street. There is one playground available for small children, with one bench available for viewing the playground. The remainder of the park is open space with trees and a split rail fence bordering both 14th Street South and South Monroe Street.

The playground equipment is in good repair, however, the sandy play area on which it rests is overgrown with grass. The park property line behind the playground consists of a chain link fence enveloped by extensive plant growth.

### Recommendations

21. The County should provide additional benches for Monroe Park, especially near the playground equipment.
22. The playground area should be cleaned of grass and other debris.
23. The County should provide a low planting along the park property line behind the playground.

### ***Doctor's Run Park***

Doctor's Run Park has public access from South George Mason Drive and from the walking path which enters the park from the Randolph Elementary School property. It is bordered by South George Mason Drive, Randolph Elementary School, and several residential properties.

The park currently has playground equipment which is in good repair, several picnic tables, and two trash cans. The northern end of the park is screened from rather unattractive commercial development by two large trees and by evergreens planted by Arlington County via a beautification grant. However, one of the two large trees is dead, which provides little in the way of actual screening, and is unsightly.

Douglas Park residents are concerned that the many small children who use this park are at risk from traffic on heavily traveled South George Mason Drive. Also of concern is extensive soil erosion along the formal and informal paths leading from Randolph School.

Doctor's Run Park is named after Doctor's Run Branch stream, a branch of Four Mile Run stream. Doctor's Run Branch crosses into the neighborhood under Four Mile Run, appears briefly adjacent to Barcroft and Taylor Square apartments bordering 16th Street South near the intersection of Four Mile Run, and then disappears under Doctor's Run Park and Columbia Pike, reappearing in Alcova Heights Park at South George Mason Drive and 8th Street South. This stream is the outlet for the Doctor's Run watershed which drains approximately 1050 acres of Arlington land. Creating a flood control pond at the watershed outlet could double as an artificial wetland. Restoration of Doctor's Run to a natural streambed state could provide an aesthetic resource and improve the water quality and stream health of lower Four Mile Run and subsequently the Chesapeake Bay.

### Recommendations

24. A split rail fence with fine mesh wiring along the bottom and open gate entrances at appropriate intervals should be installed along the length of the George Mason Drive property line. Such a fence would keep small children from running into oncoming traffic and prevent events such as a ball rolling out into the street. It would visually enhance the park area as well.
25. Additional benches should be installed, especially in the southern end of the park.
26. The existing water fountain, which currently does not drain properly, should be repaired.

27. The County should develop options for dealing with worsening soil erosion along the walking paths in the wooded areas of the park.
28. The large, dead tree behind the evergreen plantings at the north end of the park should be removed and a replacement tree considered.
29. The County should restore the Doctor's Run watershed by day-lighting Doctor's Run Branch stream and create in the neighborhood an artificial wetland that would serve as an aesthetic, environmental and recreation resource.

### ***Community Gardens***

The Ft. Barnard Community Gardens occupies the eastern portion of the open space in the Ft. Barnard triangle. Run by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources, the Community Gardens are a membership club for people wanting plots of arable land and the gardening infrastructure that goes with them. The Community Gardens is a separate entity from the Civic Association and the leadership and membership of one is unrelated to the other.

### ***Dog Park***

The fenced area at the southeast corner of S. Pollard Street and 19th Street South is used by the neighborhood as a dog walk area. Although fully fenced, the area has not been designated an official off-leash dog walk area, despite the expressed desires of some in the neighborhood. A dog park has been a controversial use for this open space. There is a sizable contingent of neighborhood residents who bring their dogs to the fenced area to exercise and socialize. However frequent complaints from the nearest neighbors have centered on the noise, smell, trash, traffic congestion and hours of visitation due to the presence of the dog park. To accommodate both interests, the Douglas Park Civic Association has developed a proposal to move the dog park to the fenced area immediately to the south, where the water tower now stands. In addition, the Civic Association proposes to sponsor and monitor a Dog Park Co-op whose costs and operation would be borne by the members using the facility. In this way, managed access could be obtained for the dog park by a set of vested, responsible dog owners who would comply with regulations regarding use.

### **Recommendation**

30. The County should establish a managed-access dog park at the water tower site at Ft. Barnard under the sponsorship of the Douglas Park Civic Association.

***Off-Street Bike Trail***

The Bikeways Master Plan describes the northern hemisphere of what could be a circular seven-mile bike trail linking the six neighborhoods bordering the east end of Columbia Pike. In concert with other neighborhoods affected, Douglas Park endorses the construction of such a bike trail. Consistent with the vision articulated by other neighborhoods, this bike trail would be off-street through newly-acquired open spaces. The bike trail would enter the neighborhood at Columbia Pike and South George Mason Drive and travel through Doctor’s Run Park up the hill behind Randolph Elementary School to the cul-de-sac portion of the 1400 block of S. Randolph Street. Following S. Randolph Street to the south, it would cross 16th Street South and continue into the west end of Douglas Park. The trail would continue east through Douglas Park, exiting the park onto S. Quincy Street and heading east on 18th Street South to S. Walter Reed Drive. Turning northward for a block, the trail would parallel S. Walter Reed Drive to 17th Street South exiting the neighborhood and crossing over into Columbia Heights at the S. Glebe Rd., S. Walter Reed, and 17th Street South intersection.

Recommendation

- 31. The County should create a bike trail loop through the six neighborhoods of the east end of Columbia Pike (Central Arlington, Arlington Heights, Alcova Heights, Douglas Park, Columbia Heights and Arlington View) by acquiring properties along the routes described and constructing an off-street bike trail.

***Fourth of July Parade and Picnic***

Annually, the Douglas Park Civic Association sponsors a neighborhood Fourth of July parade and picnic. The parade includes floats consisting of wagons, cars, or trailers, children and their decorated bicycles, antique cars, fire trucks, a convertible carrying the parade Grand Marshal and contestant judges, costumed entrants, a police Honor Guard, a stroller brigade, and numerous unadorned marchers. Streets are blocked off and the parade commences in Monroe Park, weaving through neighborhood streets and ending at Douglas Park for the neighborhood picnic. At Douglas Park, the Douglas Park Civic Association provides hot dogs, with side dishes and desserts contributed from the picnic-goers, while the children amuse themselves with pony rides, a moon bounce, and a dunk tank. The annual Fourth of July Parade and Picnic is a tradition of community fellowship and cooperation in Douglas Park and are a prime example of general recreation use in our neighborhood parks.

## **IV. Community Appearance and Identification**

### ***Utility Lines***

Douglas Park currently has above-ground utility lines supported by metal and wooden poles. This type of system, while cost effective, is very unsightly. Replacement of this system with underground utility lines would represent a major improvement to the streetscape.

### **Recommendation**

32. The County, in concert with the telephone, cable, and power providers, should research approaches to moving utility lines underground.

### ***Litter***

Accumulated litter generated by people leaving the commercial area along Columbia Pike and walking along South Monroe Street is a concern among New Arlington - Douglas Park residents.

### **Recommendations**

33. Appropriate trash receptacles should be placed at intervals along South Monroe Street.

34. The County should enforce litter ordinances and communicate the County-wide desire for litter free streets and property by posting “No Littering” signs prominently.

### ***Neighborhood Lighting***

Street lighting is a concern in various parts of the community. The community is supportive of the use of the Hadco Luminaire style street lights, particularly those areas of New Arlington - Douglas Park that residents have identified as gateway areas to the neighborhood. At this time, the community has identified several possible areas for new or additional lighting. However, it should be noted that, pursuant to the County petition procedures, the neighborhood and plan supports any areas of the neighborhood which may be identified after the writing of this plan.

### **Recommendations 35- 44**

Possible areas for new or additional lighting are:

- South Quincy Street from Columbia Pike to 13th Street South
- South Quincy Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South

Douglas Park

- South Monroe Street from Columbia Pike to 14th Street South
- 17th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
- 14th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
- 16th Street South from South Glebe Road to South Monroe Street
- 16th Street South from Four Mile Run Drive to South Stafford Street
- South Highland Street from Columbia Pike to Walter Reed Drive
- South Randolph Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South
- Path from Randolph School to Doctor's Run Park.

### ***Landscaping***

Although there are three parks in Douglas Park, there is little else in the way of landscaping that is maintained by the County. Currently, there are several areas in need of attention.

The area along South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and 14th Street South very much needs to be landscaped. The large majority of planting strips, sidewalk, and median strip areas in Douglas Park have little in the way of landscaping provided by the County. In general, residents would appreciate having the County install trees in the planting strips and provide appropriate landscaping in any public areas where feasible.

There is a notable Holly tree, believed to be the largest and oldest Holly tree in Arlington, located on the Travers Cemetery Historic district site. The community is very interested in and committed to maintaining and protecting this notable tree.

### **Recommendations**

45. The County should work in concert with school planners and other concerned citizens to develop a safe and attractive landscape and lighting plan along South Quincy Street in front of Randolph Elementary School.
46. The County should inspect South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and 14th Street South and develop options for landscaping, to include planting strips, and trees.
47. The County should provide planting strips along sidewalk areas wherever possible. Also, the median strip dividing Walter Reed Drive between Columbia Pike and 13th Road South needs additional landscaping, similar to that on Walter Reed Drive just south of this area.

## ***Graffiti***

Residents are concerned about increased incidents of graffiti throughout the neighborhood.

### Recommendations

48. Police and community residents should work together to develop a system of increased patrols designed to prevent additional graffiti incidents.
49. The County should enact legislation designed to beautify the community by requiring businesses and public entities (e.g., Metro) to remove graffiti as soon as it occurs.
50. The County should enact or enforce legislation to discourage graffiti writing through stiff penalties and other deterrent measures.

## ***Neighborhood Identification***

The community is supportive of neighborhood identification signs being placed at gateways on major thoroughfares.

### Recommendation

51. The County should install community identification signs at appropriate intersections. Recommended locations include: South George Mason Drive where it borders Doctor's Run Park, South Walter Reed Drive and South Four Mile Run, 12th Street South and South Quincy Street, 12th Street South and South Monroe Street, South Highland Street and South Walter Reed Drive and South Randolph Street and South Walter Reed Drive. A maximum of four sites are allowed under the ordinance; the neighborhood will select the four sites at a later time.

## ***Capital Improvements***

Curbs, gutters, and storm drains in many areas of the neighborhood are adequate and should be maintained in accordance with the County's regular schedule of inspections and maintenance. As with lighting needs discussed earlier, the community has identified several locations which require sidewalk, curb, gutter, and storm drain improvements. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list. The neighborhood and plan supports the installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks as qualified by block residents and property owners through the County's established petition process.

## **Curbs and Gutters**

52. Roads which need improvement in terms of curbs and gutters are:

19th Street South between South Oakland and South Pollard Streets

18th Street South between South Walter Reed and South Monroe Street, and also between South Nelson and South Quincy Streets

17th Street South between South Glebe Road and South Lincoln Street

14th Street South between South Monroe and South Pollard Streets

13th Street South (right of way) between South Monroe and Glebe Road -- also paving f street

13th Street South between South Monroe and South Norwood Streets

13th Street South between Glebe Road and Walter Reed Drive

13th Road South west of South Highland Street

12th Street South between South Highland Street and Walter Reed Drive

South Irving Street

South Lowell Street

South Oakland Street between 16th Street South and 14th Street South

South Pollard Street between 16th and 14th Streets South

South Quebec Street west of South Randolph Street

South Randolph Street between 16th Street South and Douglas Park

South Stafford Street between 16th Street South and 16th Road South

## **Storm Drains**

53. Improved storm drains and other water control mechanisms are needed at:

The intersection of South Quincy Street and 19th Street South

The rear property line of residences on the north side of 13th Street South

The intersection of 13th Street South and South Monroe Street

South Monroe Street between 12th and 13th Streets South (west side)

## **Sidewalk**

54. Sidewalks should, in general, be maintained in accordance with the County's maintenance schedule. At present, however, sidewalks needing more urgent attention are:

13th Street South and South Monroe Street -- overhanging brush on the south side of 13th Street South

South Monroe Street between 13th Street South and 14th Street South -- a Mulberry tree on the east side of the street has droppings that are slippery and which force pedestrians into the street, which has a high volume and speed of traffic.

South Highland Street between 14th Street South and 13th Road South has overgrown shrubbery on the west side that forces pedestrians into South Highland Street, which has a high volume and speed of traffic.

## **V. Land Use and Zoning**

### ***General Description of Existing Land Use and Zoning***

The land use pattern in Douglas Park is composed of a core single-family residential area (zoned “R-6” and “R-5”), bordered by higher density apartment and townhouse development (zoned “R-1OT” to “RA-8-18”), with a few commercial areas on the fringes (zoned “C-1” to “C-3”). Densities are generally higher in the area east of Glebe Road. There are three park areas (Douglas, Monroe, and Doctor's Run), one school (Randolph Elementary), and a County-owned service area containing a fire station. This last site, currently zoned "S-3A" and "R-6", also accommodates community gardens.

Douglas Park also includes a portion of the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District (from South Walter Reed to South Oakland Street, south of Columbia Pike to 13th Street South). This area constitutes the principal commercial precinct in the neighborhood. In addition, there are two small commercial locations, one at the north side of the intersection of South Walter Reed Drive and Glebe Road, the other at the southeast corner of South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike. This latter site presently contains a convenience store and a used-car lot. A service station which also stood on that corner has been razed. The owner has expressed interest in redeveloping the property to contain a small retail/office building.

The one federal presence in the neighborhood is the South Station Post Office on Columbia Pike at South Monroe Street. It is located on leased land and is scheduled to be relocated to the former Jennings property, bordered by South Glebe Road, South Monroe Street, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets South. When the County Board agreed to a rezoning of this property to accommodate purchase by the U.S. Postal Service, it stipulated that the land would not be free for construction of other commercial ventures or businesses if the Postal Service chose not to use it.

An historic location of note in Douglas Park is the Travers Family graveyard on South Monroe Street, which dates from before the Civil War. This site was the subject of a development dispute in 1989, when a developer sought relocation of the cemetery in conjunction with a development proposal. This proposal generated adamant opposition from the neighborhood. The graveyard

was designated an historic district on February 10, 1990. (Historic district status means that any work or changes proposed for the site will likely require a Certificate of Appropriateness.)

### ***Neighborhood Concerns and Survey Responses***

The strong sentiment of the Douglas Park community is to preserve the character of the neighborhood. This sentiment has been frequently expressed in Civic Association meetings and reflected in responses to a neighborhood survey. By more than 3 to 1, survey respondents said they approve of the current land use in the neighborhood. By more than 2 to 1, they indicated reluctance to change the current land use pattern. Eighty percent of respondents said that the commercial establishments in and near the neighborhood met their daily shopping needs.

While recognizing that by-right prerogatives pertain to existing parcels, residents want to preserve the low-density atmosphere of the neighborhood and strongly urge that all future site planning decisions not increase existing density. Whenever possible, the County should strive to enhance existing open space, common areas, and buffers, through land acquisition if necessary.

### ***Delicate Balance***

The Douglas Park community is concerned about the trend towards higher density land use. While residents embrace the benefits of all aspects of diversity that our neighborhood provides, they caution that the combination of a mixed neighborhood and attractive land prices not be misconstrued as an invitation or opportunity for excessive concentrations of residential treatment programs, low-income rental housing, and high-density zoning creep. Mixed neighborhoods, more than others, are a careful interplay of many factors -- commercial, residential, public service, open space, and human -- that sustain their vitality and that residents want preserved. Although the mosaic is of a mixed neighborhood, the tesserae in that mosaic are the land uses, housing styles and demographics; changing those components will make an indelible change in the community. No less than predominantly single-family neighborhoods, we are concerned that the elements that give a neighborhood strength and spirit not be pushed out of balance.

### **Recommendations**

55. The County should not allow relatively lower-priced property in the neighborhood to become a self-fulfilling rationale by approving higher density plans simply because the neighborhood is not overwhelmingly single-family residential. The County should carefully evaluate proposals for land uses in the neighborhood for compatibility with County goals for optimal ratios in all neighborhoods. The County should resist a practice that is polarizing and

disuniting when executed on a county-wide basis, to overload Douglas Park with certain land uses because zoning has mitigated against those land uses in other neighborhoods.

### ***United States Postal Service - South Station Site***

Construction of a US Postal Service (USPS) facility has begun on the property bounded by South Glebe Rd., South Monroe Street, 12th Street South, and 13th Street South. The new facility replaces the old South Station Post Office located at the corner of South Monroe Street and Columbia Pike. The South Station services the 22204 zip code, which is the largest in Arlington and is responsible for approximately 25% of the mail in the county. The new site is surrounded on three sides by single family residences.

Prior to approval of the site plan for this project by the Arlington County Board, USPS and their architect consulted with a working group of representatives from the NADPCA. The principal objective of this dialogue was to achieve a site plan that minimized the adverse effects of the new postal facility, which is fundamentally a commercial operation, on the adjacent residential areas. Several of the provisions in the approved site plan reflect these consultations.

The scope of the facility under construction is larger than what was represented to the community in the mid-1980's when the property was rezoned from residential to accommodate the new Post Office. The impact of the facility and its operations on the surrounding residential areas remains a source of concern to the community.

Some continuing concerns related to the new Post Office follow.

#### **Traffic and Safety Issues**

There is currently no vehicular entrance or exit planned for the Post Office on either South Monroe Street or 13th Street South, and none must be allowed in the future. Such an entrance or exit would funnel traffic relating to the Post Office directly into the nearby residential areas.

#### **Noise Abatement**

Once the new Post Office opens, experience with its operations at the site may demonstrate a need for further action to minimize its noise impact on the adjacent residences. This includes noise from the following:

- Loading dock operations
- Vehicles accessing the facility and in the parking lot
- Trucks making deliveries and pick-ups at the facility
- Utilities at the facility, for example, HVAC equipment, exhaust fans, etc...

USPS states that only 7-9 ton trucks will be used to service the facility, for the next “several” years. If, in the future, larger trucks are used, they should be restricted to conventional business hours and definitely barred between the hours of 9:00PM and 9:00AM.

### **Visual Aesthetics**

Current plans for the west side of the site call for the construction of a 6-foot high berm covered with greenery, and topped by a 6-foot high fence. This should provide an adequate visual screen for the residences on the west side of the site. However, experience may reveal a need for further efforts to screen residences on the east, west, and south sides of the site from:

- Parking lots
- Loading docks
- Utility equipment
- Trash collectors (dumpsters)
- Light generated by the facility and its operation

Any future wall or fences constructed should be attractive and augmented with greenery on the side facing the residences. Greenery on the South Monroe Street and 13th Street South sides should consist of mature, dense evergreens, supplemented with appropriate deciduous and seasonal plantings. USPS should be responsible for maintaining the greenery in good condition and in a manner that ensures ample and attractive screening.

### **Miscellaneous Concerns**

The bicycle path, which is currently located on the north side of the site, should be preserved in a manner that is visually pleasing.

The location of the Post Office must not become a rationale for further expansion of commercial uses into what is now residential zoning. Nor should the Post Office be a justification for changing the zoning of nearby properties to permit higher density residential uses.

### **Recommendations**

56. The County should ensure that details of the South Station Post Office site plan are implemented by the USPS as approved.

### ***Code Enforcement***

Residents have expressed concerns about possible violations of current zoning and other quality-of-life ordinances in the Douglas Park area. Allegations include illegal auto repairs and other commercial ventures in strictly residential areas, overcrowded residences, noise from construction, storage of inoperable vehicles, deteriorated structures and improper storage of trash. The community wants to work with the County to enforce the zoning laws and ordinances that protect our neighborhood's desirable characteristics.

### **Recommendations**

57. The County should work aggressively with the neighborhood to enforce the zoning ordinance, occupancy code, noise ordinance, care of premises ordinance, building code and other quality-of-life ordinances.

### ***Housing***

#### **Home Ownership**

According to the 1990 Census, Douglas Park has approximately 850 single-family residential units and 2800 multifamily units, the vast majority being affordable to those below median income levels. Approximately 80% of all dwelling units in the neighborhood are rentals. Residents of Douglas Park believe that higher rates of owner-occupied units are necessary to give a community strength. HUD's 1995 National Homeownership Strategy encourages homeownership as a commitment to personal financial security, public safety, sense of community and economic growth. The National Homeownership Strategy sets a goal for the nation of 67.5% of residential units to be owner-occupied in 2000. Douglas Park supports moving towards this goal.

#### **Affordable Housing**

The County should take a two-step approach to reduce residential density and raise the rate of owner-occupied units in Douglas Park. First, the method of providing affordable rentals needs to be changed. Current practice emphasizes preserving older rental complexes in the affordable stock, rather than acquiring newly constructed units. This has the effect of inhibiting Douglas Park

redevelopment and institutionalizing low-income rentals in the few geographic areas where older rental complexes exist. The fear of acquisition, redevelopment and large-scale displacement drives efforts to keep the entire complex in the affordable stock, thus precluding a mixed-income character. Not coincidentally, many surrounding older complexes in these same areas are already locations of market rate (unassisted) affordable rentals. The combination of high density, concentrations of market rate affordable rentals, and institutionalizing low-income complexes for the long term creates a critical mass of social problems that Douglas Park is unable to absorb. These problems are manifested in low school achievement, low civic involvement and low property values, among others, which diminish the perceived livability and, consequently, the desirability of the neighborhood. Instead of allowing developers of newly constructed rental complexes to make monetary contributions to the Low Income Housing Fund, the County should require developers to set aside units in return for density bonuses, relief from compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, or other amenities the developers received from the County through the site plan process. This change would have several advantages:

- the stock of affordable rentals can be expanded
- the County can effect the creation of mixed income rental complexes
- additional rentals to the affordable stock can be better distributed geographically, thus reducing the social problems of high concentrations in few locations
- existing concentrations of affordable rentals can be reduced and thinned
- older complexes which are often run-down and attractive targets for purchase can be converted to more desirable land uses consistent with the natural cycle of redevelopment
- the redeveloped property can expand the County's tax base, and
- the loss of market rate affordable rental complexes to by-right developers will not have such a disastrous effect on the affordable rental stock as reliance on older complexes to provide all affordable rentals is lessened through expansion of new construction affordable rentals.

Second, the practice of providing affordable housing heavily weighted toward rentals should be changed to emphasize affordable ownership. Rental complexes with committed affordable units should be structured to convert to ownership units after a period of time. In addition, the County subsidies designed to achieve affordable housing goals should be structured to encourage the provision of affordable homeownership, consistent with the benefit to the community that derives from a higher rate of owner-occupied dwellings.

### Recommendations

58. The County should take actions to increase the rate of owner-occupied dwellings in Douglas Park.

59. The County should reduce its reliance on older rental complexes in the affordable housing stock by requiring new construction set asides from developers where possible in the site plan process.
60. The County should emphasize affordable ownership units, rather than rentals, as a means to achieving its affordable housing goals.

### ***Columbia Pike Revitalization***

Concerns have also been expressed about the potential effects of redevelopment along Columbia Pike. Revitalization of "the Pike," long desired by merchants and residents of this area, many of whom have participated in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO), will undoubtedly have a significant impact on Douglas Park. Increased office and retail density will affect traffic that may be drawn through the neighborhood as shoppers try to reach Columbia Pike and the immediate shopping environs.

The community is generally very supportive of business conservation efforts. Douglas Park wants to work with the County and local businesses to maintain commercial areas that are attractive, convenient, and successful to serve the community and its neighbors.

### Recommendations

61. The County should follow through with the revitalization of Columbia Pike consistent with the *Columbia Pike 2000 Plan* to make both the business and residential communities in this area more attractive as a place to work, shop and live.

Attachments: General Land Use Plan  
Zoning Map.

## **VI. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

### ***Overview***

The Douglas Park community has identified traffic management as one of its top priorities. Concerns include volume of traffic -- particularly "cut-through" traffic -- speeding, traffic accidents, and hazards to pedestrians and road infrastructure; all of which engender safety and quality-of-life concerns among the residents. Although there has been no official documentation of these issues by County staff, these issues have been identified by residents based upon everyday, real-life observations and occurrences over the years.

While the community recognizes the need for a county-wide traffic management system, Douglas Park believes it is essential to bring about measures to reduce and control traffic difficulties in order to ensure resident safety and an adequate quality of life for the community. Furthermore, the community is firmly opposed to any measures that would further divide the neighborhood by increasing traffic flow.

Overall, the Douglas Park community seeks to work in concert with County traffic experts and political leaders to develop a plan that improves traffic management structures for the neighborhood. As such, the community requests that the Department of Public Works immediately initiate the residential traffic management program (RTM) process to document existing problems and identify and implement solutions.

Suggested actions in this regard include appropriate traffic calming measures including, but not limited to: nubs, traffic circles, and traffic humps, increased signage and street-markings, and increased police monitoring and enforcement. The Douglas Park community is also interested in other traffic flow regulation devices if other options are available. It should be noted that the traffic calming measures suggested are based upon the community's existing knowledge of available measures and does not necessarily feel limited to these measures, thus the call for the RTM process. Indeed, the measures can be seen as a starting point of discussion for problems and preferred solutions.

Certain streets in the Douglas Park community experience problems such as high-volume and high-speed traffic. While many of these streets are designed to provide primary access to the neighborhood, there is a large amount of traffic which is not neighborhood oriented but rather cut-through traffic. These streets, as they are presently configured, offer attractive opportunities

for non-neighborhood traffic to "beat the system" by avoiding congestion on major arterials; avoiding stop lights; and using long, uninterrupted, less frequently patrolled stretches of residential streets on which to speed. Also a number of intersections in and adjoining the neighborhood also present difficulties, including driver visibility and pedestrian safety.

Douglas Park recognizes several aspects of streets and traffic patterns in the neighborhood which are of paramount importance. These key issues have significant impacts upon the Douglas Park neighborhood in terms of noise, pedestrian safety, motorist safety, neighborhood cohesiveness, and overall quality of life.

***KEY ISSUE I: No left turn lanes on Glebe Road increases delays and traffic congestion on Glebe Road.***

The inadequate carrying capacity for the traffic volume on both northbound and southbound Glebe Road causes several problems throughout the neighborhood including: cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets; excessive speeding; inadequate stops at stop signs; illegal turns; and decreased pedestrian safety.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) development between South Monroe Street and Glebe Road is likely to further negatively impact traffic in this area. In meetings with USPS officials, residents have emphasized the critical need for having left turn signals at Columbia Pike and South Glebe Road, as well as the need for a traffic signal to guide patrons into and out of the Post Office parking lot. The USPS is conducting a traffic study to identify and address these problems.

I(a) **Intersection of 14th Street South and Glebe Road** Traffic traveling northbound on Glebe Road turning left onto 14th Street South has to wait for southbound traffic to clear and thereby blocks one lane of Glebe Road, increasing the risk of rear-end collisions.

Recommendation

62. Create a left-turn lane on northbound South Glebe Road at the intersection with 14th Street South.

II(b) **16th Street South and Glebe Road** Traffic traveling northbound on Glebe Road turning west onto 16th Street South has to wait for southbound traffic to clear and thereby blocks one lane of Glebe Road, increasing the risk of rear-end collisions.

Recommendation

63. Create a left-turn lane on northbound Glebe Road at the intersection with 16th Street South.

***KEY ISSUE II: Inadequacy of Columbia Pike - Glebe Road intersection forces high traffic flow through the neighborhood***

Fourteenth Street South and South Monroe Street north of 14th Street South are designated as official routes for northbound Glebe Road traffic turning onto westbound Columbia Pike. Inability to make left turns in three directions (northbound, southbound, eastbound) at this intersection deters shoppers from patronizing local businesses and increases traffic congestion on nearby neighborhood streets.

Specific concerns related to Issue I are:

- I(a) **Increased Traffic Volume on South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and 14th Street South.** (See also discussion of Key Issue III: Traffic Volume and Speeding on South Monroe.) While South Monroe Street is considered a neighborhood feeder route in general, it is used as a means of avoiding the Columbia Pike/Glebe Road intersection. Other traffic uses South Monroe Street and other neighborhood streets to generally avoid this problem.
- I(b) **Avoidance of No Left Turn Restriction from Northbound Glebe Road at Columbia Pike.** Traffic traveling north on Glebe Road seeking to go west on Columbia Pike and traffic traveling south on Glebe Road seeking to go east onto Columbia Pike uses this section of 14th Street South (and South Monroe from 14th Street South to Columbia Pike) to effect the desired turn because of left turn restrictions on Glebe Road at Columbia Pike.
- I(c) **Increased Traffic Volume on 12th Street South from Glebe Road to South Highland Street.** Southbound traffic on Glebe Road is prohibited from making a left turn onto Columbia Pike. In response to this restriction, many cars turn left onto 12th Street South and travel to South Highland Street, which can be used to access Columbia Pike eastbound. Essentially, 12th Street South becomes an alternate to Columbia Pike for this traffic.

I(d) **Illegal U-turns at 12th Street South/Glebe Road.** Cars often make U-turns at this intersection because southbound traffic on Glebe Road cannot turn left onto Columbia Pike.

Recommendations

64. Create left turn lanes and signals from northbound Glebe Road onto westbound Columbia Pike. Recently, left turns have become legal at this intersection for traffic traveling westbound on Columbia Pike without creating problems.

65. Allow left turns from southbound Glebe Road onto eastbound Columbia Pike.

I(e) **Intersection of 14th Street South and South Monroe Street** A high volume of traffic is diverted through the neighborhood due to the Columbia Pike and Glebe Road intersection, and traffic approaching from the west on 14th Street South often "rolls through" the stop sign. Also, visibility due to parked cars at the northeast corner of South Monroe Street is often a problem.

Recommendations

66. Restrict parking within 10 yards of the intersection on South Monroe Street at the northeast corner.

67. Paint markings on the street -- at, and in approach to, the intersection -- to encourage a full stop.

68. Install nubs onto 14th Street South to reduce the width of the street and to control speeding.

69. Improve Columbia Pike and Glebe Road intersection and reduce traffic diversion through the neighborhood via 14th Street South and South Monroe Street.

**KEY ISSUE III: *Traffic Volume and Speeding on South Monroe Street between Columbia Pike and South Walter Reed Drive***

South Monroe Street offers northbound and southbound access to the neighborhood, but it also is an attractive cut-through opportunity for traffic seeking to avoid Glebe Road. For example, South Monroe Street south of 16th Street South is busy even though it is not classified as a neighborhood principal street. The street is not often patrolled, and it offers a long stretch of road which is attractive to speeders.

Part of the higher than expected traffic volume on South Monroe Street is due to the inadequate carrying capacity of the Columbia Pike/Glebe Road intersection. Also, people use South Monroe Street to reach several commercial establishments on Columbia Pike near South Monroe Street and to access the current post office branch. Additional traffic uses the northern portion of South Monroe Street because of the turning restrictions at this intersection. Other traffic uses South Monroe Street to generally avoid congestion of the main parallel arterial road, Glebe Road.

The southern end of South Monroe Street at Walter Reed Drive offers a very broad entrance, permitting traffic traveling north on Walter Reed Drive to make sweeping turns onto South Monroe Street at high rates of speed. South Monroe Street traffic is largely unimpeded by stop signs, which may encourage speeding. South Monroe Street experiences a significant volume of trucks as well (many of which are County vehicles and also U.S. Postal Service trucks).

#### Recommendations

70. Improve traffic flow along Glebe Road and at the Columbia Pike/Glebe Road intersection.
71. Install nubs along all intersections of South Monroe Street which currently allow parking.
72. Narrow the entrance to South Monroe Street from Walter Reed Drive using nubs or otherwise discourage high-speed turns from northbound Walter Reed Drive traffic onto South Monroe Street.
73. Require traffic to stop in additional locations.
74. Increase enforcement of speeding laws.
75. Install "No Through Trucks" signs on along the length of South Monroe Street.
76. Prevent access to the proposed post office parking lot from South Monroe Street to ensure that traffic intending to go west on Columbia Pike is not routed through the neighborhood via South Monroe Street or other neighborhood streets -- in particular, the right-of-way for the unopened portion of 13th Street South between Glebe Road and South Monroe Street should not be opened to traffic.

**KEY ISSUE IV:     *Use of 16th Street South from Glebe Road to South Four Mile Run Drive as Cut-through Route***

Sixteenth Street South offers a long, mostly wide stretch of road which is attractive to cut-through traffic traveling from Four Mile Run Drive and George Mason Drive to Columbia Pike (via South Quincy or South Monroe Streets) and to Glebe Road. 16th Street South essentially parallels Columbia Pike, and some traffic - including truck traffic - avoids the congestion and traffic controls of Columbia Pike by using 16th Street South. Also, traffic coming from the Skyline area and traveling north on George Mason Drive can use 16th Street South as a more direct path toward the Pentagon and downtown D.C. areas because 16th Street South, combined with South Quincy Street or South Monroe Street, is a shorter distance than traveling on George Mason Drive to Columbia Pike. This is true for traffic traveling in the opposite direction as well.

Recommendations

77. Install nubs, traffic humps, and traffic circles at appropriate intersections along 16th Street South to reduce the width of the street and thereby reduce speeding.
78. Increase enforcement of the speed limit.
79. Install caution signs alerting drivers to children, the hill, and dangerous intersections.
80. Reduce the unbroken length of road by installing stop signs at several intersections.
81. Install "No Through Trucks" signs along the length of 16th Street South.

**KEY ISSUE V:     *Safety Hazards on South Quincy Street from Columbia Pike to South Walter Reed Drive***

South Quincy Street is a relatively broad and uninterrupted stretch of road which encourages cut-through traffic -- including trucks -- and, especially, speeding. Hills in several areas reduce visibility, and the street intersects with several other busy streets. Of special concern is the effect of high-volume and speeding traffic, and poor visibility due to hills, in the vicinity of Randolph Elementary School. In addition, many school children cross South Quincy Street and use its sidewalks with little protection from speeding traffic.

The Randolph Elementary School drop-off lane generally provides a safe area for students to enter and exit their parent's cars, but use of this lane during peak periods can back-up traffic on South Quincy Street.

#### Recommendations

82. Install nubs, traffic circles and traffic humps at appropriate intersections along South Quincy Street.
83. Install 3-way stop signs at the intersections of South Quincy and South 14th Street and South Quincy and South 13th Street to protect Randolph students and to make South Quincy Street less attractive to cut-through traffic.
84. Install several school caution lights near the school on South Quincy Street.
85. Ensure that the children cross South Quincy Street only at the most highly visible and designated areas.
86. Install signs that alert traffic to areas of low visibility in on South Quincy Street.
87. Plant trees between the sidewalks and curbs along South Quincy Street to create a physical buffer from traffic for the children.
88. Install "You Are Speeding" signals for both northbound and southbound traffic near Randolph Elementary School on South Quincy Street.
89. Install "No Through Trucks" signs along South Quincy Street.
90. Monitor and study traffic congestion resulting from the student drop-off lane at Randolph Elementary School, and devise solutions to ensure smooth and safe traffic flow during peak times.

#### **KEY ISSUE VI: *Excessive Speeding on Glebe Road between South Walter Reed Drive and Columbia Pike***

Traffic is prone to speeding in either direction on this major arterial road. This propensity towards speeding is made more dangerous due to the frequency of vehicular turning and stopping movements along the route and because the road is crossed frequently by pedestrians.

#### Recommendation

91. Create left turn lanes in both directions on this road.
92. Create a left turn lane for access to the new postal facility for northbound Glebe Road traffic.

93. Install a traffic light at the entrance to the new postal facility at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South with protective left turn signals both into and out of the postal facility.
94. Establish a more frequent police patrol/radar presence to reduce speeding.

***KEY ISSUE VII: Dangerous intersection at South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike***

This is a dangerous intersection because of traffic volume, the downhill approach for traffic headed west on Columbia Pike, and the overall width of the intersection. Left turns are difficult from all directions and result in cars sitting in the middle of this dangerous intersection.

Recommendation

95. Create left-turn arrow signaling for all directions.

***KEY ISSUE VIII: Dangerous intersection at Glebe Road and South Walter Reed Drive***

The unusual angle at which these two major arterial streets meet, combined with the junction of 17th Street South make this intersection very difficult for motorists to understand. In particular, the angle of traffic signals, especially for southbound traffic, confuses motorists as to the appropriate signal, and what directions of travel are allowed from each lane. Moreover, the great breadth of the intersection, combined with the timing of the lights, leaves late green- or yellow-light traffic still standing in the middle of the intersection when opposing traffic is given a green light.

Recommendations

96. Install highly directional traffic lights which cannot be seen by traffic approaching from adjacent streets.
97. Clearly mark lanes, and indicate what turns are permitted with street markings and signs.
98. Extend the timing of the traffic lights in some directions to ensure that late traffic has time to clear the intersection before opposing traffic starts.

99. Make southbound traffic on Glebe Road aware that northbound traffic may be crossing in front of it to turn left onto 17th Street South and that "Right Turn on Red" is not permitted onto southbound Walter Reed Drive from Glebe Road.

***KEY ISSUE IX: The intersection of 13th Street South and South Quincy Street***

Thirteenth Street South meets South Quincy Street just below the crest of a hill. Traffic entering South Quincy Street from 13th Street South is in danger of colliding with rapidly-moving northbound traffic on South Quincy Street due to the poor visibility of this intersection. Sight distance is further obstructed when cars park too close to the intersection. This visibility problem compounds the traffic congestion, speeding, and pedestrian safety problems occurring near Randolph Elementary School. The intersection is also dangerous because of the large number of elementary school students in the area.

Recommendation

100. Install an above-street warning light alerting traffic to the blind approach to this intersection, and require all traffic to stop at 13th Street South by installing either a traffic signal or three-way stop signs.

***KEY ISSUE X: The intersection of 16th Street South and South Quincy Street***

This intersection has a visibility problem due to the hill on 16th Street South, west of South Quincy Street. Speeding on 16th Street South increases the danger of this intersection. The placement of stop signs at this intersection prevents motorists traveling on South Quincy Street from seeing traffic approaching from the west on 16th Street South. The setting sun can compound the problem of seeing traffic approaching from the west. In June 1996, DPW put a four-way stop sign at this intersection for a trial period, with an evaluation period to follow.

Recommendations

101. Retain four-way stop sign at this intersection.
102. As noted above, install nubs on South Quincy Street and 16th Street South.

103. Install caution signs for eastbound traffic on 16th Street South.

### ***Other Issues***

The following traffic issues are also important, but some may have less impact on the neighborhood than those listed above because of lower traffic or pedestrian volume.

### **South Highland Street from Columbia Pike to Walter Reed Drive**

Traffic uses South Highland Street to cut through to public services on Columbia Pike (and just north of Columbia Pike) and to cut-through to Walter Reed Drive. South Highland Street is a visually attractive cut-through street because of its broad southern entrance that includes turn and merge lanes.

#### Recommendations

104. Narrow the south entrance to South Highland Street and other portions of the road using nubs.
105. Install caution signs alerting drivers about children and cross traffic at the south entrance of South Highland Street.
106. Reduce the uninterrupted unbroken length of road by installing at least one stop sign.
107. Create a left turn signal for northbound traffic on Walter Reed Drive turning onto Columbia Pike.

### **19th Street South from Walter Reed Drive to South Quincy Street**

Traffic, some of which appears to be cutting through the neighborhood, frequently exceeds the speed limit on 19th Street South. Much of the road is narrow, and visibility is reduced due to hills. The narrowness of the road, poor visibility, and absence of sidewalks also makes this street dangerous to pedestrians.

#### Recommendation

108. Install caution signs, painted crosswalks at intersections, and sidewalks on the south side of the street to reduce speeding and provide a safer path for pedestrians.

### **South Randolph Street from Walter Reed Drive to 19th Street South**

Cut-through traffic uses South Randolph Street to travel from Walter Reed Drive to 16th Street South and also Columbia Pike by using the route of South Randolph Street, 19th Street

South, and South Quincy Street. This route is particularly inappropriate for cut-through traffic because of the poor visibility at the intersection of 19th Street South and South Randolph Street, and 19th Street South and South Quincy Street. The southern entrance to South Randolph Street is inviting to speeders and cut-through traffic because of its immense width.

Recommendation

109. Reduce the width of the intersection at South Walter Reed Drive and South Randolph Street, including possibly constructing a traffic island.

**12th Street South between South Monroe Street and South Quincy Street**

12th Street South experiences significant truck traffic, perhaps because it serves as a kind of long U-turn for Columbia Pike truck traffic.

Recommendation

110. Install "No Trucks" signs on 12th Street South as well as on South Quincy Street and South Monroe Street.

**The intersection of 12th Street South and South Monroe Street**

Low visibility due to a fence requires eastbound traffic on 12th Street South to pull out into South Monroe Street to check for traffic.

Recommendation

111. Improve visibility by using nubs on South Monroe Street to allow cars to pull out further without being in the path of traffic.

**The intersection of 12th Street South and South Highland Street**

Visibility is poor for westbound traffic on 12th Street South and, therefore, it is difficult to determine whether it is safe to enter South Highland Street. This visibility problem is compounded by the high volume of traffic on South Highland Street.

Recommendation

112. Construct nubs on South Highland Street to allow traffic on 12th Street South to pull out farther into the intersection without being in the path of oncoming traffic.

**The intersection of 13th Road South and Glebe Road**

Thirteenth Road South is one-way westbound, but some drivers do not notice this restriction.

Recommendation

113. Make more clear the one-way markings at this intersection.

**The intersection of 13th Street South and South Monroe Street**

Brush, a small hill, and a wall visually obstruct the view of South Monroe Street traffic for vehicles traveling east on 13th Street South. Traffic now has to creep into the high-volume traffic on South Monroe Street to make a safe entrance. The brush also creates an obstacle for pedestrians.

Recommendation

114. Reduce the visual and physical obstruction created by the brush.

115. Use nubs on South Monroe to Street to protect vehicles trying to enter safely onto South Monroe Street.

**The intersection of 16th Street South and South Monroe Street**

Visibility is poor for South Monroe Street traffic at this intersection due to parked cars on 16th Street South, and at times, due to the afternoon sun. Also, the speed of traffic on 16th Street South makes entering the intersection from South Monroe Street dangerous. These difficulties are evidenced by the high number of traffic accidents reported at this intersection.

Recommendation

116. As noted previously, install nubs on South Monroe Street and 16th Street South.

117. Restrict parking within 10 yards of this intersection on 16th Street South.

**The intersection of 16th Street South and South Stafford Street**

This intersection is obstructed visually by hills and walls. Traffic on South Stafford Street must creep into busy cross traffic on 16th Street South in order to see whether it is safe to enter the intersection. In addition, there is a blind spot along South Stafford Street just south of the intersection at the crest of the hill.

Recommendation

118. Protect vehicles on South Stafford Street by installing nubs on 16th Street South.

119. Mark in some manner the blind spot at the crest of the hill on South Stafford Street.

### **The intersection of 18th Street South and South Monroe Street**

There are visibility problems at this intersection for traffic traveling on either street due to parked cars. Also, (as noted above) the broad entrance to South Monroe Street at Walter Reed Drive, some 20 yards away from this intersection, encourages a high-speed entry to South Monroe Street, followed by an abrupt stop at the stop sign at this intersection.

#### Recommendation

120. Install nubs on South Monroe Street.

121. Narrow the entrance to South Monroe Street at South Walter Reed Drive.

122. Prohibit parking within 10 yards of the intersection of South Monroe Street and Walter Reed Drive.

### **The intersection of 19th Street South and South Nelson Street**

The southbound approach to this intersection (on South Nelson Street) is blind because southbound traffic on Walter Reed Drive turning right onto 19th Street South cannot be seen at a distance. Moreover, because this turning movement is only a slight turn, traffic does not need to slow down to physically make the turn. Also, because of the placement of sidewalks, pedestrians must cross 19th Street South at or near this intersection, despite the lack of a crosswalk, to avoid walking long distances in the street.

#### Recommendation

123. Use signs and/or street markings to indicate that this is a blind intersection.

124. Signs should also alert South Nelson Street traffic to the poor visibility or blind spot at this intersection.

125. A crosswalk should be installed on 19th Street South as far to the west of this intersection as possible.

### **The intersection of 19th Street South and South Quincy Street**

This intersection is blind because traffic approaching from the south (on South Quincy Street) and west (on 19th Street South) is below the crest of a hill and cannot be seen. The intersection is particularly dangerous because of the high rate of speed of traffic on South Quincy Street.

#### Recommendation

**126.** Install a 4-way stop sign at this intersection.

### **The intersection of South Highland Street and Columbia Pike**

Northbound South Highland Street traffic, especially traffic exiting the retail use located at the southwest corner of this intersection, is often not aware of traffic turning south onto South Highland Street from Columbia Pike.

#### Recommendation

**127.** Install caution signs for the corner retail use and South Highland Street traffic. If the service station proposes any modifications, traffic flow should be improved as part of the modification plans.

### ***Public Transportation***

While the neighborhood does not have nearby access to Metrorail, numerous Metrobus routes serve the general area via Glebe Road and all of the major streets bordering the neighborhood. Many of these bus routes operate throughout the day and evening.

Of particular importance to much of the interior area of the neighborhood is the 16-U Metrobus route, which loops through the center portion of the neighborhood located west of Glebe Road. While only a rush-hour bus route, the 16-U provides the only bus service for some interior portions of the neighborhood. As such, it is critical to the quality of life for some residents, and service should be maintained at the current level or expanded.

Also of note is school bus service to the neighborhood. Students are picked up and dropped off on South Monroe Street and 16th Street South. Not all pick-up locations provide sufficient waiting area for the number of students waiting for the buses. Rather, students sometimes must stand within inches of the flow of traffic. Devices such as nubs, planting

strips, and trees could provide greater safety for students waiting for buses by distancing them from the flow of traffic.

Any traffic control, street, gutter, and sidewalk modifications within the neighborhood should take into account the 16-U Metrobus route and school bus routes. Buses should be able to navigate 16th Street South, South Quincy Street, and 18th Street South especially. Also, the safety of pedestrian traffic associated with bus service should be considered.

### ***Overall Recommendations***

The key issues described above identify critical traffic-related improvements needed for the Douglas Park neighborhood. The proposed solutions, described throughout the traffic plan, seek primarily to reduce traffic volume and speed on residential streets and thereby improve safety and quality of life in the neighborhood. Much of the cause of the traffic issues is a need for engineering key intersections and roads to mitigate outside traffic from flowing through the neighborhood, and to encourage traffic to use the nearby major arterials and intersections. Additionally, neighborhood streets need to be engineered to reduce their attractiveness to cut-through traffic and to speeding.

Traffic is a paramount issue for the Douglas Park neighborhood, and re-engineering the traffic infrastructure will be instrumental to ensuring a high quality of life in the neighborhood.