

McLean Citizens Association
Resolution Regarding
McLean Day and Lewinsville Park
December 4, 2004

Whereas, prior to 1989 McLean Day was held in the area immediately adjacent to the McLean Community Center, but due to the expansion of the Community Center and the resulting lack of sufficient space was moved to Lewinsville Park; and

Whereas, for the past fifteen years McLean Day has been successfully held at Lewinsville Park because this park is centrally located, has sufficient area to accommodate a multitude of activities, and has sufficient parking within and surrounding the park to safely accommodate visitors to the event; and

Whereas, it has recently been proposed to the McLean Community Center Governing Board, the official sponsors of McLean Day, by the Dranesville member of the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Board, that McLean Day be moved to some other location, with McLean Central Park being the first suggestion; and

Whereas, the McLean Community Center Board recently held a special Board meeting, which by law is open to the public, to discuss this proposal, which meeting was attended by numerous members of the community, including several McLean Citizens Association representatives, and which featured the Dranesville member of the FCPA Board and the FCPA Director of Park Operations to present the proposal for moving McLean Day to McLean Central Park and to answer questions ; and

Whereas, the reasons given as underlying this proposal included the following:

- 1) McLean Central Park is underutilized;
- 2) Loss of use of a baseball field at Lewinsville makes the remaining space inadequate;
- 3) There is inadequate room at Lewinsville Park for McLean Day to grow;
- 4) There are parking and traffic issues along Chain Bridge Road;
- 5) The opinion that, “McLean Central Park would be as adequate as Lewinsville Park”; and

Whereas, use of McLean Central Park is rapidly growing with the new gazebo and tot-lot, and the children’s shows this fall attracted hundreds of children, the very activities for which this park was designed; and

Whereas, McLean Central Park has recently undergone major landscaping, at great cost—an amenity that would be largely destroyed if McLean Day were to be held in the Park; and

Whereas, there have been no complaints from any of the public about McLean Day activities at Lewinsville Park, a fact acknowledged by the Dranesville member of the FCPA Board; and

Whereas, McLean Day coordinators accommodated the loss of use of the baseball field in 2004 without difficulty; and

Whereas, there have been no plans proposed or even suggested to expand the activities of the McLean Day festival beyond what they have been for the past decade; and

Whereas, for many years the McLean District Police Station has supplied at least two officers to direct and control vehicular traffic and ensure pedestrian safety along Chain Bridge Road, and reports of the last three McLean Station Commanders indicated that they have experienced no problems with this arrangement ; and

Whereas, long-time residents with homes adjacent to Lewinsville Park have recalled no safety incidents or problems over the past fifteen years and, in fact, have encouraged festival-goers to park along local streets (which have sidewalks) surrounding the park on the other three sides; and

Whereas, the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce strongly supports retaining McLean Day at Lewinsville Park because this site is the closest to the business district without infringing on its parking or normal pedestrian access; and

Whereas, McLean Central Park has the following disadvantages as a venue for McLean Day:

- 1) McLean Central Park, particularly the trails, was not designed to accommodate trucks or heavy equipment, so any booths or other facilities to be erected in the park would have to be transported by hand truck or hand dolly;
- 2) There is no access from Old Dominion Drive except the narrow pedestrian foot bridge;
- 3) To accommodate the rides for McLean Day, nearly the entire parking area of both the Community Center and Library would be required, not just the upper lot at the Community Center;
- 4) The trees surrounding the Community Center and parking facilities would dictate that the larger rides be clustered in the center of each parking area, virtually eliminating use of these spaces for vehicular parking;

- 5) There is little street parking in the immediate area of the park, and the streets are narrow and have no sidewalks;
- 6) The lack of parking in the immediate area of the park would require pedestrians to cross Dolley Madison or Old Dominion, and both major streets are potentially hazardous for pedestrians;
- 7) Renovation of the Library is scheduled to begin in 2006, and construction vehicles and areas would further reduce the area available for McLean Day;
- 8) The space at the McLean Central Park/Community Center is so spread out—some space near Dolley Madison, some behind the Community Center—that the festival would lose its community feel; and

Whereas, there are no other centrally located park facilities with sufficient space and parking facilities to safely accommodate this event, and

Whereas, Lewinsville Park is a Community Park, and no substantial justification has been brought forth to deny the 8,000-11,000 citizens who participate in McLean Day the use for one day each year of Lewinsville Park to hold this event; now therefore

Be it resolved, that the McLean Citizens Association supports the continued use of the Lewinsville Park for McLean Day and adamantly opposes any proposal to relocate McLean Day to McLean Central Park; and

Be it further resolved, that the McLean Citizens Association, which represents the interests of 26,000 households with 65,000 residents in the McLean Planning District, urgently requests a special meeting with the full Park Authority Board to address this issue.

Distribution:

Supervisor Joan DuBois
Mr. Kevin Fay
McLean Community Center Board, attn. Caroline Pickens, Chair
Board of Supervisors
Park Authority Board and Senior Management
County Executive
Department of Community and Recreation Services