

Falls Church Pulse

Dear Neighbors,

In early February, City Manager Wyatt Shields informed the City Council that the City faces a \$20+ million bill to acquire the additional sewage processing capacity needed for the recent growth in the City and developments under construction. This investment includes the construction of a \$10.8 million vault that City staff maintain would ensure Falls Church's compliance with Fairfax's demand that we better manage our peak sewage flows during major rain events.

To help you understand this serious challenge, we bring you two posts – the first explains the problem and the proposed solution, the second covers the issue of funding it.

Coincidentally, the City planners are also updating the Demographics chapter of its Comprehensive Plan. A profile of the population changes and growth projections were presented.

Growth here is driven by an increase in housing units. The Quinn Homestretch senior housing project was approved and a new mixed-use apartment complex was submitted for the S Maple Avenue and W Annandale corner.

Thank you for your interest in this City.

The Editors

March 2024

[The Little City's Big Sewage Challenge – Part 1](#)

Approved and coming mixed-use projects prompted negotiations with Fairfax County to increase sewage processing capacity. City Manager Wyatt Shields surprised Council with an initial estimate of \$19.3m. This will only be sufficient for current construction, future developments will require further expense.



[The Little City's Big Sewage Challenge – Part 2: Has Growth Paid For Growth?](#)

The City Manager proposed funding the now \$20+ million cost of adding sewage capacity with City funds and \$14.3 million bond issuance. City Council asked why this cost was not anticipated and if, in fact, growth isn't paying for growth. Other options were also explored. Watch the video clip of a testy exchange between Councilmember Erin Flynn and Wyatt Shields.



[City Council Approves the 10-Story Quinn Homestretch Project, Not Waiting For Information On Sewer Outcome](#)

City Council voted to approve the Quinn Homestretch project (5-2). The majority felt the trade-off between the 10 stories and the open space was justified. The City is still negotiating to have this project's sewage processed by Arlington County, otherwise the default sewage plant is in Fairfax County where the City has exceeded capacity limits.



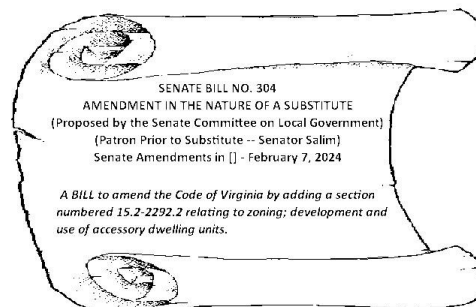
[The Maple and Annandale Development – Another Proposed Mixed-Use Apartment Project](#)

The 7-story Maple and Annandale proposal brings 196 rental apartments to the City but minimal commercial revenue, fully occupies the lot and bulges out over the sidewalk. Otherwise, it is an interesting building. Many issues remain to be clarified in the coming months.



[Senate Bill SB 304 on Accessory Dwelling Units: How Would It Affect Falls Church?](#)

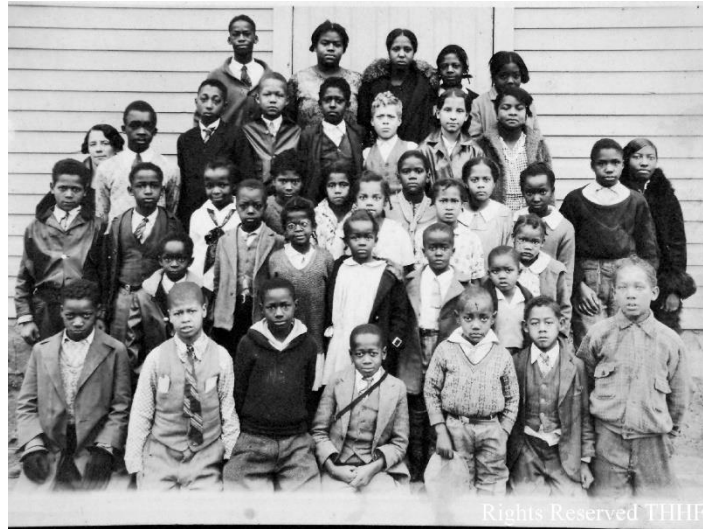
Update: Senate bill SB 304 was postponed to 2025 for further discussion. It would mandate that all localities in Virginia allow accessory dwelling units in residential districts, whether internal, attached or detached, with minimum side and rear setbacks, overriding the ability of communities to decide zoning issues for themselves.



Posts you may have missed

[Falls Church's Black History: A Welcoming Community That Has Not Always Been So Welcoming](#)

Falls Church was once 42% black. Local historian Ed Henderson writes about their struggle for equity and how zoning, taxes and budgets can displace a community, intentionally or not. Read about why Falls Church retroceded a third of its land to Fairfax County and our separate but unequal schools.



[A Founders Row II Primer](#)

An overview of Founders Row II, a 6-story apartment building with ground floor retail on the corner of Broad and West Streets. It will have 280 rental units, 12% will be affordable housing. Some commercial space for restaurants, co-work space, etc. on the ground floor. Environmental impacts and expected revenues to the City are discussed.



[Founders Row II Architectural Plans](#)

Architectural, landscape and street modification plans for Founders Row II. The plans show changes to the green median on Broad Street to allow a left exit from the building.



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