

# DCBIA Celebrates 14th Annual Community Improvement Day at Oxon Run Park

*The design visualizes shaded sitting areas around the pool with playground equipment and a gathering pavilion. The main path to the park and a new entrance feature will be aligned with the geometry of the exiting streets and crosswalks of surrounding housing developments. Trails will be extended beyond the middle school to bridge current gaps and to divert pedestrian traffic from its school yard. Flower beds will be planted and picnic nodes sited in areas of natural shade.*

On Saturday, September 16, 2006, Ward 8 residents will receive a very much improved community venue, representing the efforts of many professional and skilled members of the DC Building Industry Association's Community Services Committee and devoted volunteer members of the Association. This year's Community Improvement Day (CID) project started back in January, when the site selection committee compiled a short list of potential projects. After touring the City to visit each, a "pro/con" ranking of the sites was prepared and a consensus choice reached. Come September, our community day volunteers will take on Oxon Run Park—located on Mississippi Avenue, SE.

The Park is flanked by two schools—Simon Elementary and Hart Middle School—with a Department of Parks and Recreation outdoor pool centered between. One of the more challenging aspects of the site, but also its greatest potential, lies in its vast open spaces. Currently, there is no sense of scale, few trees, and no principal entrance. In short, the park is like a blank canvas awaiting our designers' creativity.

The charrette design is in full swing. A dedicated team of professionals has spent evenings and Saturdays getting this job done: Will Teass (Shalom Baranes Associates), Liz Dixon (Inscape Studio), Sondra Pires (OPX), Angie Yu (Cunningham + Quill) and Mark Baughman (SKB). Also, Buddy Paris (Educational Media, Inc.), Tama Duffy (Perkins & Will) and Joshua Dean (Merrifield) have come up with some enhancing ideas, complimented by input from the community at a presentation of our plans

hosted by Pastor Payne of the Lighthouse Baptist Church.

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Matt Farris (Lehman-Smith + McLeish) and Michael Norton (Haines Land Design) have participated in the charrette design and, most importantly, have tackled the Green Grant Application for funding by the US Forestry Service to supply about seventy trees for the park.

Once the design is complete and preparation of construction drawings has begun, general contractors will step up to the plate. James G. Davis Construction Corporation, Clark Construction, Hitt Contracting and Jefferson Millwork, along with several others, will donate staff, equipment, construction expertise and resource their subcontractors to get the job done on time.

This year's fund raising effort will again be led by pros Steve Mutty (Advantis/GVA) and Lance Jaccard (OTJ Architects). Their tremendous success over the past few years bodes well for this year's BIG effort! Already, Hines and CarrAmerica have committed to being the lead Corporate Sponsors—Hines' sixth year and CarrAmerica's third. We thank them for their continued support and strong vote of confidence in our Community Services Committee and its work. Many other companies will be contributing at the Benefactor level. **We invite you to join them in supporting what we know will be another outstanding DCBIA community service venture.**

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Robert Alvarez

James G. Davis  
Construction  
Corporation



Michael Day

Cunningham + Quill

Co-Chairs,  
DCBIA Community  
Improvement Day  
2006



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amounts of withdrawal liability is increasing. From a “trickle” of four in 2001, there was an “avalanche” of 146 withdrawal liability cases in 2005, and the trend line points toward more of the same. The percentage of multi-employer pension plans that were fully funded has been spiraling downward, from 83% in 2001 to only 17% in 2005. In other words, fewer than one in five multi-employer pension plans now have sufficient reserves to pay their vested benefits. During 2005, there were several withdrawal liability assessments that exceeded \$1 million, with a high of \$2.8 million—not including interest and attorneys’ fees, of course.

A contractor joining a multi-employer pension plan of the type associated with the baseball stadium PLA is likely to be entering a plan with a significant funding deficit. Thus, when the stadium is finished, there may very well be a spate of withdrawal liability assessments made against the open shop contractors that helped build it. Imagine a multi-million dollar assessment hitting a small contractor virtually out of the blue years after the project is finished. “Winning” a bid on the stadium job has the very real potential to put the small, local contractors PLA was supposed to help out of business.

As important a threat as withdrawal liability is, virtually no contractors seem to know about it. I was alerted to the issue through my work with The JOBS Coalition and was shocked to realize its implications. It seems patently unreasonable that a contractor can be hit with an assessment after making all required contributions to a union pension plan. So the next time you meet one of our political leaders who voted to impose a PLA on the stadium, see if you can get him or her to explain how a serious financial liability works to provide new business opportunities for our local contractors and new employment opportunities for our residents. ▲

## Community Service continued from page 7

Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 16—the day we will need our DCBIA members to don their boots and jeans, and pitch in to give something back to the community—and, along the way, have a good time doing it. Sign up by contacting Danielle Melus at [dmelus@dcbia.org](mailto:dmelus@dcbia.org). Community Improvement Day needs your hands and smiling faces! ▲

## Legislation continued from page 6

property owners but ultimately passed through to, and borne by, consumers.

Another issue totally unrelated to revenue matters has crept its way into the Budget Support Act—an amendment by CM Brown that would extend LSDBE set asides to non-construction contracts and to equity participation (20%) in District-sponsored development projects. As was attempted last year with “Way to Work,” the Brown amendment is an attempt to by-pass established Council procedure in order to move substantive legislation forward without the public scrutiny and comment it quite obviously requires. DCBIA and several other business organizations have objected and requested that the Brown amendment be struck from the Budget Support Act for separate consideration on its merits.

### Green Building

At a hearing in February before the Committee on Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Committee Chair Graham agreed to the formation of a task force to reconsider Bill 16-515, “District of Columbia Green Building Act of 2005.” The bill calls for the adoption of green building standards for essentially all commercial development in the District (office, mixed-use and multi-unit residential), with a specified schedule of implementation leading to the achievement of progressively higher levels of green standards. While a consensus on the goals of the bill appeared to exist, important questions remained on how best to reach those goals.

A Green Building Task Force of members with the requisite technical expertise (including four DCBIA representatives) has been convened to recommend the necessary elements of workable legislation. A series of meetings has been scheduled with the objective of presenting task force findings and recommendations at the reconvened public hearing on July 14<sup>th</sup> before the Committee on Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

### School Modernization

In May, the Board of Education voted to adopt the Facilities Management Organizational Strategy proposed by DCPS management. The plan for implementation of the multi-year school modernization incorporates a number of key recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Facilities Management Task Force, a coalition of education advocates and business groups including DCBIA.