

## 2013 State of the Town Address

Good afternoon and Happy New Year.

It is my pleasure to join you to present my State of the Town remarks. As always the Council deeply appreciates all the Association and its members do to make Purcellville a great place to live, work and raise a family.

### **Celebrating Success**

I am pleased to report the State of the Town is strong and the future of our community is bright.

We need to celebrate the success we have achieved over the past year. 2012 was a year of substantial progress in a number of areas that continue to move our Town forward as a leader.

- Phase 1 of our [Downtown Improvement Project](#) is now complete and well received. We have been awarded additional Federal and State funds to move forward with Phase 2 of the project.
- The second annual [Loudoun Grown Expo](#) was very successful with more than 2,000 folks visiting from all around the region. We expect this year's event will be just as successful and we are delighted with the response to date.
- Our Main Street is thriving. The Purcellville Gateway and Shoppes at Main and Maple projects are complete and they are busy signing tenants and opening businesses. Our historic downtown is alive and well - thriving with new businesses and energy. More than 300 new jobs were created by businesses last year in Purcellville and 2013 looks just as promising.

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- Our first ever Purcellville Wine and Food Festival drew more than 5,000 visitors in the middle of July and our local businesses did an outstanding job in bringing hundreds of families and thousands of folks to our Town for Halloween. Once again, the Town-wide Tag Sale, Christmas in Purcellville program and Rock the Field events were well attended and well received.
- Our efforts at sustainability were recognized and honored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Siemens with our winning a national “Sustainable Community” award. That award led to 115 new trees being planted along the “A” Street corridor as the result of the \$20,000 prize we won.
- We adopted a Tourism Economic Development Zone for our downtown.
- Our investments in Fireman’s Field have been well founded. The private firm operating the Tabernacle reports more than 40,000 folks utilized the facility last year.

### **Supporting Local Business**

While we have much to be proud of, we must continue to innovate and collaborate to build upon the successes we have achieved together.

As such I am proposing several items I will be asking Council and staff to pursue for the coming months.

- Tourism is a \$1.5 billion industry in Loudoun County. As the Capitol of DC’s Wine Country we are strategically positioned to take

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advantage of this opportunity. As such, I will be asking we create a Tourism Plan for our Town. The plan will provide us a guide and allow us to be eligible for State grants to help further market our Town as a great place to live, work and raise a family. I am pleased to report Visit Loudoun has already agreed to assist our Town in developing this plan.

- To further take advantage of our unique position in western Loudoun, I have asked former Council Member Greg Wagner to take the point in working with the Loudoun Wine Association and Visit Loudoun to establish a temporary Wine/Visitor Center for weekends at our train station with the long term vision of establishing a permanent site in the historic Dillon house along 21<sup>st</sup> Street.

I am pleased to report Greg has agreed to do so. Further, I can tell you my conversations with Doug Fabboli of Fabboli Wines and Patrick Kaler of Visit Loudoun have been very positive. We will also be working with our partner in local government, Supervisor Janet Clarke, to make this project come to life.

In the long run I see this as a perfect opportunity for Northern Virginia Community College to be involved as well. With the growth of Loudoun's wine industry the possibilities of teaching the ins and outs of business while at the same time giving students hands on training at local vineyards will lead to strengthen our rural economy and provide the next generation of wine makers and vineyard owners.

### **Shop Purcellville**

Sustainability is not just about the environment, but it is about a thriving small business community. As you know, more than 90% of the business

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licenses in the Town of Purcellville are held by non-chain, local businesses. We are indeed fortunate to have a thriving small business community and we are pleased to be able to work with the Business Association to continue to see it thrive.

As such, I am pleased to announce the kick off of our Shop Purcellville program. The concept is simple; all business license holders in Town will be invited to sign up and to provide a unique discount to customers who hold a “Shop Purcellville” card.

A web site is being developed which will list all participating merchants and the discount they wish to provide. Merchants will receive a letter in the next several weeks inviting them to sign up. Participating merchants will be provided collateral materials including a window decal and electronic versions of logos to place on web sites and Facebook pages. We will be looking at other digital strategies as well.

It is our plan to kick this program off for the Babe Ruth World Series in August and push it into high gear for the Fall and Christmas season. I believe it is these types of innovative and creative partnerships with our business community that will help our small businesses grow further.

I am grateful to Business Association President, Jim Bowman, for his generous offer of help to assist us in making sure businesses in Town participate in this program. And, it will be free for all businesses to be listed and to any folks who are interested in obtaining the Shop Purcellville card.

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### **Strong Fiscal Performance**

With strong fiscal discipline and management the news from Town Hall once again is positive.

We ended fiscal year 2012 in line with our fiscal plan. Furthermore, the Council for six consecutive years has adopted a real property tax rate that either equalizes or cuts Town taxes.

In recognition of the Town's outstanding performance our Consolidated Annual Financial Report and budget received national awards. Less than 1% of the municipalities of our size in the entire nation have been so recognized. Purcellville is the smallest jurisdiction in Virginia to receive a Distinguished Budget Award.

### **Transportation**

Much is happening on the transportation front and I am excited by the progress we are making.

With respect to the long planned Southern Collector Road (SCR), construction is on schedule and the contractual completion date for the roadway is the end of this June. I am hopeful with good weather the opening of the road will be even earlier.

We are grateful to Governor Bob McDonnell for his leadership in advancing a proactive transportation agenda. As you know, the Town obtained funding from the Commonwealth to make improvements to the Town maintained portion of Hirst Road and to Country Club Drive. Both projects will be under construction this year.

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Transportation, however, is not just about cars.

With the paving of the trail along William T. Druhan, Jr. Boulevard (SCR), the private sector and we have placed more than two miles of sidewalk/trail within our Town over the past several years. We have an additional sidewalk project planned for East Main Street to further link our community.

With that said, I believe we need to revisit our sidewalk plan. As such, I have asked the Town's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to take a new look at the plan and to develop a new priority list of projects we can work to accomplish in the years ahead. In particular I am asking the Board to take a hard look at missing links, which would provide greater pedestrian access to our schools and other public facilities.

Further, I have requested the Board to work with our partners at Loudoun Valley High School to develop a brochure for our two wonderful trails, the Chapman-DeMary Trail and the Sue Kane Nature Preserve. These two trails are beautiful assets to our community, but not necessarily well known. The brochure is intended to give trail users the opportunity to understand and interpret the nature they are seeing along their walks.

I am also pleased to inform you we have received VDOT approval for our way finding program. VDOT has approved the locations and we are in the procurement process to obtain the signs and poles.

VDOT will need to sign off on construction plans and installation, but I am hopeful barring unforeseen circumstances our signage will be in place by mid-Summer prior to the World Series. These signs will be helpful in directing visitors to our community not only to key facilities such as

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Fireman's Field, the Carver Center and Town Hall, but to public parking and welcome folks to our historic downtown.

### **Working with Loudoun County**

I am pleased to report that 2012 was a year of great cooperation with our partner in local government - Supervisor Janet Clarke.

We have seen our gas tax funding restored, cooperation in planning on improvements to the Bypass 7/Route 287 intersection, forward movement on the Route 690 Interchange project and the Town received financial assistance with respect to further improvements to our beautiful Fireman's Field facility.

We are grateful as a community for the active and positive assistance of Supervisor Clarke.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion I would like to thank the members of the Council. I am proud to serve with them.

We are also fortunate as a community to have a dedicated, loyal and hard working staff. They, like the Council, put the needs of the community ahead of their own personal self-interests. I know speaking for the Council we are eternally grateful.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not take the time to publically thank Carolyn, my wonderful wife, and Kathryn our daughter for their support of my efforts. In fact, I thank all of the families of our Council Members, Commission members, volunteers and staff for their support of their

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spouses. Without their support and understanding it would make a difficult job, even more challenging.

Thank you once again for allowing me to join with you today.

God Bless Purcellville.