

P I M M I T H I L L S C I T I Z E N S A S S O C I A T I O N

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SPECIAL BULLETIN

Executive Committee Report on Curbs and Gutters

Because of expressed general desire to know the more recent developments toward obtaining curbs and gutters for those areas in Pimmit Hills not having them, and particularly because of a problem immediately facing one part of that area, the Executive Committee felt that a report on that subject covering developments to date should immediately be made. Efforts were made by phone calls to announce the report, and it was made at the last Association meeting. The following is a more complete form of that report.

Perhaps the first inquiry into the utility of a Sanitary District as a means of getting curbs and gutters was the letter dated June 2, 1952 addressed to the Sanitary Engineer of Fairfax County. It was learned from that inquiry that the statute, as it then stood, would not permit such installations. During the last session of the State Legislature we cooperated with the Bel Air Association in obtaining the passage of an amendment permitting the use of a Sanitary District to pay for curbs and gutters, sidewalks, street lights and other facilities. We were then ready to look into the mechanics of organizing a district.

On April 20, 1954, a representative of the Executive Committee met with Mr. Aikel, then Resident Engineer of the State Highway Commission, to discuss the initial procedure. Mr. Aikel pointed out that construction on street rights-of-way was within the jurisdiction of his department and was, in fact, the responsibility of that department. He added that if the funds were available, the Highway Commission would already have installed the curbs and gutters. The funds appropriated for this county are, however, hardly sufficient to maintain proper repair.

The Executive Committee was advised that the first step was to obtain a rough estimate of the cost of the project. This estimate was necessary in order to have a figure to work with in taking further steps. As a result of this conference and this advice, on May 6, 1954 a letter was sent to the Highway Commission, asking them to make a rough estimate of the cost. On September 7, 1954, we received our answer. The estimate reads as follows:

Excavation	\$ 5,000.00
Drainage	75,000.00
Curbs and Gutters	118,570.00
New Base Material	46,350.00
Surface Treatment	40,000.00
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	284,920.00
10% Engineering & Contract Fee	28,492.00
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	\$ 313,412.00

This estimate is based on the installation of standard curbs and gutters throughout the sections not now having them, widening Pimmit Drive and Griffith

237 / 118,570
500
118,570
1570
1570
3340
3150

118.3

Road to 36 feet, widening the other streets to 32 feet, and the installation of a storm sewer system, complete insofar as the streets are concerned, and adequate to handle the drainage from any future development in this area.

It would be impractical, to say the least, to pay for the installation of curbs and gutters and to leave them in a condition that would permit their destruction. To protect them from erosion the street surface must be extended and tied in with an adequate seal. To protect the streets and adjoining properties from standing water a complete storm sewer system must be implemented. In addition, it is necessary to take into consideration the full development of this and surrounding areas in planning the storm sewer. If that development is not considered, portions of the system will eventually be found to be inadequate and will have to be replaced.

The Executive Committee next examined the County tax records to find the total assessed valuation for the area in question. By applying the legal limit on bond issues, we found that bonds in the amount of \$324,889.02 could be issued. Since this was enough to cover the rough estimate, we could proceed.

Conferences were then set up with Mr. Carlton Massey, County Executive, and with Mr. Robert McCandlish, the attorney handling the County's dealings with sanitary districts. From these conferences it was learned that a payment schedule of approximately \$10.00 per house per month would be necessary in order to sell \$313,000.00 worth of bonds. That was more than the residents of Sections 1 through 5 could handle.

We took our problem to Mr. G. Wallace Carper, County Supervisor from our magisterial district, who took it up with the Highway Commission. He arranged a meeting for himself, Mr. Lonnie Bolton, Resident Engineer, and a representative of the Executive Committee. At the end of this meeting the Highway Commission had pledged itself to extend the street surface to the curbs and gutters without cost to the residents, and we were advised to consult an engineer to see whether the estimate could be further cut. It could be. The rough estimate now stands at the figure of approximately \$225,000.00. This decrease allows an extension of time so that the monthly payments can now be adjusted to between \$4.00 and \$5.00 per month per house. Efforts are being made to reduce this payment even further. At this time, however, no promises can be made. In considering the feasibility of the project, we must figure that payment to be final.

So the problem is no longer can you have curbs and gutters? You can have them. The problem is now, do you want them?

The cost of this complete installation per house will just about equal the increase in market value. No value can be placed, however, on the increased convenience of wide, dry streets, on the increased pride in the appearance of your home, or on the stopping of possible loss due to erosion. This project will give to Sections 1 through 5 and Register's Addition a better street system than that now enjoyed in either Section 6 or Section 7. Most of the streets will be 32 feet wide, and the major ones will be 36 feet wide. The cost to the resident will be no greater than it would be if narrower streets were put in. In addition, there will be plenty of room for two way traffic and parking on both sides.

For those who plan to live in Pimmit Hills permanently, the cost will nearly equal the appreciation in value. Perhaps it is ill advised to go further, but I think it to be only practical thinking. At any rate, for those residents who plan to sell their homes within a reasonable time, the installation will increase their value, but a portion, at least, of the cost will be born by the purchaser.

through the taxes he pays. It is entirely your choice whether you avail yourselves of this opportunity. The role of the Executive Committee from here on in is solely to help those who want curbs and gutters to get them.

In spite of having reached a point where a decision of sorts must be made, we are not yet ready to move in equipment and start to work. Many things must yet be done before we come to that point. An engineer must be retained to prepare a more exact estimate and to prepare specifications for the project. (That estimate will probably result in a further reduction in the cost.) We must retain an attorney to represent us in the legal formation of the sanitary district and before the County Board of Supervisors. We must go before the County Board to get their blessing on the project. (Mr. Carper's assistance will ease this problem.) A petition for a sanitary district must be circulated to be signed by at least 50 qualified registered voters. Funds must be raised for the attorney's fee. (One dollar per house should cover this fee.) Then, after 4 weeks advertising, we go to court for a hearing on whether the district should be formed. If the order is favorable, a special referendum on the issuance of bonds and the required advertising will also be ordered. Again, only qualified registered voters may respond. The bonds must be printed and marketed. Bids on the job must be advertised for. (4 weeks advertising). Then, at last, contracts can be let and the work begun. All of this procedure will take a minimum of from 6 to 9 months, probably more.

I have attempted here to explain the present position of curbs and gutters and to lay out, briefly, the future prospects. The executive Committee realizes that there are or will be questions not adequately covered. For that reason a special meeting of the residents and members in those areas not now having curbs and gutters (excluding Magarity Road) has been called for MARCH 28, at the DUNN LORING FIRE HOUSE at 8:00 PM to further discuss the subject and to answer those questions. Y'all come!

J.H. Whytock
President

NOTICE

The Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are presenting a FREE "Landscaping Institute" at the Fairfax High School on Arlington Boulevard in the Town of Fairfax on Tuesday Evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 PM. On March 22 the subject will be "Lawns". March 29 - Plant maintenance, insects and diseases. April 5 - Pruning, with demonstrations. April 12 - Azaleas and Roses.

The speakers will be specialists on each subject from V.P.I., from the U.S.D.A. and from the National Arboretum.