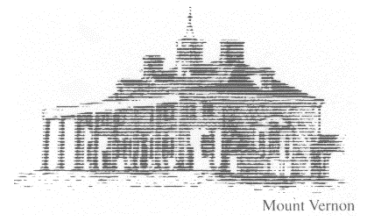




Dan Storck
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**Thank you to Fairfax County Staff for Supporting Mount Vernon's
34th Annual Town Meeting
February 9, 2021**

On February 6, 2021, I hosted the 34th Annual Mount Vernon Town Meeting completely virtual from the Channel 16 studio. This year, the town meeting theme was “Covid Recovery and Rebounding in 2021”.

I would like to thank all the agencies that were able to attend and who continue to make this tradition so successful. I would also like to thank Chairman Jeff McKay, County Executive Bryan Hill, Mount Vernon District School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders, Congressman Gerry Connolly, Congressman Don Beyer, Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu, and Fort Belvoir Garrison Colonel Joshua SeGraves for their willingness to join me on Super Bowl Saturday and for providing updates to residents on key issues affecting the Mount Vernon District, the County, and our nation.

Thank you also to the Fairfax County Communications Productions Division, Channel 16. Special thanks to Director Donna Monacci, Producer Sara Prohaska, Chief Engineer Greg Smalfelt, Production Manager Patrick “Potts” Balsamo, Albee Sinayoko, Josh Bass, Kenneth Gilbert, Steve Adams, Ali Al Taweel, Mark Jung, Ben Block, Gil Caraballo and Kathi Overton; our tremendous DIT team, Kim Satterthwaite, Mike Palacios, Amante Bustamante, and Mark Leonard; and Matt Miller from GIS for their support and professionalism.

The town meeting will air play on Cox cable channel 16 at 8:00 pm on the following dates: February 14, February 20, and February 25. It is also available on the Channel 16 website below and on my Facebook Page. In addition, DVD copies are available at Mount Vernon District libraries and at my office.



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JOHN W. FOUST
DRANESVILLE DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Board Matter
Supervisor John Foust
February 9, 2021

Targeted Business Relief and Recovery Programs

Background: As we all know too well, the impacts of COVID-19 and the public health measures needed to address the pandemic continue into the new calendar year with no end in sight. For now, Governor Northam has extended his executive order to keep in place coronavirus-related restrictions through the end of February. We can expect that the direct economic impacts of the coronavirus will continue well into 2021 and that a much longer period will be required for our local economy to fully recover.

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority and the County's Department of Economic Initiatives has worked with a consulting firm to evaluate the impact of the pandemic and to prepare an economic recovery plan to help guide and expedite our recovery efforts. At the Economic Initiatives Committee on November 18, 2020, we received a briefing from staff and our consultant on their efforts. Supervisors have now received the draft final Economic Recovery Framework ("Framework") document. There will be a detailed discussion of the Framework at the next Economic Initiatives Committee.

The Framework outlines recommendations for fostering a just and resilient economic recovery. Data and analysis included in the Framework demonstrate that many businesses have been able to adapt reasonably well by expanding teleworking, altering operating procedures, adjusting products, reaching new markets, and making other creative and effective changes.

The Framework also clearly demonstrates that the pandemic did not impact all communities in the county equally, and that it had the greatest impact on minority and low-income communities. Similarly, the pandemic has had disproportionate impacts across industries, with hospitality, food service and small retailers heavily impacted. Among many other important findings, the Framework notes that 90% of all job losses took place in industries with average wages less than 80% of AMI. These job losses have disproportionately impacted minority and low-income workers.

The Framework also shows that business interruptions have been most severe for establishments that rely on in-person activities because of necessary restrictions on

occupancy, hours of operation, and/or social gatherings, along with changed customer behavior due to the pandemic. Sectors that were particularly hard hit and face difficult recovery challenges as a result include hospitality, food service, small retailers, and arts and entertainment.

In addition to providing employment to many members of our community, these businesses and non-profits contribute to making Fairfax County a fantastic place to live, work and visit. We cannot afford to lose them, and we will not be able to achieve a fully robust economic recovery without them. Because of the near-business-death experiences that operators in these sectors have suffered, the Framework finds that additional local, targeted assistance programs will be essential to achieving that recovery. Assistance in many forms, including but not limited to financial grants, is needed to assist operators in these impacted business sectors to survive through 2021, to adapt to changing conditions, and to thrive in the long-term recovery when the public health crisis is behind us.

Time is of the essence. While all levels of government have a role in supporting economic recovery, here in Fairfax County, we need to act now to support the efforts of these particularly hard-hit businesses and non-profits to return to vibrancy so they can continue to contribute to our economic and cultural vibrancy.

Motion: Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board of Supervisors direct the County Executive to:

- Direct staff from the Department of Economic Initiatives to work with the Economic Development Authority to develop recommendations for targeted relief and recovery grants and/or programs to support Fairfax County businesses and non-profits identified in the Framework as having been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the related public health mitigation measures,
- Direct that these recommendations be brought to the Board of Supervisors' Economic Initiatives Committee on March 16, 2021 for consideration, and
- Evaluate funding for these programs in the range of \$10 to \$15 million from the Economic Opportunity Reserve.

This nomination begins the established process for review by staff and the Board prior to allocation of any Economic Opportunity Reserve funds.