

**A FEW WORDS ABOUT NORMAN-- OUR DEAR FRIEND AND PRE-EMINENT CIVIC LEADER**  
**Julie Davis and Jenny Sue Dunner**

We are very honored to have been asked by Barbara and the children to share a few memories about Norman, our dear friend whom we also knew as a pre-eminent civic leader. We regret that we could not be here to share them in person.

Many of you have known Norman only in more recent years as one of the leaders of the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (or CCCFH), and as land use counsel for the Village of Friendship Heights. However, we became acquainted with Norman over fifty years ago when, as a civic activist in his early thirties, he was organizing a new citizens coalition to monitor proposed development in the Friendship Heights area.

It was the early 1970s, and mass transit was coming to Montgomery County. In anticipation of a new METRO station in Friendship Heights, major real estate developers and property owners in the area announced plans for nearly 10 million square feet of new commercial and residential development on both sides of the Maryland and D.C. line.

If approved, the new development would have equaled the then square footage of two Rosslyn's or four Crystal Cities. It would also have generated over 13,000 new vehicle trips during the evening rush hour on just the Montgomery County side of Friendship Heights.

It would be a gross understatement to say that the communities in and around Friendship Heights were shocked by these plans. However, they were uncertain as to how to respond to these unprecedented development proposals.

But not Norman. That's when his career as a civic leader began in earnest. He was already president of his Brookdale Citizens Association, but he realized that this situation needed a much broader response.

Working with a small group of civic leaders from other nearby communities (including the two of us), Norman formed CCCFH. More than 20 communities in the Friendship Heights area, including Norman's Brookdale community and the Village of Friendship Heights, ultimately joined the organization.

But this was just the beginning. Norman also understood that the real estate industry exercised significant influence over Montgomery County elections through campaign contributions and other means of support.

Although the CCCFH neighborhoods could never even that playing field, these neighborhoods had thousands of residents that could be organized and energized to vote for County Council candidates who would support controlled growth in Friendship Heights. Norman decided that CCCFH could and should become a political force to be reckoned with in County politics.

Keep in mind that political marches and rallies, whether for civil rights or against the Vietnam war, were hallmarks of the 1970s. Norman borrowed liberally from that playbook.

With a small group of other CCCFH volunteers, he organized hundreds of residents from the CCCFH communities to participate in marches throughout the Friendship Heights business district. His group also organized rallies at Planning Board and County Council hearings and meetings, making sure these events were covered by local news outlets.

Most Planning Board and Council hearings and meetings were in the evening, and many elderly residents in the Friendship Heights area were reluctant to drive at night. Norman and his CCCFH volunteers thus arranged for carpools and buses to bring residents to those meetings and hearings.

At several Planning Board and County Council hearings in the huge B-CC High School auditorium, so many buses brought in so many CCCFH residents that the auditorium was filled, and there was standing room only in the school hallways and parking lot.

Knowing that one picture is worth a thousand words, Norman also worked with an area public relations firm to make a video showing the potential impacts of overdevelopment in Friendship Heights on the residents in and around the area. He then made sure that the video was shown and reshown at as many Council and Planning Board hearings and meetings as possible.

But political pressure alone was not enough to limit development in Friendship Heights. There were also significant legal battles to be fought. Norman, then practicing anti-trust law, developed an expertise in Maryland land use law that even the most experienced members of the County land use bar came to respect, if not fear.

With Norman leading the legal charge, court case followed court case. Several went all the way to the U.S. and Maryland Supreme Courts, and CCCFH was on the winning side in each. Norman also took an active role in raising funds to pay for the lawyers representing CCCFH.

By the late 1970s, development plans for the Montgomery County side of the D.C. line had been successfully limited by the provisions of the 1974 Sector Plan for Friendship Heights, which had finally been upheld by the courts after nearly a decade of litigation.

Through the years that followed, Norman remained actively involved in CCCFH, leading its involvement in the 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan. He also opened a law firm in Rockville, and successfully represented numerous other communities throughout the County in land use cases. And, after moving to the Village of Friendship Heights from the Brookdale community, he took on the role of Land Use Counsel for the Village.

Through his career as a civic leader for over half a century, Norman became a legend in his own time. Although we deeply mourn his loss, his memory will forever be enshrined in the Friendship Heights communities for which he worked so diligently for so many years to protect and preserve.

We again thank Norman's family for allowing us to share some of our memories of Norman's early life as a civic leader.