

February Meeting Minutes

Our February 13th meeting was opened by AHCA Pres. Bruce Cameron, standing before a pair of trash cans positioned to catch water dripping from the ceiling.

Anthony Fusarelli and Alex James of County Staff, presented the concept plan for Crystal City. The plan (www.plancrystalcity.com) has a 40 to 45 year horizon, and is designed to ensure that Crystal City remains viable and sustainable through the Base Relocation impact. Planning started in October 2006; about 25 task force meetings have been held. The plan will eventually go to the County Board for approval.

The current plan proposes a two-fold increase in the resident population, a 50% increase in office space and a 50% increase in hotel space. Most of the development will be east of Route 1, but does propose 70% growth west of Rt. 1 along Eads St.

Attendees expressed concerns about changes to Restaurant Row, retaining existing green space, adequate parking, transitions between new high buildings and single family homes and maintaining the un-built areas along Fern St on the Crystal Houses block as well as Eads St. The Market Commons site at Clarendon was cited as a successful resolution of similar problems.

County Board Chair Walter Tejada and Larry Slattery of the Waste Water Treatment Plant, provided a construction update. The current phase will end in February. Phase 2 will start in December 2008. Subsequent phases will have significant breaks between periods of pile driving. The last pile is scheduled to be driven in January 2010. Mr. Tejada said he would explore the possibility that homeowners with damage might apply for funds from the County's Home Improvement program.

Kenton Drury of Archstone-Smith displayed the company's plan for developing the post office site at 18th and Eads St., proposing a building with about 130 rental apartments that would include parts of the Crystal House frontage. He showed two possible building designs. He said he has been in discussion with post office personnel about a small retail post office in the building (the current post office is a regional distribution center).

Fran Lunney, County Coordinator of Housing Planning (703.228.3785 or flunney@arlingtonva.us) reviewed the proposed Accessory Dwelling Initiative, available at www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/CPHD/housing/pdf/page60104.pdf. She reviewed the definition of an Accessory Dwelling, the approval process, parking issues, and a cap on the number of occupants. She said that, based on other communities, Arlington might expect about 30 Accessory Dwellings under the proposed change. Questions from attendees included how parking capacity is defined, problems with enforcement of existing occupancy restrictions, the need to inform all home-owners about the change and the fact that the burden on neighborhoods seems disproportionate to the proposed benefit.

The minutes from the January meeting were approved. About 45 persons attended the meeting.