

JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

Our January 9 meeting drew an audience of over 80, and included visitors from the Arlington Ridge Civic Association. The principle attraction was Walter Tejada, new Chairman of the Arlington County Board, who attended the first part of the meeting.

AHCA President Bruce Cameron posted large sheets that listed current community issues for which he has sought county assistance. These included:

- > Loss of infrastructure in the community in recent years
- >A Community center with very limited programs; (the old firehouse is an opportunity)
- > The neighborhood sidewalk network remains far from completion
- > Wakefield High School remodeling lags far behind in funding
- > Nina Park play equipment had to be removed, but there is no funding to replace it
- > Waste water treatment plant construction continues its ongoing negative impact on the quality of life in the neighborhood
- > Code enforcement is apparently understaffed, with a large backlog of cases
- > Traffic calming and safety have seen little progress
- > The strong need for a water park facility at our end of the County
- > Eads Street trash issues, robberies, loitering at the gateway to our community are related problems
- >The Draft Crystal City redevelopment plan shows serious commercial encroachment into the neighborhood.

After Mr. Cameron summarized that the AHCA /ARCA area is not getting a lot of county attention, Mr. Tejada responded with extended comments:

> He promised to pay attention to our issues in the coming year. Aurora Highlands is the first civic association he is meeting with as Chairman.

>He reviewed what is in our reach for short term, encouraging completion of our updated Neighborhood Conservation plan to help funding, which is now on hold. He said he will expedite moving it forward.

>Sidewalks are mandated at least on one side of every street, and he will look at ways to expand the "missing links program" in our area.

>The County will need to prioritize school projects in a period of limited budgets. He said Wakefield is part of the discussion.

> He has spoken with congressman Moran about support for some kind of commemoration for the 9/11 first responders from this area

> Problems with construction at the Waste Water Treatment plant: "There is no way to sugar coat this," he said. The count is under court order to get the project done, and most of the first phase of pile driving is done.

Larry Slattery, Plant manager, advised that the county is investigating a European hydraulic hammer with a shroud to muffle sound. He said there will still be vibration of soil, but less noise. A resident noted that all claims for damages have been denied by the insurance companies. She asked Mr. Tejada "What would you advise these residents to do?"

Mr. Tejada noted that no County funding was set aside in the project budget for paying claims. Residents asked that Mr. Tejada look at options to compensate residents and for a date to report back on the options. Mr. Tejada replied that he has asked his staff to look at our list of claims would try provide an answer by the next AHCA meeting. He promised to return at the end of the year for a follow up meeting.

The meeting concluded with a spate of announcements relating to:

The county's Housing Commission's recent Accessory Dwellings Initiative, a community forum January 30, to present the draft Crystal City Task Force plan and solicit citizen comments, and an invitation by Steve Wyner for volunteers to work on our draft Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Bruce Cameron announced his intention to meet with County Board members seek assistance with trash cleanup and other issues along Eads Street.