

Aurora Highlands Civic Association
Membership Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 South 18th Street

7:10 p.m. – Nick Giacobbe opened the meeting, 16 members present

Officer/Representatives Reports

- Newsletter editor Cory Giacobbe announced that the Giacobbes are relocating to Rome in a few weeks and will not be able to be present for AHCA meetings during the three years they expect to be away.
- Mike Dowell gave a presentation on the County's efforts to update the sign regulations. The goal is to regularize the process and make it more predictable for applicants. There are two big issues on the table for the neighborhood, signs above 40 feet and the staff proposal to allow unlit signs to face the neighborhood. Various federal agencies are also interested because they do not want signs to face areas such as Arlington Cemetery and the George Washington Memorial Parkway.
 - On a motion, Mike was authorized to have the association join in as a signatory on a letter he has been asked to write from approximately thirty civic association presidents recommending that the County Board not allow any signs above 40 feet.
- Mike Dowell reported on the site plan review process for the old post office site, a proposed residential development of rental units by Kettler with approximately 12 stories. Questions remain about how much bonus density the developer will receive and how to place the community feature on the corner and what it should be.
- Mike Dowell and Nancy Swain reported on the PenPlace project. The next meeting is coming up on Monday, July 16 and the developer, Vornado, is presenting their urban design manual.
- Reminder that the 2nd Monday PLACE meetings with the County Board continue at Gunston. Last week's meeting centered on power outages.
- Passport to Summer continues with a very successful pirate event just before the meeting.
- Crystal City BID continues to sponsor lots of events during the summer, see the newsletter and BID web site for specifics. The sixth Vintage Crystal will be coming up on Sunday, September 16 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. AHCA has had a table at the event in the past, which is not only a lot of fun for volunteers,

but a good way to raise awareness of neighborhood activities to the 3,000 attendees.

New Business

- A motion was approved to authorize Cheryl Mendonsa to spend up to \$500 for costs related to the Boo Ha Ha in October. The funds will be used to help defray the costs of face painters, jugglers, and magicians. The hope is that the funds will be a loan and returned to the association through sponsorships.
- There was a general discussion about amenities for the neighborhood such as a hospital, stand-alone emergency room, and increased tree canopy. The consensus of the group was that it's probably time to consider making some amendments to our five-year old Neighborhood Conservation Plan, with the expectation that it will need to be redone in about 5 more years.
- Possible topics for fall meetings were suggested, to include inviting the County Manager to give us a general update and the management of the Potomac Center, our neighborhood nursing home, to tell us about their services.
- The excessive crowding at Pentagon City Metro station was brought up in conjunction with a discussion of handicapped access to neighborhood facilities (it had been raised on the AHCA Facebook page), and it was suggested that this might be a topic for the Monday PLACE discussion at Gunston, especially since Mary Hynes is on the Transportation Board.
- The final motion was to express the appreciation of the association for the service by Nick and Cory Giacobbe to the neighborhood over the past few years and wish them well on their new adventure in Rome.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.