

Are you a homeowner or a renter? If you live in the Aurora Highlands area you are invited and encouraged to come to our monthly meetings where we meet neighbors, discuss topics of interest and share information. ALL are welcome to attend. Come at **6:45pm** and meet your neighbors at the Aurora Hills Recreation Center at 735 S. 18th St. at the corner of 18th and Hayes Streets (where the library / fire station is located).

OUR UPCOMING MARCH 12 MEETING

The press of business continues. This month's agenda includes:

1. Revisiting the Historic District designation to clearly define its impact. Laura Trieschmann of Tracerics (contractor to County) will give a presentation on the designation for Aurora Highlands.
2. Also on deck are two sign proposals,
 - A. David Tarter for The Gramercy, a building near the Potomac Yards Harris Teeter.
 - B. Signage changes sought by Metropolitan One.
3. Elizabeth Wilcox of JM Zell Partners, on plans for its property behind Restaurant Row. Zell owns the 22nd St. parking lot and the land under the Crystal Houses.

As always, child care will be available as well as the usual refreshments. Join us!

Our next newsletter will devote a substantial section to the failure of county officials to address ANY of a long list of neighborhood concerns.

ARCA Monthly Meeting: Focus ADU

President Dick Herbst has advised that Martha Moore, co-chair of Planning & Zoning for the Arlington Civic Federation, will join in discussing the Accessory Dwelling Initiative at the Arlington Ridge Civic Association meeting Thursday, March 13, 7:30 p.m. at Oak Ridge School. Members of the Aurora Highlands community are invited to attend.

PILE DRIVING

After months (read eternity) of ceaseless clanging, the community will be granted a nine month respite. Down at the Water Pollution Control Plant they're looking for the next round of pile driving to start in December. Some may find the sudden silence makes their ears ring. Pets will be perplexed. But they will adapt. So gather your napping while you may. December will descend all too soon.

TREE GIVEAWAY

Arlington County Parks & Natural Resources is giving away small tree whips to Arlington homeowners on Neighborhood Day, Saturday, May 10. The choices are 1) A larger shade canopy tree, the yellow-poplar, which grows 70 to 100 feet high, and 2) A smaller tree, the Allegheny serviceberry which grows 15 – 25 feet with lovely blossoms in the spring. The tree 'whips' will be approximately three to five feet in height and potted in one or two-gallon plastic containers. To request trees for your yard, email Aurora Highlands resident and Tree Steward, Penny Kriese, at pckriese@gmail.com or call her at (703)519-0961 before April 18th.

14TH STREET BRIDGE

According to its web site

(www.14thstreetbridgecorridoreis.com) the 14th Street Bridge Corridor encompasses our community in its entirety, from the GW Parkway to Columbia Pike. The project is a joint endeavor of (FHWA), (DDOT) and (VDOT) all estimable (ORGS) seeking to ease the 14th St. (BRG) bottleneck without constructing another (BRG). The group has solicited public opinion from the community on two occasions for an eventual EIS. Their *March Gateway Gazette* has a chart logging the state license plates of cars using the bridge in the morning and evening, which appears to show 3600 more Virginia cars going north each morning than return in the evening. This either represents a migration of Virginians to the north (in winter) or a significant portion of the work force has been going home early.

OUR CHAMPION TREE

Aurora Highlands has achieved county recognition for the Swamp Chestnut tree in Nina Park, which has been designated one of ten "specimen trees" worthy of County protection. Readers may recall that Nina Park previously had achieved modest fame for being the only playground in the county with arsenic-laced playground equipment. The equipment was removed after an article in the daily press and some equipment has since been replaced. At the time County Staff said improvements were planned. Community input has not been requested.

Delays and Uncertain Funding for Wakefield

AHCA President Bruce Cameron spoke during the public comment period at the School Board's Jan. 31 meeting. He expressed his concern as the parent of three young children that the facility will not be renovated even by the time his 3-year-old is ready to start high school. He urged the board to move ahead on Wakefield.

Built-in Delay The Wakefield "timeline" approved by the school board has no firm dates for completing the project. It only requires the school superintendent to report back to the board in April on "progress". It also directs the superintendent to develop a "capital needs plan" to maintain the Wakefield facility for the next several years. This is a far cry from a full renewal.

County Board Delay In June 2007 the County Board asked the school board to suspend the building level planning committees) for Wakefield, the Career Center, and Jefferson Middle School. Although Wakefield was identified as a priority after the County Board approved Yorktown High School's final design in November 2007, the Planning Committee has only resumed work in February. Any designs this committee develops will have to be reviewed and coordinated with the newly created Public Facilities Review Committee.

Uncertain Funding The County Manager has proposed a range for the 2008 school bond (\$34 to \$56 million) that will not complete projects already underway, like Yorktown, which will be spread out over several bond cycles and further delay Wakefield, still in the design phase. The county's 2010 and 2012 proposed school bond limits are even lower.

IMPORTANT SCHOOL CENSUS

Early this month, every residential address in Arlington will be mailed a school census survey in a blue envelope. It is very important to complete and return the census, which verifies the number of children residing in the county and determines state funding for Arlington schools.

School News

For general school information, see the APS website (<http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/aps/site/default.asp>)

Spring Break March 17-21: Schools reopen on Mon., March 24.

Oakridge Elementary School PTA Meeting March 4: Meetings are held usually on the first Tuesday of even months, with a family friendly format and free pizza for all at 6:30 pm in the cafeteria; there are activities for children while the adults attend the meeting starting at 7 pm. Upcoming events:

Habitat Spring Gardening & Beautification Day, Sat., March 29, 9 am-noon

Have Lunch With Your Child, Thurs., April 3

Casino Night at the Sports Pub Sat., April 26: (for adults)

Spring Fling Carnival & Taste of South Arlington Sun., April 27: , 3-6 pm

Gunston Middle School PTA Meetings March 12 and April 8: Meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm in the library. Upcoming:

Spring Play "Mother Goose Is Eaten by

Werewolves": Fri., April 11 at 7 pm & Sat., April 12 at 2 pm (\$3 admission)

Wakefield High School PTA Meeting March 10 and April 14. Meetings are on the second Monday of the month at 7 pm in Room 110.

\$100,000 Scholarship Recipient: Congratulations to Wakefield Senior Soraya Letournai, who was recently awarded a Posse Scholarship worth more than \$100,000 that will cover full tuition for four years at Bucknell University. She was one of four Arlington students selected through the Posse Scholarship leadership and diversity program, started in 1989.

CANDIDATES FORUM MARCH 24

Virginia law requires that School Board elections be non-partisan. This means that no candidate for school board may be nominated by a political party, but it does not prohibit political endorsement of a non-party candidate. So far, six candidates have declared in the race for two seats on the Arlington School Board and, not surprisingly, all six candidates are running in the Democratic caucus that takes place May 1 and 3 for two endorsements. Because of concerns many organizations have about appearing partisan, very few forums will be held before the caucus. One forum will be sponsored by several groups and is open to the general public: Monday, March 24, from 7 to 9 pm, at Wakefield

How to Get on the Listserve

The neighborhood listserv is hosted by Alice Andors. It continues to be an independent community resource (it is not connected with the civic association). To join, send an email to Alice at andorsali@comcast.net with a note that you'd like to participate. She'll walk you through the drill.



café PIZZAIOLO
Eatery – Take Out – Catering – Delivery

Larry Ponzi
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V 703-894-2250 F 703-894-2254 C 571-241-2006
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Aurora Highlands Civic Association

P.O. Box 25201 - Arlington, VA 22202

"The Association is a non-partisan organization of community residents formed to work in the overall community interest in promoting civic pride, enhancing the quality of life in the community, preserving the character of the community and planning for the orderly, safe, and humane development of the community" (AHCA Bylaws, Article II). The AHCA meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (except August) in the Aurora Hills Recreation Center (735 S. 18th St.) at 7:00 p.m.

2007 Association Officers & Committee Chairs

- ◇ President – Bruce Cameron 703 892-5071
- ◇ Vice President – Steve Wyner 703 920-1629
- ◇ 2nd Vice President – Van Newstrom 703 683-5911
- ◇ Treasurer / Membership - Johanna Soli 703-655-5895
- ◇ Business Secretary – John Kriese 703 519-0961
- ◇ Corresponding Secretary – Martin King 703 979-7299
- ◇ Aircraft Noise Liaison - Denis O'Sullivan 703-521-6425
- ◇ Meeting Hospitality - Judy King 703-979-7299
- ◇ Newsletter Distribution - Martin & Judy King 979-7299
- ◇ Newsletter Editor—Molly Sessions 703-271-0753
- ◇ Police and Waste Water Treatment Plant Liaison -Brad & Louise Garris - 703-548-1944
- ◇ Urban Planning Ted Saks 703-683-1312
- ◇ Newsletter printing compliments of the Sheltered Occupational Center, 750 South 23rd St. 703-920-9400)

Items for the Newsletter: Send items in e-mail messages (not attachments) to the newsletter editor, Molly Sessions, at mksessions@aol.com; no later than the 26th of the month.

Important Phone Numbers:

- Streetlight Outages/Power Outages Contact Dominion Virginia Power at 1-888-667-3000.
- Arlington Non-Emergency Number 703-558-2222 for County Police / Fire / Rescue
- Water Pollution Control Plant (odor complaint number) 703-228-6867 (Phil Loar). When you call this number it will also give you a number for the Shift Supervisor for immediate assistance after regular business hours, holidays, or weekends.
- Inspection Services 703-228-3800 for concerns / complaints about construction
- Refuse / Recycling Pickup call the Department of Environmental Services customer call center at 703-228-6570.
- Unkempt Property / High Grass To report high grass or unkempt properties, call Arlington County Code Enforcement at 703-228-3232. .

Civic Federation Sign Initiative

The Arlington Civic Federation has announced a citizen-driven plan to improve official signage in the county. Residents who know of County signs that need to be added, changed, eliminated, or improved can send suggestions/photos to Burt Bostwick burt@civicfed.org. The suggestions will be compiled and presented to the county.

Wakefield PTA Alert

Supporters of Wakefield High School have alerted the community to the fact that there is no guarantee the Wakefield project will be put on the upcoming bond cycle. The Wakefield PTA sent a letter to County Board members expressing its concerns. It requests other parents send a personal message to the County Board stating your feelings and the urgency of this project! You can email the County Board at: countyboard@arlingtonva.us. A portion of the PTA letter follows:

Dear Mr. Tejada and Members of the County Board:

"On behalf of parents, staff, community members, and the PTA of Wakefield High School I am writing to express the grave concern within our community that Wakefield will be allowed to languish and that it will be many, many years before Wakefield High school will be reconstructed. The current building is well over 55 years old, with its major systems having reached the end of their life expectancies. We know that the school system is currently researching what it will take to keep the school functioning, but that is only a very short term solution.

Reality being what it is in Arlington, families will not want to send their kids to Wakefield when there are two other brand new high schools, yet these schools are not equipped to handle a large influx of additional students should Wakefield no longer be able to function. Why should Wakefield not stand as an equal? With an increasing number of elementary school children in the southern sector of Arlington that will be entering high school in five years or less, does Arlington County want to put this number of students at a disadvantage at such a key period of their lives?"

SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD

In an effort to open a dialogue with the Crystal City Bid, civic association V.P. Van Newstrom met Feb. 21st with the BID Director and her staff. A proposal for community representation on the BID Board was not considered. They agreed to look forward to working together on items of mutual interest.

Lion and Dragon Yoga Studio



530 24th Street South
Arlington, VA 22202
Roy & Brenda
Holistic Fitness Trainers
571-217-1353 • 703-623-4873
lionanddragonyoga@yahoo.com



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. Tajada 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 homeowners 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.

FIRE STATION

After more than four years of construction, Arlington's Fire Station No. 5 on 18th Street is nearly completed, and move-in is scheduled later this month. At a sneak preview attended by Bruce Cameron, Walter Tejada said "This is a long time in the making,"

Construction on the station began in November 2003 and was supposed to be completed by June 2005, but the original contractor was removed due to poor performance. Construction resumed in April 2006 with a different contractor. According to the Deputy Fire Chief, the old fire station will be used by the Fire Department as a warehouse storage building.

THE 23RD ST. PARK

Deserving a proper description, the space beside the Pizzaola Restaurant (nee Zavarella's) may now be designated a Mini Park, the result of combined efforts of Pizzaola's Larry Ponzi, the 23rd Street Restaurant Group and the Crystal City BID. Tables, bushes and a new fence now decorate this gateway to Restaurant Row and the community. According to Fred Lutz, the Restaurant Group will handle the cleanup and maintenance.

VINCENT PLS CL YR OFC

"Sometime after 8 pm last night, a framed piece of art was left on our front porch on 24th street. It bears no name or other markings. I assume that it was left mistakenly on the wrong porch. If anyone is missing an expected piece of art, please contact us at 703-519-3869 or at linda.boner@verizon.net and describe the piece." This intriguing note was posted on [4D-A] last Saturday. We include it as a subject worthy of idle speculation.

Our sincere thanks to SOC for their support of AHCA by printing our newsletter.

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