

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 APRIL 9 MEETING

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

- 1) Signage across from Costco
- 2) Signage down at far end of Crystal City (The Bank of America signs)
- 3) Proposed Crystal City development
- 4) Open discussion on issues raised below.

A letter from AHCA President Bruce Cameron:

Dear neighbors in AHCA and ARCA,

Thank you for allowing me to represent the Aurora Highlands neighborhood association this year. Since becoming involved with the association over the past several years, I have become increasingly concerned, frustrated and often enraged at the way our neighborhood is treated – or more accurately stated – ignored – by Arlington County officials. At our upcoming meeting, I would like to initiate a discussion about our concerns. This is our home and it is our responsibility to ensure that our concerns are heard and our needs are met. I strongly encourage you to come to the next meeting and participate in the conversation.

I believe the citizens of South Arlington are being shut out by the County leadership.

Our neighborhood is facing several long term issues that threaten to grind down the quality of life in our unique and special corner of Arlington.

It is critical that more members of the community (**that means you!**) become actively engaged and get vocal about the issues concerning our area of Arlington. This County Board and this County Manager are deaf to our pleas for equitable treatment and to be brought into an open and transparent process called the "Arlington Way".

These are a few of the most critical issues I see facing our neighborhood:

Crystal City Long Term Plan 40 years

Crystal city and Aurora Highlands are 2 distinct neighborhoods. However, county plans for Crystal City will greatly affect the quality of life in Aurora Highlands. The question is – HOW???

- Increased density though out the "new" greater Crystal City
- Overlap with traditional boundaries of AHCA including annexation of Crystal House I-II and Restaurant Row into Crystal City.
- Impact along Eads and Fern as well as Restaurant Row.
- According to County Board Chair, Crystal City is the most important issue for the county.

Crystal City Business Improvement District (CCBID)

- Overlap of CCBID area with AHCA at restaurant row and area behind restaurants (between 22nd and 23rd).
- Border with CCBID along Eads Street.
- Lack of community representation on the CCBID Board, even though the County Board is the ultimate legal governing body of the CCBID.
- Lack of Code of Ethics - When the County Board "delegated" county powers to the CCBID, it did not convey over to the CCBID key legal obligations which itself must follow. For example, the County Board is governed by a Virginia Statute addressing conflict of interests and code of conduct but were not written into or addressed in the key documents signed between the County Board and the CCBID.
- The county board approves the annual work plan and salaries of CCBID staff.

- Cooperation Efforts Rebuffed - Although I would like to see the AHCA and CCBID work together on mutual interests, outreach efforts to the CCBID have been rebuffed. Examples include CCBID's organization of a community event on 23rd Street without consulting the neighborhood and rebuffing our request to hold the neighborhood day parade on Eads street.

New Firehouse

Since August 2007, I have suggested to the County Board members and senior staff on several occasions that the old fire house could be incorporated into a renovated community center and perhaps federal funds could be sought given the special tie into 9-11. I did not receive any feedback. However, at the "sneak preview" of the new fire house opening on February 29, I learned that the old firehouse will be used as a warehouse by the Fire Department. This is another example of a decision directly affecting our neighborhood being made without consulting the people who live here.

Virginia Highlands Park and Community Center

- AHCA Community Center has been called the worst in the county by knowledgeable county staff.
- Softball fields have become club fields at Virginia Highlands Park as they remain locked when not being used by the softball clubs.
- We have NO public water feature on our side of 395 (swimming pool, spray park.)

Wakefield High School

Arlington has 4 High Schools, HB a special program/lottery high school, and 3 area High Schools: W&L, Yorktown, and Wakefield. Wakefield is not on parity for capital replacement with W&L and Yorktown's recent major renovations. If funding is not planned for now - children entering elementary school now have no chance of a renovated high school.



Eatery – Take Out – Catering – Delivery

Larry Ponzi
507 South 23rd St Arlington, VA 22202
V 703-894-2250 F 703-894-2254 C 571-241-2006
lponzi@gmail.com www.cafepizzaiolo.com

We have a state of the art waste water treatment plant and a state of the art fire house, where is our state of the art High School for our children?

NCAC Program (Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee)

- Does not factor in size or population of neighborhoods and all neighborhoods compete equally through this process, regardless of impacts they faced.
- Street light upgrades compete equally with capital infrastructure projects like sidewalks where none existed. Sidewalks for children, blind couples, heart transplant patients, electric wheel chair bound neighbors. These are the actual stories of who would like to use sidewalks in our neighborhood.

County-Wide Services—Our neighborhood pays the cost:

- Waste Water Treatment Plant - Critical county-wide service. However our neighborhood bears the burden of the noise and damage of pile driving and odor issues.
- Bus Barn - The County put County ART Bus Barn facility next to Metro Bus Barn with little or no engagement with AHCA on impact to our neighborhood.

Lost Services

- Urgent Care facility - We now must drive at least 20 minutes across the county for an urgent care medical facility.
- Post Office - At risk - There has been no County engagement on this issue.
- Nina Park - Equipment was removed due to safety concerns but has not been replaced.

Protection of Historic Restaurant Row

Historic designation study done by County staff clearly shows 23rd Street Restaurant Row as part of our neighborhood area going back to the early 1900s but county is annexing for Crystal City and losing site this is an area that has been part of the heart of our community.

County ADU initiative.

Regardless of where you stand on the issue, there has been a real failure of a process to notify all property owners and give them equal chances to raise questions and positions.

Our neighborhood is one of only a few neighborhoods in county to see almost continuous property tax increases. However, our area does not receive equitable services from the county.

Thank you for the opportunity to raise my concerns with you – members of the Aurora Highland Community. I have deliberately raised some provocative issues. During my tenure as AHCA President my two priorities are 1) to wake up the members of our community and get YOU actively engaged. This will lead to my second priority – to make sure that our part of Arlington is treated fairly – equal to other parts of our fine county. I look forward to seeing you next week and at future meetings.

Bruce Cameron

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. .

School News

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

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.

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



March Meeting Minutes

Meeting, March 12, 2008

Bruce Cameron opened with a series of announcements:

- The County Board could do a walking tour of our neighborhood May 27, June 19, or September 9. Those present thought this was a good idea and Bruce agreed to follow up to set a date.
- Repaving will start in April. Bruce will send an e-mail to the list serve with more information as it becomes available.
- The plan is for the old firehouse to serve as a storage building.
- The Wakefield High School construction issue is not a done deal.
- Walter Tejada was quoted as saying Crystal City is the most important issue for the County. Walter Tejada was also quoted as saying he would like to find a way to help the families impacted by the Water Treatment Plant construction. County lawyers said this would open the County to liability.

Meeting Presentations:

Aurora Highland Historic District

Laura Trieschmann, Architectural Historian with EHT Traceries, Inc. discussed the proposed historical designation for a portion of Aurora Highlands. She reviewed material to be presented on March 20 to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources nominating Aurora Highlands to the National Register of Historic Districts. She noted the designation is honorific and different from a local government historic designation which has to be requested by the neighborhood and can have zoning consequences. The document tells the story of the neighbor from the perspectives of architecture and community development. She noted the oldest house in the neighborhood dates from about 1870. The draft report is available online at http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/COUNTIES/Arlington/000-9706_Aurora_Highlands_HD_2008_NRdraft.pdf.

New multi-family dwellings

Elizabeth Wilcox, Director Land Planning Services, JM Zell Partners, LTD, discussed company plans to develop multi-family dwellings over the next four-five years on the parking lot at the corner of S. Eads/22nd St S and on the Crystal House land. She said JM Zell plans to engage the AHCA as the plans develop. A member raised parking and Ms. Wilcox said they will consider it as they develop the plans. A question was also raised about the non-functioning lights in the parking lot. She said she would ensure the Crystal House management is aware of the problem.

Proposed signage for Bank of America

Katherine Youngbluth, Urban Planner, with Cooley, Godward, Kronish, LLP, sought the Association's endorsement of three signs for the new Bank of America facility above the Harris Teeter at S. Glebe and Jeff Davis. The Bank is requesting three signs and plans to go to the County Board in May. It was moved and seconded that the AHCA endorse the signs. A formal vote will be taken at the April meeting.

Proposed Signage for the Gramercy at Metropolitan Park

P. David Tarter, Attorney with Lawson, Tarter, & Charvet, P.C., said the Gramercy at Metropolitan Park across from Costco requests that the County allow additional signage for the building. People are having trouble finding the entrance to the building, and they believe additional signage will help. The proposed signs are smaller and fewer than allowed under County guidelines. When asked what signage is planned for the additional buildings in the development., Mr. Tarter said the plans for these buildings are still under development.

New AHCA Web site

John Kriese, AHCA Business Secretary, briefly described the AHCA's new Web site at <http://www.aurorahighlands.org>. The site has information about the neighborhood and its history, community places, issues that will impact us, and the AHCA. He invited all to provide feedback and welcomed suggestions for how to make the site more valuable. The AHCA is grateful to Michael Cangialosi for providing server space and paying the annual domain name fee as a gift to the AHCA.

Approximately 35 people attended the meeting.

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

SOC Enterprises

750 South 23rd St. Arlington, VA 22202
703-920-9400 Fax: 703-299-3255

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