

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

Monthly Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2018

Attendees: 32 people signed in. Members of the Arlington Ridge and Crystal City Civic Associations joined AHCA for the meeting.

Proceedings:

--AHCA President Natasha Atkins called the meeting to order at 7:10 in the Aurora Hills Library.

--Carol Fuller with the Crystal City Civic Association announced that there will be a meeting on changes at National Airport on Feb. 21, 7-9 p.m., at 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 908.

395 Express Lanes Extension

Brent McKenzie, Government Relations and Community Outreach Manager for Transurban, the company handling the Rt. 95 Express Lanes, introduced several people working on the project and Sarah Crawford, Arlington County liaison for the project.

The 395 extension got its "notice to proceed" in July and final completion is expected in fall 2020. The current two HOV lanes will become three reversible HOV lanes from Edsall Road to the 14th Street Bridge. There will be other changes to lane configurations around Duke Street and changes at the Pentagon, such as a dedicated lane for slug traffic.

The new sign designs are consistent with the current Rt. 95 signs. There will be Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) in some places. Transurban has met with the County three times since September about this. As a result, they are making revisions in their original plan. The number of signs will be reduced from 12 to 8. The Size of the signs will be reduced by about 37 percent. They will change one near Army Navy Drive to have black powder coating and a black backing. Electrical boxes on the signs are being modified to have less impact on our urban environment.

They are trying to limit lane closures to have less impact on the community.

In answer to a question about a bottleneck at the Northern end of the highway, they said they have modified the Southern end to take care of potential problems at the North end.

Concerns were voiced about bottlenecks where the four express lanes end onto Eads St., especially in light of all the massive new buildings in the area. There are ongoing traffic studies and studies were done earlier for various impact statement requirements.

There will be minimal construction except by the Pentagon and on the actual HOV lanes.

They will meet with ARCA on Jan. 18 to discuss a possible sound barrier or wall. No sound reduction structure would be effective above the third floor. Noise is anticipated to increase by 1 decibel by the year 2040 as a result of the increased traffic.

Concerns about traffic blocking intersections will need to be addressed by VDOT and Arlington County.

CCBID is concerned about signal operations at pedestrian crossings. Transurban intends to tie into what the County is doing/will do in that regard.

Transurban will give \$15 million a year from tolls to the State and then the State will allocate that money on a grant basis each year. Over the lifetime of the project that will add up to billions of dollars.

Transurban says the project is good for the environment because there will be more buses and carpools using the new lanes. HOV trips and bus trips are way up on the existing express lanes because there is an incentive to use them.

They are NOT the company that did Rt. 66.

The company is big on evaluation and over the course of their 73-year lease on the road they will continue to monitor impacts.

Other AHCA business:

--The minutes for the October and November monthly meetings were approved.

--Joel Nelson discussed his concerns about lack of notification of the Association's consideration and endorsement of the County purchase of lots for a pocket park at 20th and Ives Streets. He is concerned that it was not on the agenda and there was too little discussion; that the County may reject future requests relating to parks and there will be unintended consequences; and he wants a better process for how the Association conducts business.

--Heather Spence discussed the Bill Thomas Park Service Award Nomination for Friends of Aurora Highlands Park and encouraged people to submit letters of support for the nomination. Because there was not a quorum of members present, a vote could not be taken on sending an AHCA endorsement of the nomination.

--Maria Teresa Desaba briefly discussed her plan to establish another pre-school facility at 821 23rd St. S. next door to her current location. We intend to put discussion of this proposal on the agenda for our Feb. meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Maureen Quinn

Recording Secretary