

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2018

**DRAFT**

**Attendees:** 26 people signed in including 21 AHCA members.

**Proceedings:**

--Vice-President Scott Miles called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Aurora Hills Senior Center.

--The National Park Service presentation had to be cancelled again because Mr. Nardas, NPS community liaison, was called away to work on wind storm issues.

--The meeting minutes for January and February were approved.

--Treasurer Gail Fleming reported that we have 106 paid members and \$9,440 in our treasury.

--There will be a spring community event at the Aurora Highlands Park softball field on Saturday, March 31 from 1:30-4:30 p.m. It will be a chance to have fun with neighbors and all are welcome. Volunteers to help and donations would be appreciated. There will be kite making and flying, egg decorating and egg rolls, lawn games, snacks, 'smores, etc.

--Everyone is invited to the Arlington Ridge Civic Association meeting on March 17 in the senior center. County Board member Eric Gutshall will be there and JBG Smith will give a presentation on its 12<sup>th</sup> Street project.

**Crystal City Update**

Rob Mandle, Chief Operating Officer of the Crystal City Business Improvement District, reported on a number of activities and initiatives the BID is working on. With a 22-25 percent vacancy rate, the BID is sponsoring a variety of events to showcase Crystal City, which he said is the biggest walkable city in the area—bigger than downtown Richmond. Every 1-percent vacancy translates into \$3 million annual revenue for our area, so it is important for Crystal City to be successful. The BID is looking at the feasibility of a Crystal City to DCA (CC2DCA) pedestrian connection. They estimate that 15,000 residents are within a 15-minute walk to the CC end of a bridge. The BID will work with VRE, the adjacent JBG Smith property owner, the National Park Service and Arlington County to get to the next level. They will also need to involve the National Capital Planning Commission. The 6-year timeline includes coordination and planning; environmental work; and construction. Construction of a bridge would cost an estimated \$30 million and a tunnel would cost \$38 million. Annual maintenance would be about \$100,000. Neighbors suggested looking into the problem of Route 1 being a barrier between our neighborhood and Crystal City and a pedestrian path to Long Bridge Park. Check CC2DCA.com for

updates on the airport access project. In answer to a question on Amazon relocation, Rob said that 50,000 additional workers could be accommodated in Crystal City.

### **Emissions Study for Water Pollution Control Plant**

Neighbor Paul Guttridge, AHCA's liaison to the WPCP task force reviewing plans for upgrading sewage treatment studies and plans for solids disposal, updated us on the status of the group's efforts. The plant has been in our neighborhood since 1933 and parts of it plant have not been upgraded since 1950. Residual solids can be trucked to farms, turned into fertilizer, or converted to methane, which could be used for bus fuel after being cleaned up. There is \$150 million in the County budget for this project. It is a CIP line item. There are concerns about costs and emissions. The County will again look at a regional option with trucks taking solids to the DC Blue Plains facility. There are health aspects of emissions to consider if the solids are burned at the plant, they could keep the emissions at an acceptable level by using the proper controls. The cleanest option would be to pipe fuel across Eads Street for the ART buses.

**A motion passed for AHCA to send a letter to the County Board to motivate them to negotiate with Blue Plains to truck the solids there.** Paul said that he would draft the letter and it will be presented for approval at our next monthly meeting. A selling point of this option is the cost savings.

### **Unfinished Business**

**--A motion was passed without objection to support neighbor Gerald Woodruff, who lives at the corner of 21<sup>st</sup> Street South and South Ives, in his problem with Arlington County regarding his fence, if the facts of the issue are in accordance with those presented to the Association. In addition, if the County can demonstrate that his fence is unsafe, then the County should pay for moving the fence since the County approved it in advance of its construction.**

### **Open Discussion**

--A proposal was made for AHCA to get a baby sitter for monthly meetings so parents can participate in the meetings, but they must notify the Association ahead of time that a sitter would be needed. It was noted that someone would need to volunteer to handle this responsibility.

--Nancy Duncan updated us on the walk zone survey for Oakridge Elementary School.

--A request was made for an update on the status of the sidewalk improvements in the neighborhood to be made at the next meeting, such as the status of projects in the works or in queue, and what is being done in Neighborhood Conservation vs Complete Streets programs, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Maureen Quinn

Recording Secretary