



All Aurora Highlands and Pentagon City residents are invited and encouraged to come to our monthly meetings where we meet neighbors, discuss topics of interest, and share information.

MEETING – Wednesday, October 10 at 7 p.m.

Aurora Hills Community Center
735 18th St. S.

Aurora Highlands Civic Association Newsletter – October 2018

Meeting Agenda

Nominations Due: AHCA Needs You! You don't need to be a long-time resident to see how much our neighborhood and our County have changed and continue to change. Some of these changes have been good and others problematic, but no matter what, AHCA input along the way has been critical to making this the best possible place to live. Our civic association came into existence to help us band together to evaluate our local needs, proposed changes from owners, developers and the County, and the need for change--and to make our concerns known to the County. Over the years, the County Board and staff have noticed how active AHCA has been among the many Arlington civic associations and we don't want to lose that advantage as we face both new and ongoing issues. **The bottom line is that we need new board members for 2019 to represent our neighborhood.** Our current 1st Vice President and Treasurer are willing to be nominated to stay on for another year. We need nominees for President, 2nd Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Communications Secretary. Nominations are due at our October meeting. A nominee for President must have been a member for the entire 2018 calendar year, but members are eligible for other positions if they have paid their dues by October 31. The election will be at our November 14 meeting. Please consider nominating a friend, neighbor, or yourself. If you want to find out more about what is involved, please contact any of our current officers.

Proposed New Development Behind Oakridge School. In June, a developer proposed building 12 townhomes on the hillside behind Oakridge school, above the Forest Hills community on S. Queen Street. Many nearby residents and others are concerned about the scale of this project, its toll on the County's dwindling mature tree canopy and the woodland ecosystem, and significant erosion on a steep hillside. The builder would need to extend Queen St., which would require an amendment to the Master Transportation Plan. In July, the County Board indefinitely extended the amendment. The developer has evidently since changed the scope of the project to 3-5 single family homes. Although no official filings have been made, revised plans are expected in the next few weeks. Andrea Hoffman, of the Forest Hills community, will come talk and answer questions.

Community Dates and Updates

Uber/Lyft lot on S. Eads Street. The County held a community meeting on the neighborhood traffic impacts of the lots on Eads St. used as a staging area for Uber/Lyft drivers waiting for calls from passengers at DCA (National Airport). Hui Wang, an engineer for the County's Dept. of Environmental Services, shared data from traffic counts and video, which revealed the dramatic impact of the lot on Eads St. traffic. VDOT, which controls Route 1, and DES are working together on Phase I. This involves adding a temporary light pole at 27th St. and Route 1 so that drivers could exit the lot onto Route 1 through an existing gate. The new signalization, which should be operational in the next few weeks, is expected to reduce the impact on Eads by 50%. Phase II, installing a permanent pole with more sophisticated signalization over the next year or so, should reduce traffic impacts by another 25%. DES will also create a project webpage. These fixes have significant costs. Of concern is whether the Airports Authority, MWAA, will be willing to bear any of this burden. Given the \$4 fee that MWAA charges for each ride picking up at DCA, and video counts of 3,927 vehicles entering the lot daily, MWAA could pay for these upgrades in one month.

Fall Community Fest. Despite best intentions, plans for an Aurora Highlands community fall festival have been shelved. There simply wasn't enough interest in helping

to organize or in participating. The planned event on October 27 also would have conflicted with the Halloween Parade held nearby in the Arlington Ridge neighborhood. AHCA residents are invited to attend that Halloween event; it begins at 3 p.m. at the corner of 26th Rd. S. and Fort Scott. At 4 the parade begins and proceeds in a loop along 26th Rd. There will be snacks and drinks for adults and kids, and a resident DJ will be providing music for all. Food contributions are always welcome. We hope to collaborate with the Ridge folks next year to reprise the April spring fest that we held this spring in Virginia Highlands Park.

Nelly Custis Park. Renovation of Nelly Custis Park became one step closer to reality on Sept. 22 when the Arlington County Board voted unanimously to approve the award of a nearly \$644,000 contract to Crown Construction Service Inc. to make the improvements. All-new play equipment and both entrances will be ADA-compliant. Porous paving, landscaping, new benches, and picnic tables will be added, along with signage and trash cans. Drainage will be improved, so that water will drain from the playground and the porous walkway to the S. Grant Street storm drain. Linden resources is expected to install a rain garden to capture runoff from the parking lot that currently floods onto the park.

Dog Park Update. ARCA submitted a dog park application to the Dept. of Parks & Recreation in March. After study, its Staff rejected the two sites proposed (behind the tennis courts at Fort Scott Park and west of the bus driver parking lot on South 31st Street) on environmental and future-use grounds. Staff have proposed an alternative at Eads Park. The area would be south of the paved path along Fort Scott but would not affect the playground or the soccer fields. Issues of concern with the site are parking, tree removal, neighborhood impacts, and the open location. Staff is currently working on its feasibility study.

Crystal City Crafts Market. Eastern Market's shopping vibe comes to the neighborhood this fall with the return of the Crafts Market at 1900 Crystal Drive. Featuring a diverse mix of arts, crafts, handmade jewelry, bath and beauty products, and other local handcrafted products, the market will be open 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Thursdays until Christmas.

VOTE on November 6. The midterm general election will be on Tuesday, Nov. 6. Polling places are open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. On the ballot are U.S. Senator, U.S. House Representative, County Board member, School Board member, 2 Virginia constitutional amendments, and 4 county bond referenda. You must register to vote by Monday, Oct. 15. If you want to vote absentee by mail, you must request an absentee ballot by Oct. 30. You can vote in-person absentee at the County Elections Office through Nov. 3. On election day, you can vote only in your own precinct, so check out where your polling place is and take an acceptable form of photo ID. You can also volunteer with the County as an election officer or concierge or volunteer with groups such as the League of Women Voters, Election Protection, or the party or candidates of your choice. For more information go to vote.arlingtonva.us

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