



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION JUNE 2024 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

We have had a very busy month with many of the AHCA executive board and many of you attending the Planning Commission meeting and County Board meeting this past month. The Tier II Study was accepted by the County Board. Melwood will be presenting at our meeting regarding their intended plans, more discussed in the article on the next page. Crystal House 7 & 8 will also be presenting at our meeting. Please use the Survey link below to submit questions in advance and indicate what aspects of the project about which you would like to learn. Survey closes Tuesday night.

The Crystal City Sports Pub has generously provided some appetizer platters for us with mozzarella sticks, chicken fingers, hot pretzels, humus and veggies!

We also received a \$500 grant from the County for a neighborhood run/walk! We are hoping to discuss planning it in part during our next meeting. With School getting out for the summer we are also looking for KID contributions for the newsletter. If you know a kid interested in writing an article or sending in artwork or games please email infor@aurorahighlands.org.

In other news, the

Yours,
AHCA Pres. Rachel



Survey Link:
<https://bit.ly/AHCAJuneSurvey>

Calendar

- June 11 - Van Leeuwen's Ice Cream \$1 scoops @opening
- June 12 - (and every Wednesday in June) Twilight Tattoo @ Ft. Myers
- June 19 - Juneteenth Celebration @ Met Park (Details on back)
- June 22 - Amazon's 2nd Annual Community Day @ Met Park 9am – 1pm
- June 26 - Flute Circle @ Sustainable Scoops 12pm - 2pm
- June 26 - CPCC Meeting @7pm

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, June 12

At: Aurora Hills Recreation Center
735 18th St S, Arlington, VA | 7:00-9:00 pm

AGENDA

7:00 pm - Call to order, approve May Minutes, & enjoy appetizers by



7:05 pm - AHCA business & County Code Inspector

7:30 pm - Melwood Presentation and Q&A

8:15 pm - Crystal House 7&8 Presentation and Q&A

9:00 pm -Adjourn

Optional: Register via Zoom
<https://bit.ly/48GweqH>



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Local Listserve: 4D-A
<https://groups.io/g/4D-A22202>

Melwood's Special GLUP Amendment

On May 6, the Planning Commission voted on the Melwood Special GLUP study and on May 21, 2024 the County Board accepted the Special GLUP Study Document and advertised a GLUP amendment for Parcel A from "Public" to "Low-Medium" Residential. Despite County surveys having more responses expressing concern over the project, there was no change to the Study and the County Board approved it unanimously.

Melwood now has the opportunity to develop a plan and submit it to the County. In this process there will be an SPRC and again more opportunity for public input. Melwood's attorney hosted a meeting on May 29, mailing notices to surrounding property owners and requesting AHCA advertisement, unveiling a 113 unit building with less program space and only 93 parking spaces. The plan shows only 8 feet setbacks and less than 5 feet of greenspace bordering the park. The County Board encouraged Melwood to work with the community. AHCA will remain engaged and reached out on May 10 to invite Melwood to resume correspondence. Melwood then in response offered to attend our June meeting and again in July if needed. We hope to have County staff at the June Meeting to assist with questions, but staff have yet to confirm their attendance.

Arlington Ridge Road/Mount Vernon Avenue Bridge Reconstruction Project

Plans have reached 100% design; construction is scheduled to start Winter 2024/2025. The transportation project, including traffic signal upgrades, at the intersection of S. Glebe and Arlington Ridge Road/Mount Vernon Avenue are scheduled to be completed before bridge construction starts. However, some lane closures on and just south of the bridge are already in process.

Elections June 18- Don't forget to vote!

As you all may have noticed, the County Board has the ability to determine many things about our day today life here in the neighborhood. The United States Senate also affects our lives and neighborhood, albeit at the Federal level. We invite you to thoughtfully consider which candidate for the County Board would be best or which candidate for the Senate would be best and vote. Arlington's Democratic Party is selecting a candidate for the County Board election this fall and the Republican Party is selecting a candidate for Senate this Fall.

Virginia does not require party registration to vote in primaries. But you can only vote in either the Republican or the Democrat primary, not both!

This County [voting page](#) provides key information on both primaries, including the candidate names for each party ballot.

The Democratic Primary election will again be by ranked choice. You may rank up to 3 of the 5 Democratic candidates on your ballot. More information on how ranked choice voting works can be found [here](#). This page also links to a [sample ranked choice ballot](#) to practice this type of voting.

[Register to vote](#) (or update your existing voter registration) by May 28. If you miss the registration deadline, you may be able to do [Same Day Registration](#).

Art Appreciation: Summer

No summer lovin' entries were submitted... hopefully next month with our pet theme we will have some entries!



VDOT Update on Route 1

VDOT recently released the [Executive Summary](#) and the [full report for Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study in Arlington County](#) for Phase 2. Comments are due **Friday, June 28**. There is a balance between pedestrian safety and preventing the gridlock anticipated from lowering Route 1. The study does not seem to strike any balance for either and both unsafe and gridlocked roads seem likely.

There will be only at grade crossings of Route 1, the study currently proposes a Barnes Dance crossing at the at grade intersection of 18th. The speed study has not been conducted, as it was supposed to have, but it is anticipated that the speed limit would be lowered to 25 mph.

The Travel Demand Management (TDM) Plan continues to remain unrealistic. The Phase 1 recommendation was to reduce total traffic volume by 20-30%. During Phase 2, VDOT gathered new traffic volume data and revised their Phase 1 recommendation, based upon newly gathered traffic pattern data. Total traffic volume is still down and the AM peak commuting patterns have spread out. However, peak PM traffic has returned, causing significant congestion along Route 1 north of 23rd. In their Phase 2 plans, VDOT plans to reduce this congestion by focusing on TDM at the intersections of 15th and Route 1, with limited details on a truly regional TDM program. The proposed reduction in right turn lanes from southbound Route 1 to westbound 15th Street appears to complicate the TDM goals.

How VDOT will be able to ensure lower traffic levels in the AM and reduce them in the PM remains unclear. Why they predict that future traffic patterns will not have a significant impact on our local streets is also unclear.

The Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pedestrian Advisory Committee hosted a meeting with VDOT viewable [here](#). Email comments to AHCA at infor@aurorahighlands.org and to VDOT at route1multimodalstudy@vdot.virginia.gov

Updates

Possible 23rd St Area Plan?

There has been discussion of a new area plan for 23rd St. We have no concrete information but the Planning Commission has asked for one. Stay tuned a your input will be very important to preserve and improve 23rd St.

JBGS submits new PDSP for the RiverHouse Neighborhood

According to this [Urban Turf article](#), JBGS has submitted a revised PDSP, as well as applying for a new Site Plan for Land Bay N and for rezoning of the R2-7 and C-O-2.5 portion of the property to the RA6-15 Zoning District. After County acceptance, watch for a new online engagement and the start of several SPRC meetings for this massive site.

Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY 2025- FY 2034

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the plan for building, maintaining, upgrading or replacing County facilities and infrastructure including parks, community centers, technology systems, water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, etc. The [proposed CIP plan](#) is being considered by the County Board and they are holding a series of meetings. Note that funding for the start of the Park Master Plan for the Virginia Highlands Park has been pushed back to 2034.

County Launches Neighborhood Web Pages: A new resource available [here](#).

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Art Appreciation: Pet love!

Show us your pet, photos and drawings accepted.

Officers will select one entry to be published in the July Newsletter! Mail or email your entry by July 1 to the AHCA P.O. Box or email it to info@aurorahighlands.org

Report a Problem

If you see problems you can report them to the County. Try it: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Topics/Report-Problem>

Engage Arlington: Visit this site frequently for new opportunities to give the County feedback!

2024 AHCA officers

- President Rachel Hicks
- 1st Vice President Jill Braun
- 2nd Vice President Stacy Meyer
- Treasurer Ben Watts
- Recording Secretary Nick Giacobbe
- Corresponding Secretary Alyssa Gardner

Applications Open for School Board Advisory Councils for the 2024-25 School Year

The School Board Advisory Councils and Committees provide the School Board and administrators input and feedback on the instructional and support programs, facilities, and operations of the Arlington Public Schools. More info: <https://www.apsva.us/citizen-advisory-groups/> or [click here for an application.](#)

Sustainable Scoops Paid Internship Opportunity:

Sustainable Scoops was recently awarded some grants that will support volunteers and recruit interns. Mission is to provide multimedia story telling skills and opportunities. Application [here.](#)

AHCA Membership Dues for Calendar Year 2024

Dues are \$20 per household. Mail a check to AHCA at P.O. Box 25201, Arlington, VA 22202, or via PayPal at <https://bit.ly/AHCAdues>
Find out your membership status by emailing: treasurerahca@gmail.com
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