



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

Many of you have expressed concern about Nelly Custis School, which Melwood is proposing to demolish and replace with a 60'+ apartment building. The latest rumor is the Local Historic District Study will be presented to HALRB this winter/spring. After that, it goes to the County Board. Stay tuned to the 4D-A22202 (see address at the bottom right corner) listserv. Letters that were sent to the County Board by your neighbors copied to me were batched together and forwarded also to the OHP with a copy to the chair of HALRB. Our voices together are **very compelling**. **I am not sure how to stress this enough.**

**Now is the time to use your pen.
Your opinion matters in this process.
Your silence also matters, unfortunately.**

Please write to the County Board at countyboard@arlingtonva.us and copy president@aurorahighlands.org. **Even (and especially) if you have written in the past, please send in that letter again.**

FEBRUARY MEETING

There will be a brief presentation of two mini-films one about demolition of the historic Queen City in 22202 and the other about the history of the Hall's Hill community in North Arlington to honor Black History Month.

David Litman, Chair of the Arlington Neighborhood Program (ANP) and our ANP representative will discuss what projects AHCA might want to pursue via the ANP, and there are a couple of proposed business discussion items for AHCA business. See more inside.

BREAKING NEWS

County Board member JD Spain is backing a proposed state bill to "accelerate affordable housing development on church properties by right", with no BZA review, which could come as soon as next year. 23rd Street could become "ground zero" as there are (5) churches. Nick G. will provide an update during the business portion of the meeting. ARLNOW link to article:

<https://www.arlnow.com/2026/02/04/county-board-member-joins-push-to-help-churches-redevelop-with-affordable-housing/>

Thank you,
Stacy Meyer, President

NATIVE GARDENING

- February can be the perfect time to plan additions to your native plant garden and remove some invasive non-native species. Visit <https://www.plantnovanatives.org>
- Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia is launching a Restoring Nature series to share practical actions to support wildlife, protect our watershed and build healthy soil. More information: <https://mgnv.org/>

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 11

At: Aurora Hills Recreation Center

**735 18th St S, Arlington, VA | 7:00-9:00 pm
refreshments & social at 6:30 pm**

AGENDA

**6:30 pm Valentine Social w/member
giftcard doorprize sponsored by
National Landing BID Partnership**



7:00 pm Announcements

**7:05 pm Black History Month Mini-film
Queen City & Halls Hill**

**7:20 pm David Litman - Chair of & Our
Rep to the Arlington
Neighborhood Program (ANP)**

8:00pm AHCA Business

9:00pm Adjourn (latest)

Optional: Register via Zoom

<https://bit.ly/2026AHCA>

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with live links at:

AuroraHighlands.org



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info@aurorahighlands.org



(703) 594-1344



P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202

Local Listserve: 4D-A

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



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The following Notice is provided per the AHCA Bylaws Article X, Section 2:

During AHCA Business portion of the February meeting we will discuss new issues:

- 1) revising the required quorum from 20 members to 10 members - as per Bylaws Article V - Meetings Section 2.
- 2) sending a letter to WMATA in support of relocating the west route bus stop on Grant & 23rd from its existing location in front of a private residence with a narrow sidewalk. If moved, we will vote on these items.

Bylaws can be found on the Documents page of the AHCA website. Please email president@aurorahighlands.org if you have concerns

ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM UPDATE - from DAVID LITMAN, OUR ANP REP

The Arlington Neighborhoods Program is a unique and valuable tool to improve and enhance Arlington neighborhoods. It empowers residents to communicate with the County through their own neighborhood plans and identify projects that may not surface through traditional planning mechanisms. Each participating Civic Association can propose one project for ANP's 1st Priority Project List. Types of projects include installation of new sidewalks along a block where none exist, intersection improvements, streetlight installations and park renovations. At the February meeting, David Litman, our ANP representative, will present more details on the ANP process. If you have an idea, bring it to the meeting or drop David an email before the meeting at david.litman@verizon.net.

ART APPRECIATION

"Stable, the Raptor" by Adam Henry



"Stable, the Raptor" shown here with artist Adam Henry and his son Adam Henry is now appearing across the street from the west Nelly Custis Park entrance.

Adam Henry is an artist from Brooklyn, NY. He attended the Pratt Institute of Art and now lives and works in the 22202. Henry was the first Artist in Residence at the HQ2 MoCA Innovation Studio. His media includes theater staging, album covers, sculpture, paintings, and portraits.

Inquiries: <https://www.instagram.com/adamhenry351/?hl=en>

Stable, the Raptor fits right into our mini-Ice Age!
photo: Peter Lyon



Successful projects generally have enthusiastic support from the immediately affected neighbors and someone from that group who is willing to serve as a block captain to coordinate and communicate among neighbors. Since the projects can take multiple years to proceed through the process, that support needs to be sustainable. Aurora Highlands last 3 proposed projects have not advanced through the process because they lacked sufficient support from the immediately affected neighbors.

SNOWCRETE 2026: MAN BUILDS CAVE



It's been a rough couple weeks of bitter cold and hard traveling. But there have also been a couple moments of light, including this igloo fire pit shelter, across from Nelly Custis Park.

According to our source (Greg's wife, Jess), Greg had the task of shoveling their long shared driveway, by, as we - now hardened - Southerners all well know, "hacking with metal shovels". The legend goes that Greg observed the snow was coming off the driveway in these "almost perfect rectangular blocks", and he couldn't pass up the opportunity or primal urge? to build with his two boys. Add in a couple of lawn chairs and a fire pit and you have one sweet man cave! Enjoy, Greg, very "cool"!

22202 Headlines

RETAIL

- *Twins Ace Hardware Store Hopes to Open at 2051 S. Bell Street by March 1, 2026*
- **Amazon Fresh Closed, Potomac Yard**
- **ABC Store Closing at 320 23rd Street**
- **Studios at Arlington Arts now open 3700 S. 4 Mile Run**
- **Scapegoat Restaurant opening delayed 6 months**

GOVERNMENT

- *Latest Crime Data now in Aurora Highlands for 2025 is 25% up from 2023 per County Crime Hub Data website, while the whole county is up 8%.*
- **Low Residential Study** - *The CB has directed staff to study zoning amendments to support better stormwater outcomes and increase tree canopy in low density residential neighborhoods:*
<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability/Stormwater/Low-Residential-Study>

DEVELOPMENT

- **JBGSmith is extending the Americana Hotel redevelopment potentially to 2029**

TRANSPORTATION

- *Crystal City Metro Station to be closed 10 weekends in the Spring between Feb 14 and June 21 with a break for the Cherry Blossom Festival - there will be a shuttle*
- *GW Pkwy Repaving Spout Run to Old Town this spring*
- **12th Street South** to be fully reopened by early April per the County. *Transitway ops with dedicated lanes begin this summer.*

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- *AHS is still collecting stories about Arlington for the 250th US anniversary until March 2026*

HELP NEEDED / ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- 1) **Walkers:** Newsletter delivery (there are varying lengths)
- 2) **Writers:** Newsletter article writer
- 3) **Techies:** Website help
- 4) **Partiers:** Membership, event planning, and if you are busy, *even just help set up one event,*
- 5) **Liaison** to Arlington Neighborhood Program (alternate)
- 6) **Delegates** to the Arlington Civic Federation & CPCC
- 7) **Planning & Zoning** - we continually have the need for representatives to review development projects in the area

PROPS:

Pam Van Hine, our longtime pedestrian advocate is retiring from being our representative at CPCC. **Thank you for your leadership over the years, Pam!!!!!!**

Sarah Summerville, a long time community activist, has volunteered to represent AHCA at CPCC. Thanks Sarah!

Sushma Subramanian is a journalism professor and will be taking over as editor of the newsletter. Thanks Sushma!

Dana Bres represented AHCA at the January County Board meeting regarding the Scapegoat Use Permit & dumpster issue on 22nd Street. Thanks, Dana!

Cory Giacobbe, past President, is now handling our social media accounts. Thanks, Cory! ❤️

PLEASE email president@aurorahighlands.org if you are curious, interested or committed and / **or just show up at a meeting!**

Please don't be shy! **Any and all help is welcome and appreciated.** ❤️

AHCA is committed to inclusivity and open, civil dialogue.



*****Events*****

ARLINGTON MAGAZINE EVENTS: <https://www.arlingtonmagazine.com/things-to-do-events-arlington-va/>

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS: <https://www.arlingtonmagazine.com/black-history-month/>

ARLINGTON PARKS & REC 55+ EVENTS: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAARLINGTON/bulletins/4067b4a> ONGOING

FARMER'S MARKETS: 4 Mile Run, Sundays 9-1pm, mid-April - early Dec. Courthouse, Old Town & Del Ray are year round.

AURORA HILLS LIBRARY hosts activities including kids clubs, knitting club, yoga, game nights, writer's cafe, Eng. conversation ++

NATIONAL LANDING EVENTS: <https://nationallanding.org/events/calendar>

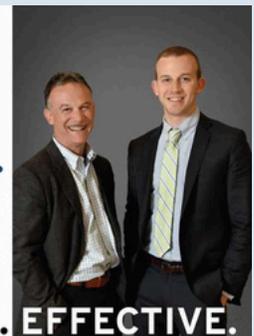
OPEN DOOR MONDAYS 6-8pm - chat one-on-one with a County Board member - virtual on 1st & 3rd Mondays, in person 2nd & 4th Mondays except Aug & Dec

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OFFICE OF CONSTITUENT SERVICES

Stephanie Bello from the Office of Constituent Services presented at our January meeting. Her office "serves as liaisons between residents and businesses, the County Manager and County departments" - "for assisting when standard channels don't work as expected." They have a number of portals for assistance to begin a request on their website:

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/CMO/Constituent-Services>

Report a Problem

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

2026 AHCA Officers

- President Stacy Meyer
- 1st Vice President Alex Chakrin
- 2nd Vice President Vacant
- Treasurer Ben Watts
- Recording Secretary Nick Giacobbe
- Corresponding Secretary Lexi Tinker
- Newsletter**
- Editor: Sushma Subramanian
- Delivery Les Garrison

AHCA Membership Dues for Calendar Year 2026

Dues for 2026 ARE NOW DUE 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

We depend on continued support from advertisers, dues, and volunteers. Thank you to those who assist the AHCA. Only dues paying members can vote.

Printed by: The UPS Store 6199, on Fern St S, a great, local AHCA supporter!

Engage Arlington:

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INTERNATIONAL REALTY

SPECIAL ELECTION NOTICE FOR VIRGINIA SENATE DISTRICT 39

VOTE BY TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH

You should vote at your normal polling place on Election Day if you live in these Arlington Precincts:

- 103 - Aurora Hills
- 106 - Crystal City
- 108 - Hume
- 121 - Virginia Highlands
- 150 - Crystal Plaza
- 153 - Met Park

Don't know if you live in SD-39? Check here! →

MORE INFO



VOTE EARLY IN-PERSON SAT, JAN 31 – SAT, FEB 7

All voters must show an acceptable ID
<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/>

Courthouse Plaza, Office of Elections, Ste. 320
Sat, Jan. 31 | 9am-5pm
Mon, Feb. 2 thru Thurs, Feb 5 | 8am-5pm
Fri, Feb. 6 | 8am-7pm
Sat, Feb. 7 | 9am-5pm

Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 16th St S
Sat, Jan. 31 | 9am-5pm
Fri, Feb. 6 | 2pm-7pm
Sat, Feb. 7 | 9am-5pm

NOTE: Madison Community Center is closed for the special election. The County is required by law to use preexisting Early Voting locations. These are the two closest approved Early Voting locations to SD-39.

ELECTION DAY FEB 10, 6AM – 7PM

Find Your Polling Location &
Verify If You Live in SD-39:
www.elections.virginia.gov

VOTE BY MAIL

Request a mail ballot by
Fri, Jan. 30, 5pm

RETURNING YOUR BALLOT:

DROP IT OFF BEFORE 7PM ON FEB 10 AT:

- Early voting locations
- Polling place on February 10
- 24/7 drop boxes

*Drop boxes will be open at **Aurora Hills & Courthouse Plaza** from Jan 26-Feb 10 and at **Walter Reed** from Jan 31-5pm on Feb 7*

-OR-

MAIL IT BY FEB 10

- Must be postmarked by Tues, Feb. 10 and received by Fri, Feb. 13, 12pm
- *we recommend returning your ballot via drop box due to the short turnaround time*

Register to Vote by Tuesday, Feb 3
Same-Day Voter Registration available
on Election Day, Tuesday, February 10

<https://vote.arlingtonva.gov/Elections>