



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

We march on.

The Nellie Custis Local Historic District will be heard by the **County Board hearing June 13 - mark your calendar.** HALRB - the Board responsible for reviewing the LHD recommended preservation, but the Planning Commission recommended demolition (more details inside).

Our voices matter - showing up does matter!
Not showing up matters more.

If you have not sent in a letter, you still have this LAST opportunity to weigh in. Your voice matters! These letters are read and are meaningful - short and simple is good. This is it.

County Board at countyboard@arlingtonva.us and copy president@aurorahighlands.org, where we will batch the letters.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, PLEASE SHOW UP ON JUNE 13.

PICK UP SOMETHING AT THE FARMERS MARKET WHEN YOU ARE THERE. THERE IS WIFI IF YOU WANT TO WORK ON SOMETHING WHILE WE WAIT.

We will be organizing a meetup before hand. (More details to follow via email.) Make sure you are signed up for the newsletter by email; see QR code on right. Joining the County Board meeting online is also a convenient option.

Update on Faith In Housing . Civic Associations across Arlington are continuing to monitor clarifications to this legislation. More to follow when we hear something!

Our regular meeting is June 10. We have a raincheck from last month from **Patrick Phillippi, Community Relations Liaison from Amazon**, who will discuss a temporary uses for the HQ2 / Helix site and ~~Jeff Zell~~ will discuss plans to adaptively reuse the TSA buildings on 12th & Hayes Street. See you then!

[Mr. Zell is recovering from surgery and will attend in July.]

Stacy Meyer,
President



Next Regular Meeting:

Wednesday, June 10, 2026

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

AGENDA

- 6:30 pm** Doors open - social
- 7:00 pm** Announcements
- 7:05 pm** Patrick Phillippi, Amazon
Community Relations Liaison
- 7:30pm** ~~Jeff Zell, TSA Redevelopment~~
- 8:00pm** AHCA Business
- 9:00pm** Adjourn (latest)

Optional: Register via Zoom
<https://bit.ly/2026AHCA>

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with live links at:

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



**ARLINGTON FARMERS MARKET &
COUNTY BOARD MEETING**
SATURDAY, JUNE 13 - 2100 CLARENDON BLVD
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY * GARAGE PARKING AVAILABLE

**EHO IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD
AKA MISSING MIDDLE**

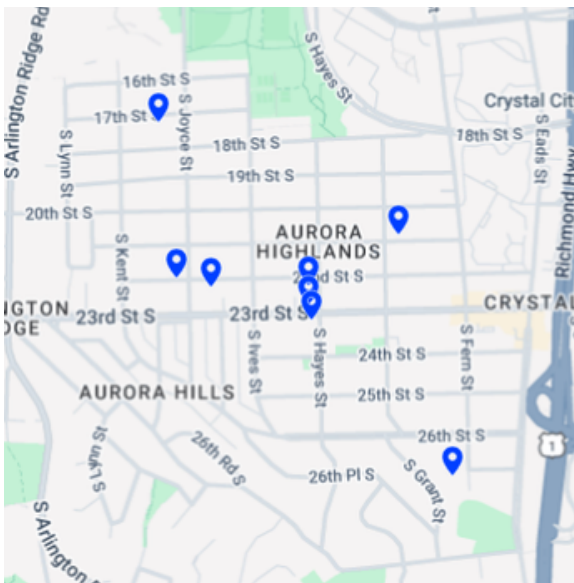
The Civic Association had a robust conversation about Expanded Housing Option (EHO) development in the neighborhood at our May meeting. With one 6-plex by Eads Park, and another set of townhouses in for permit at 23rd and Hayes, we decided to do a survey to see where there is consensus about these projects to potentially take a position. For example, there seems to be agreement about the parking implications of these new residences, at a minimum.

We hope to have the survey ready in July and discussion when we meet in September. In the meantime, if you have concerns about EHO, Neighbors for Neighbors is a group of concerned citizens, and are tracking the cases as they go through the courts.

<https://www.neighborsforneighborhoods.org/>

Here is a link to the map Arlington is keeping tracking EHO Permits. They are showing 8 in our neighborhood that are approved or under review.

<https://my.arlingtonva.us/map/permit>



AURORA HILLS LIBRARY IN THE NEWS

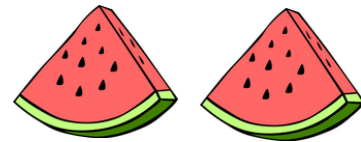


UPPER LEFT: The Arlington library glitterati were on hand for the Aurora Hills Library Centennial! Speakers including Board Chair Matt de Ferranti, Friends of the Arlington Public Library representative Maureen Quinn and head librarian Megan Wianecki stressed the importance of the library located in the neighborhood and how much it contributes to our quality of life.

In other library news, Crystal City is heavily advocating for its own library, so it is important for those who want to keep Aurora Hills to support it! And support AHCA, which is advocating for it!

Pictured: County Board members Susan Cunningham, Matt deFerranti and Maureen Coffey along with our own Alex Chakrin & the man who is everything, everywhere, all at once, Nick Giacobbe, photo by Scott McCafferty

UPPER RIGHT: There is a new mini library at Nina Park!! photo by Peter H. Lyon



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Nellie Custis Local Historic District (LHD) Update

Since most of the same members who were on the Planning Commission in 2025 and voted in favor of Melwood's proposed demolition of Nellie Custis School are still there, it was not a surprise that these same commissioners voted again against preservation at the Planning Commission hearing on the LHD June 1. However, new member of the Planning Commission, Adriana Torres, voted in favor of the LHD, remarking that in her experience as an architect, adaptive reuse of buildings like Nellie Custis is done every day...just, in other jurisdictions. She didn't understand why there wasn't an agreement from the beginning to preserve the building! Comm Lantelme explained: We tried! But, Melwood refused that option.

We recently learned that if the County Board overturns the recommendation of HALRB, it would be unheard of, creating a new precedent for demolition of historic buildings across Arlington. As a result, organizations across the county are taking notice and voicing support for preservation. The County Board received letters from Lyon Village, Lyon Park, Leeway Overlee, GlenCarlyn, Bellview Forest and Shirlington representing tens of thousands of residents, in addition to the Civic Federation.

We also recently learned that Nelly Custis was the 1st School to be built after Arlington became the jurisdiction name (not the 2nd!) [correction]

Kaydee Myers, the Chair of HALRB explained why the HALRB approved the LHD: it is in great shape to be restored and as a civic building represents the history of the development of Arlington, but the commissioners were more interested in the views of staff member Lorin Ferris than HALRB, the actual board responsible for reviewing and recommending the LHD. Even when asking questions about the HALRB's decision, those questions were directed to Ms. Ferris, instead of the HALRB chair. The reason appeared to be because the position of staff to reject the LHD aligns with the previous views of the Planning Commissioners, whereas 10 of the 12 HALRB members disagreed with Ms. Ferris and agreed the building met at least the minimum 2 criteria required for a LHD. Further, the 7 members of HALRB that voted for the LHD included 4 past chairs of the HALRB - representing decades of leadership and most of those that voted in favor agreed it met several more criteria including the notable architect, the location and contribution to history as a school.

The County still has the opportunity to require Melwood to preserve the building, especially since last month the County announced an award of \$11M to Melwood to help offset costs, and that \$11M is dependent on a final approved design. In other words, there is \$11M of our money now on the table, and the project is not likely viable without that funding. In a time when the County threatens to close the Cherrydale library and is raising taxes, \$11M of tax payer money is a lot of leverage to modify a project the overwhelming majority of local residents oppose.

We knew the Planning Commission meeting would likely be a repeat of last year, but were encouraged by Ms. Torres' frank assessment. Thanks to the residents that did speak up. It is not in vain. The decision to demolish the first school that Arlington built as a jurisdiction now lies in the hands of the **elected** County Board, and they meet on Saturday, June 13, at 9:30 AM. Melwood will bring out their usual supporters, and numbers matter. In-person matters. If you care about this issue, if you are affected, please take the time to participate in the process.

CONTACT INFO: email president@aurorahighlands.org if you are curious, or interested in volunteering, **or just show up at a meeting!** Please don't be shy! **Any and all help is welcome and appreciated.**

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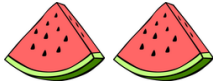
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Get! Out!

JUNE

- June 5: Intergenerational Storytime. Volunteers share reading and music with children at Aurora Hills Library, 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM
- June 6: Pride Party & LGBTQ+ Movie Screening. Screening of "To Wong Foo..." at Alamo Drafthouse Cinema and Water Park, 3:00 PM - 5:20 PM
- June 8: Credit Score 101. Session with ACFCU counselor at Aurora Hills Community Center, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
- **June 10: AHCA Monthly Meeting.**
- June 11: Neighborhood Walk & Discussion. Crystal City Sector Plan with County Board Member Takis Karantonis, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM (RSVP required) email president@crystalcitycivic.org
- **June 13: County Board Meeting. Nelly Custis Local Historic District**



- June 15: Retire Well, Live Well. Q&A series covering long-term home planning and downsizing at Aurora Hills Center, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
- June 17: World Cup Watch Party: Ghana vs. Panama. Live screening, food trucks, and games at Arlington Mill Community Center Plaza, 7:00 PM (Entry 1 hour prior)
- June 18: Jazz @ Met: José Luiz Martins. Brazilian jazz and MoCA Studio Sessions at Metropolitan Park, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- June 20: Level Up at the Mill (Teen Event). Futsal, 3-point shootout, and ice cream at Arlington Mill, 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- June 20: Play All Day VA & Community Picnic. Full lineup of citywide activities culminating in a picnic at Lubber Run Community Center, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

- June 20: Arlington Open Pickleball Tournament. Indoor doubles matchups (Registration deadline June 8)
- June 21: Firefly Festival. Bug hunts, walks, and nature talks at sunset at Fort CF Smith Park, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- June 28: Free Girls Flag Football Clinic. Open to Arlington residents in grades 1–12 at Washington-Liberty High School, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

JULY

- July 1: World Cup Watch Party: Round of 32. Live screening, food trucks, and games at Arlington Mill Community Center Plaza, 8:00 PM Kick-off; Entry starts at 7:00 PM
- ONGOING EVENTS
- Climate Action Plan Feedback Window: Visioning and framework input open through June 26
- Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) Refresh: Online community feedback form open through June 21

AURORA HIGHLANDS SUMMER 2026 ART CONTEST

SUBMIT YOUR ARTWORK!
WINNER FEATURED IN AUGUST NEWSLETTER!

THEME: Bugs & Birds of Aurora Highlands!
DEADLINE: August 1, 2026.
TO ENTER: Scan your drawing and upload!
(Use a scanning app for best results).

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