

Subject: Update on Aurora Highlands CA & Cherry Blossom Festival (1/19)

From: "Scott Miles, AHCA President" <president@aurorahighlands.org>

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To: Matt de Ferranti <mdeferranti@arlingtonva.us>, Libby Garvey <lgarvey@arlingtonva.us>, Christian Dorsey <cdorsey@arlingtonva.us>, Katie Cristol <kcristol@arlingtonva.us>, Takis Karantonis <Tkarantonis@arlingtonva.us>

Dear County Board Members,

I know that you have a tremendous amount of obligations right now. On a lighter note, I want to thank you for encouraging the collaboration with DPR and AHCA for the National Cherry Blossom Festival and beyond for open space needs at Virginia Highlands Park, and also provide a quick update.

After a series of calls and emails regarding the need for open space at Virginia Highlands Park since August, we met with DPR 2 weeks ago on January 5th.

### **Creating Daily Casual Use Space at Virginia Highlands Park**

We were very encouraged to learn that making one diamond field at Virginia Highlands Park, the "Hearts Field" dedicated community space for daily casual use and programming is much easier than we had thought. DPR is not leasing the space to paid leagues this season, and County use is not so much a matter of logistics with scheduling or insufficient field, but rather it had been a matter of "legacy"-- as in a few leagues simply had a preference to use that field and on a few days of the week.

### **Cherry Blossom Festival**

As the National Cherry Blossom Festival is quickly upon us, we are excited to let you know that AHCA has now become an official partner. The Festival has numerous deadlines and AHCA has submitted its list of activities including music, art, kite flying and ways to help support local restaurants and businesses, hosting potentially thousands of people over the course of the festival at the Hearts Field. See the attached PDF for a current summary.

### **Collaborating with DPR for community space**

We are excited to accept Jane Rudolph's offer to utilize the talented DPR staff to help with art and programming for the Festival and hopefully throughout spring and beyond for families, seniors and adults. We will be working with the County on any special permissions in the next couple of weeks.

### **National Landing BID**

We are also encouraged that with the availability of the Hearts Field for daily casual use and event space, the National Landing BID will be able to activate and implement their events and placemaking to support the many local businesses, which need Arlington's support more than ever. We are encouraging the BID to help activate our public spaces for public use, but they need to hear that from the County as well.

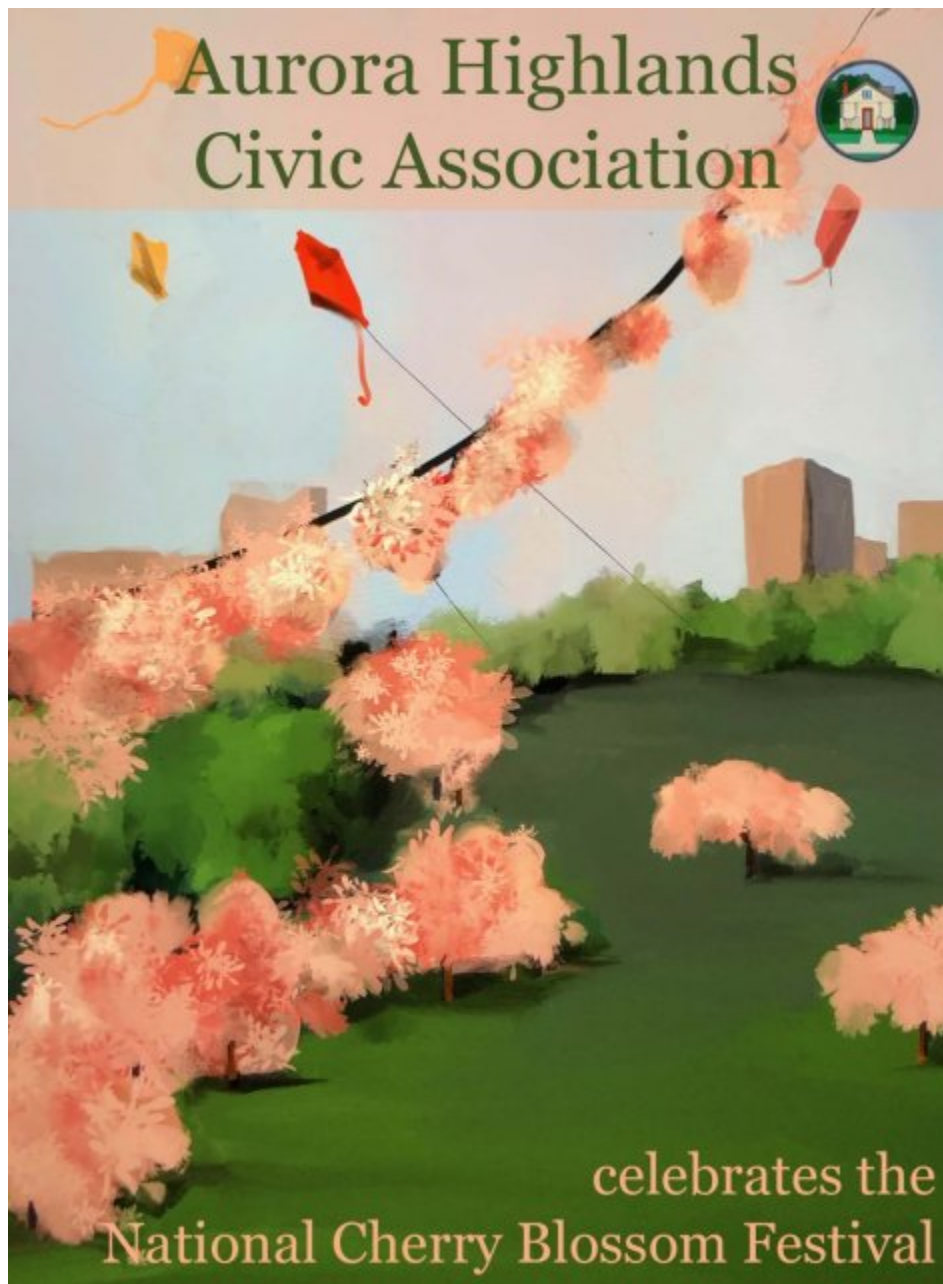
### **Arlington: Equity and Inclusiveness**

The ability to create casual use and event space for the Cherry Blossom festival and beyond will highlight Arlington's inclusive and equitable public spaces.

I know that you are very busy, but we wanted to provide this update that with the Festival only 2 months away, we are moving forward to have a successful Festival and access to the much needed community open space.

Sincerely,  
Scott

--  
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-- Attachments: -----

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Cherry Blossom Festival Ideas for Programming and Activities 2020-01-19.pdf

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