

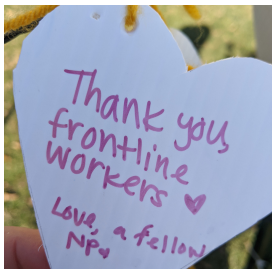


# AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## JANUARY NEWSLETTER

### LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021

In such a trying year, it can be hard to know just how much hope and gratitude there is in the world. However, nearly 150 messages of gratitude and hope were left on mini hearts at Virginia Highlands Park in December as part of the solar Winter Lights Walk. See some of the messages in this 4 minute video: <http://bit.ly/vhp-gratitude>. It'll warm your heart and may even make you laugh! We wish that all your hopes and dreams come true in 2021. We are grateful to have a wonderful community like you. Thanks to the volunteers who helped to make the Winter Lights a success. Maybe next year we can find a way to make it even bigger and better!



#### >> Dues are Due! <<

Please show your support for AHCA and our community by sending in your dues for 2021. Dues are only \$20 per household and help support this monthly newsletter, community events, and other neighborhood building activities, and also let you vote at meetings.

Please pay online at [aurorahighlands.org](http://aurorahighlands.org) by clicking the "Donate" button to pay by PayPal. Checks can also be mailed to AHCA, P.O. Box 25201, Arlington, VA 22202. **Thank You!**

#### Residential Parking Program (RPP) Update & Membership Vote

Our on-street parking will likely be changing, which could have impacts across our neighborhood. See this chart for a summary: <http://bit.ly/rpp-chart-jan>. The proposed changes to the RPP were reviewed by the County Board in December and recommended to be voted on in February. Based on the November AHCA meeting and feedback from residents, AHCA has voiced concerns to the County about reducing the number of passes, implementing 2-hour paid parking without enforcement leading to a return of commuter issues and traffic, and the general lack of analysis and review to react if and when problems arise.

Residents are requesting a stronger stance from AHCA and will be presenting a motion at the Jan 13 meeting requesting that AHCA formally oppose 1) Any 2-hour paid parking 2) Any reduction in passes 3) Changing the wording in 14.2-98 on the intent of the program. *Please join the January Zoom meeting on Wednesday to vote on whether to approve this motion.*

### Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 13

7-9pm, Virtual -- Zoom / Facebook  
<https://aurorahighlands.org/event/jan2021>

#### Pentagon Row - Site Plan Changes

Federal Realty will explain changes they are seeking to the types and size of tenants at Pentagon Row, including removing the requirement to provide a "full service" grocery.

#### Arlington Broadband Proposal

ArlFiber, a group of Arlington residents, is proposing to open the County's fiber infrastructure to provide broadband Internet to any business or residence. Hear their plan and ask questions.

#### Melwood / Miracle on 23rd Donation

The executive committee pledged a \$250 donation in November to support this long-standing community event. Vote on a motion to approve this donation.

#### 2021 Budget

Recap of last year's budget and the general plan for 2020 spending.

#### Residential Parking Objections

Hear and vote on a motion to oppose RPP parking changes.

See inside for articles on some of these items.

### Read Up & Reach Out!



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(703) 594-1344



P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202

## Pentagon Row: No more "full service" grocery store?

Federal Realty, the owner of Pentagon Row, is requesting revisions to several conditions from the original 1998 site plan approval that require certain retail categories and tenant sizes (<http://bit.ly/pr-retail-changes>). They say "the existing retail conditions create uncertainty around the ability to lease space to tenants and make it difficult to attract new tenants. Specifically regarding the existing grocery store, Federal Realty intends to maintain a grocery store element in the shopping center to serve community needs, but the owner is requesting flexibility in format, size, and location." *Federal Realty will be at our January 13 AHCA meeting to provide more details and answer your questions.*

## Pentagon Row: Siné & Petco Close; Upcoming Openings

Siné Irish Pub and Petco Unleashed are joining the ranks of local area businesses that will no longer be with us. Siné opened in in 2002 and has closed as of Jan. 2. Unleashed by Petco announced it will be closing on Saturday, Jan. 23.

New openings to come include a Virginia ABC store in the former Bloomberg campaign space and Nighthawk Pizza. Nighthawk is expected to open next fall in the former Champps space, and will feature "approachable low ABV beers, that will be reminiscent of old-world styles for the working class," along with "Spero's innovative approach towards pizza, sandwiches." It will also sport a 90s vibe and a beer hall-like atmosphere.

BTW, Pentagon Row is also changing its name to "Westpost at National Landing". (<http://bit.ly/westpost-nighthawk>)

## Arlington Municipal Broadband Proposal

ArlFiber, a group of Arlington residents, is dismayed that in Arlington, with rare exception, we currently have at most two options from which to receive Internet service, and in some cases only one option, leading to high Internet costs for everyone and leaving many unable to afford access to this vital resource and with inadequate quality of service.

The group is encouraging our County to implement another approach. ArlFiber wants Arlington to establish a Broadband Authority which would offer to run a County-owned optical fiber to any residence or business that wants one. Multiple privately owned internet service providers would then compete to offer service to Arlington residents via this municipal fiber. Experience in other cities using this approach suggests that the resulting increased competition between ISPs results in a reduction in Internet service cost that more than pays for installation of the new municipal fiber network. Earnings from more affluent parts of Arlington would allow the municipal fiber system to subsidize use of the municipal fiber by less affluent citizens. Learn more about this proposal

at <https://ArlFiber.org>. *ArlFiber will be at our January 13 meeting to provide more detail and answer your questions.*



## Cherry Blossom Festival coming to Aurora Highlands!

We are very excited to announce that the esteemed National Cherry Blossom Festival wants to bring part of the 2021 Festival to our community. Instead of the traditional large DC event, the Festival will be more virtual this year and spread out to a few areas around the region.

A Festival organizer shared that AHCA efforts at Virginia Highlands Park for "a fun yet safe place for the community to enjoy being outdoors "together" during the pandemic" sparked the realization that it "could be a great location for some of the ideas we are envisioning for the 2021 National Cherry Blossom Festival."

There will be constraints on what can be done, which will eschew large events in favor of displays, art, and activities that can be enjoyed by smaller groups. We are encouraging the County to make the park field space available through the duration of the Festival for family-friendly activities and programming. Amazon and the National Landing BID are also Festival partners and we'll be sharing the community's ideas with them.

The Festival runs from March 20 through April 11. *If you'd like to help organize activities at the park or throughout the neighborhood or to volunteer support, please email us at [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org). <http://bit.ly/ahca-cherryblossom>*

## More Open Space, Programming & Events at the Park?

Many community members have requested that the park continue to provide daily access to casual use space, programming such as Zumba, and events like the live music at Virginia Highlands Park. We'd like to make sure the County hears this support and your ideas for programming, events, and casual uses. *Please take a minute to express your support and add your comments at <https://www.change.org/vhp-openspace>*

### Crystal House to become Affordable Housing

Washington Housing Conservancy announced they have acquired the two Crystal House buildings between Eads and Fern (<http://bit.ly/whc-ch>). Rents will be lowered on 75% of the existing 828 units for those earning 80% or less of Area Median Income (AMI). Of those, 20% (165 units) will be dedicated to 50% AMI. The remaining 25% will be market-rate. These will be applied across all unit sizes, providing much needed workforce housing and housing stability so residents can stay in the community and the same property as their income changes. Changes will be phased in over 5 years, so with current turnover, minimal displacement to existing tenants is expected. The affordability commitment is for 99 years. The purchase was made possible by loans and grants from Amazon as part of its recent pledge to provide \$2B in loans and grants to secure affordable housing in DC, Seattle, and Nashville (<http://bit.ly/amazon-2B-housing>).

This property just went through a Site Plan review last year that approved an additional 819 new housing units. There is no word yet whether those plans may change, but any new development wouldn't be owned by the Conservancy so it should be the same or similar planned market-rate housing.

The Washington Housing Initiative and Impact Pool, a housing affordability effort from area landowner JBG Smith, provided a loan of \$6.7 million for the deal. JBGS will be the development partner and manage the property, and has also committed to reinvest \$8m in the building for improvements, along with an equal amount in continued investment.

### New Livability 22202 "Open Space" and "Housing" Reports published

The Housing Working Group Report (<http://bit.ly/L22202-housing-rpt>) details recommendations on addressing concerns about our neighbors' ability to find and keep their homes. These recommendations are the outcomes of two well attended workshops and feedback from 22202 residents and include proposed solutions to avoid displacement, develop new and diverse affordable housing, develop new and diverse market-rate housing, and building community.

The Open Space Working Group Report (<http://bit.ly/L22202-openspace-rpt>) reflects the need for holistic planning to strengthen connectivity, natural ecosystems, community-building and promote the evolution of existing parks to meet the needs of the present and future residents. Key recommendations include developing walking/biking loops, promoting open space connectivity from Arlington Ridge to Crystal City, Long Bridge Park, and the natural areas of Roaches Run, reducing heat island effects, mitigating stormwater impacts, providing wildlife habitat, incorporating solar energy, and increasing shade trees and plantings.

### Three concepts for Army Navy & Eads park released - Feedback Needed

Arlington County invites you to learn about and comment on three draft designs for the New Park at South Eads St. and Army Navy Drive. The concepts were informed by community comments describing how the public space is currently used and what community members envision for its future. They want to know what you think. What are your favorite elements of each concept? What do you feel is missing? Your feedback will help inform the design of the Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines for this exciting new public space. Share your thoughts through January 15 at <http://bit.ly/park-design-concepts>

#### The Meander

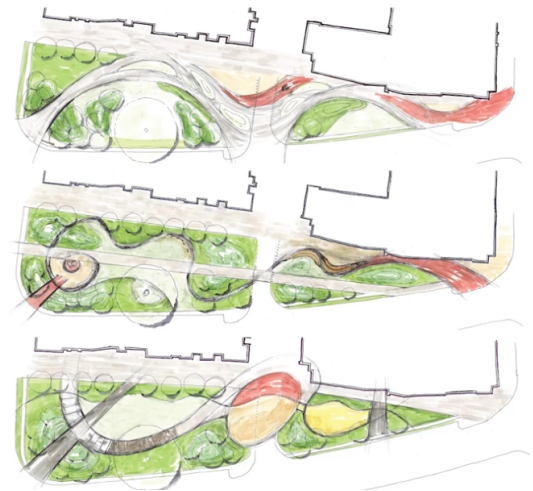
- Sweeping Landscape Promenade
- Undulating Landscape
- Immersive Natural Walk

#### Canal Walk

- Celebrating Nature
- Honoring the Natural and Cultural History
- Outdoor Fitness

#### Central Hub

- Social Gathering Spaces
- Dog and Family Friendly
- Outdoor Workspace



### Construction updates

If you live near Pentagon Centre, you're probably already aware that pile driving has begun. Operations will start at 7am and end prior to 6pm M-F, with potential of Sat 10AM - 6PM. The projected completion date is March 11. Check <https://aurorahighlands.org/construction-milton/> and [@AuroraHighlands](#) social media for updates.

Over at MetPark, Clark Construction will continue to focus on concrete operations throughout the winter months, with the goal of reaching street level or "back to grade" in the spring of 2021. Clark teamed up with the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) for a virtual tour of the Metropolitan Park jobsite. In case you missed it, a recording of the tour is available here: <https://youtu.be/cqdUIMbK-yE>. Sign up for updates at <https://www.metpark678.com/>.

### New BikeShare station at DCA and how to get there

Capital BikeShare now has a station at DCA, making it America's first station at a major airport. Whether you're using BikeShare or your own bike, check out this great article by neighbor Dana Bres on how to get to DCA by bike (<https://aurorahighlands.org/news/bike-route-to-dca/>). There's also a new BikeShare station on Hayes St at 23rd, across from Anna Salon and Spa.



# Mark Your Calendar

## Christmas Tree Collection through Fri. Jan 15

Place trees at curb no later than 6 a.m. on your regular trash collection day after removing ALL decorations, nails, stands and plastic bags. After this date, they'll be picked up with regular yard waste. <http://bit.ly/arl-xmas-pickup>

## MLK Day of Service, Park Cleanup Monday, January 18, 1pm

Let's start off the New Year by cleaning up garbage in and around Virginia Highlands Park. Meet at 1pm on January 18 by the Hearts at the softball field. We'll spread out around the park and in the surrounding streets. Masks required. Please bring bags, gloves, and any other supplies you may want to use. <https://aurorahighlands.org/event/mlk-day-clean-up/>

## GAO Report on DC Helicopter Activity

The GAO issued its report on DC area helicopter activity, entitled "Aircraft Noise: Better Information Sharing Could Improve Responses to Washington, D.C. Area Helicopter Noise Concerns." See <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-21-200> for a summary and the full report.

## Engage with Arlington – Make your voices known in 2021!

Arlington County's "Engage Arlington" (<https://topics.arlingtonva.us/engage/>) highlights upcoming opportunities for public comments on County, private developers', and other government projects. Use this website to stay informed about and make comments on the many different upcoming projects that will impact our neighborhood. These are some January postings:

- **January 10 - FY 2022 County budget:** Tell the County what programs and infrastructure should be prioritized for the upcoming tight budget. <http://bit.ly/engage-budget>
- **January 11 - VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study:** Visit the VDOT project website (<https://bit.ly/vdot-route1>) to review the project and link to the online survey. Note the PDF of slides from the recent public meeting, specifically the proposed concept plans on slide 30 and 31 that show Route 1 at grade at 15th and 18th. Check the Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group presentations (<http://bit.ly/L22202-rt1>) and send in YOUR comments by the 11th at <http://bit.ly/rt1-survey-jan11>.
- **January 11 - 2001 Clark Street South – Crystal Plaza 1:** Review the project (<http://bit.ly/2001-clark>) and submit your comments by January 11. This project will have a major impact on the Underground, street design, transportation flow, and visual impact on our community.
- **January 15 - Park on South Eads Street & Army Navy Drive (Tear Drop parcel):** Vote for your favorite plans and components for the new "tear drop" park. Do you want a dog park, shared bike-ped path, great lawn, more trees – let the County know at <http://bit.ly/park-design-concepts>.
- **January 25 - Potomac Yard Land Bay C East:** Although the public comment period is over for this project, you can still participate in the first Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) meeting on January 25. This project will impact transportation through Potomac Yard-Arlington, especially for cyclists and pedestrians. <http://bit.ly/PY-LandBayC>

## 4D-A Neighborhood Listserv Reboots - Subscribe Now

Thanks to Lisa Davis and Natasha Atkins, our community has a replacement for the "4D-A" mailing list that has served the neighborhood since 2001. Yahoo disbanded groups in December, so the new group is now at groups.io as "4D-A22202" (<https://groups.io/g/4D-A22202>). 4D-A is a great alternative to Nextdoor. It focuses on community notifications and events, with no ads, for-sale, etc. Use the link above for more details and posting guidelines or subscribe with an email to 4D-A22202+subscribe@groups.io.

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