



# AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER

### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

Join us for our Virtual AHCA meeting on May 11 at 7 pm. We will have a presentation from our AHCA Zoning committee on the Eads Street GLUP Amendment & Crystal City Heights Study. We'll be asking you to vote on whether you support sending the report to the County staff.

We'll also have a discussion about the Army-Navy Country Club Connector Trail. We've been asked to weigh in on a couple of design options, so we'd like to hear what you think.

On May 12, The Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission will be holding the meeting on the Melwood Site Tier 1 Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study. The Civic Association will be represented at the meeting by Stacy Meyer, Chair of AHCA Zoning Committee. See article below for more information.

-Cory Giacobbe, President, AHCA

#### LRPC Meeting on Melwood GLUP Rescheduled for May 12

The Arlington County Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission has informed us the the meeting to review Melwood's application to change the GLUP designation from "Public" to "Low-Medium" Residential with an associated rezoning from C-1 and R-6 to RA8-18, has been rescheduled for May 12, 7-9 pm.

#### HOW TO VIEW AND PARTICIPATE

This meeting will be held through electronic communication means in compliance with the Code of Virginia and Arlington County's Continuity of Operations Ordinance. The meeting will be open to virtual attendance by the public and closed to in-person attendance.

- Commission members, staff, applicants, and public comments will be hosted by teleconference/ videoconference via Microsoft Teams.
- Meeting access information is provided on the LRPC [webpage.\(link\)](#).
- Closed captioning is available for this meeting by viewing it through the Microsoft Teams free app.
- Audio is available from the dial-in phone option.
- A recording of the meeting will be posted to the County website LRPC webpage within two business days after the meeting.
- To request translation services or other reasonable accommodations, contact the staff liaison at the number or email listed below.

The LRPC is a committee of the Planning Commission. **The public may observe the meetings, but participation in the discussion is limited to members of the Planning Commission unless otherwise recognized by the Committee chair.** A public link will be posted to the LRPC webpage and can be accessed below

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

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Phone Conference ID: 922 675 094#

[Find a local number](#) | Reset PIN

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For questions about this notice, contact LRPC Staff Liaison: Anika Chowdhury, [achowdhury@arlingtonva.us](mailto:achowdhury@arlingtonva.us), 703-228-0096.

### Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 11

7-9pm, Virtual -- Zoom / Facebook

<https://aurorahighlands.org/event/may2022>

#### AGENDA

**7:00 pm - AHCA Zoning Committee Report on the Eads Street GLUP Amendment and Crystal City Heights Study**

**Stacy Meyer**, chair of AHCA Zoning Committee will present the committee's most recent report.

We'll discuss and vote on whether to send the report to the County Planning Staff and Board. See article below for more information.

**7:30 pm - Preparation for May 12 LRPC meeting on Melwood GLUP Study**

Stacy Meyer will represent the AHCA at the May 12 LRPC meeting to review Melwood's application to change the GLUP designation for their property.

More information in the article to the left, on how to attend the virtual meeting as an observer.

**8:00 pm - Army Navy Country Club Connector Trail Options**

Natasha Atkins will present the proposals for the ANCC connector trail, and get feedback from AHCA members on the proposed options. See article below for more information.

#### Other Business

- **New Business - Next Month: Senator Adam Ebbin will give us a legislative update and wants to know what interests/concerns us**

- Adjourn

### Read Up & Reach Out!



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## **May AHCA Meeting Topic: Zoning Committee Report on South Eads Residential GLUP Amendment and Crystal City Heights Study**

The AHCA Zoning Committee has completed a review of the proposed South Eads Residential GLUP Amendment and the Crystal City Heights Study. The Zoning Committee will present the report at the AHCA May 11, 2022 meeting.

Report summary: the South Eads Residential GLUP Amendment proposes a 60' multifamily building on South Eads Street. If approved, the Amendment would create a precedent for other similar projects that seek to encroach on the single family neighborhood. The Crystal City Heights Study currently proposes 60' and 75' tall buildings along 23rd Street and other increases in height along S. Eads. The civic association previously opposed the recommendations in the Crystal City Heights Study in a letter to the county in May of 2021, but that input does not appear to be included in the current preferred scenario from October 2021, and as currently posted on the county website.

The report can be found on the [AuroraHighlands.org](https://AuroraHighlands.org) website under Documents/Reports/2022, or you can follow this link directly to the report:

[AHCA Zoning Committee Report on South Eads Residential GLUP Amendment and Crystal City Heights Study.](#)

## **May AHCA Meeting Topic: ANCC Connector Update**

For 30 years our neighborhood has been working to negotiate for and design a trail that would connect 22202 with the Hoffman Boston School and nearby Columbia Pike neighborhoods. What was once envisioned as a winding bike/ped trail through the Army-Navy Country Club has now been proscribed by limitations imposed by ANCC, and county staff have come up with two concepts for a connecting trail within a right-of-way that skirts the western edge of the ANCC. Design must contend with a steep grade at the southern terminus, near the entrance to ANCC from Army-Navy Drive. The two concepts are (1) steep grade and high walls, or (2) steps and runnels. The 12% grade would require deep excavation, and hence the high walls in option (1). Option (2) would have a series of steps with long landings, with runnels alongside for wheeling a bike. Each option presents some safety considerations—primarily visibility vs. controlling speed—and concerns about feasibility of use for bike varieties such as e-bikes, cargo bikes, and bike trailers. Please make your opinions known. Would you use the trail? Which option would you prefer and why? Visit the Project Page at <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Project-Types/Transportation-Projects/Army-Navy-Country-Club-Trail-Connector>

## **Save the NEW Date: County Virtual Open House on Development Projects in Crystal City and Pentagon City to take place on May 16, 7-8:30 pm.**

Join the County and National Landing BID at this virtual event to learn about a new online interactive map that will help our community understand the locations of all of the many active transportation projects, private commercial development, and County-led planning efforts in the Crystal City - Pentagon City area. The virtual open house will include breakout rooms covering most of the major projects, with experts in each one, hosted by planners from Parks, Transportation and Planning Divisions. They will invite the members of the three civic associations as well as all who are interested.

Community members will have the opportunity to ask specific questions after the presentation. The link to join this virtual meeting is here: [Crystal City - Pentagon City Virtual Open House](#)

## **PenPlace is Approved**

On Saturday, April 23, the County Board unanimously and enthusiastically approved the redevelopment of the PenPlace block in Pentagon City as part of the next phase of Amazon's HQ2 for the parcel located at 550 Army Navy Drive. The actions will progress plans for the construction of four new office buildings with retail pavilions, a childcare center, a new public park, and a permanent home for the 300 student [Arlington Community High School](#). Additional community benefits include an affordable housing contribution, transportation infrastructure improvements, and a commitment to sustainable design. The Board vote adopts the [PenPlace](#), [Park Master Plan](#) and [Design Guidelines](#).

## **Americana Hotel Site**

JBGS has submitted a site plan application ( SPLN22-00001) for redeveloping the old Americana Hotel property, at 1460 Richmond Highway, as a 12-story residential tower with 166 units and ground floor retail. The building, parking, and loading entrances will be off Eads, not Richmond Highway.

## **Crystal Plaza 5 (2250 Crystal Drive and 223 23rd St. S)**

The revised Crystal Plaza 5 proposal will include two 30-story residential towers with 613 and 827 apartments, two parks, removal of the southernmost section of The Underground, replaced with an outside pedestrian passage for this section. The project will help create part of the 23rd Street and Clark-Bell realignments envisioned in the Crystal City Sector Plan, as well as build alleyways around part of the site. An LRPC meeting for Block M was held on April 11, with consensus to move forward to the SPRC process. Expect a second online engagement soon, followed by the first SPRC meeting to be held on June 13.

## **The Best Time to Plant a Tree Was Yesterday. The Second-Best Time is Today**

Old trees don't live forever, and every day we lose another to old age, storms, disease, and development. Please consider planting a young tree today to replace an old one that will disappear tomorrow. The Tree Canopy Fund makes it easy for you. TCF will plant a tree of your choice on your property, at now cost to you. You save \$200-300 and in return you help ensure that our neighborhood will continue to have shade trees that prevent flooding, shelter wildlife, clean the air, increase our property values, and keep us comfortable as temperatures warm. The physical and mental health benefits of living among trees are well documented. Deadline for applying is June 24. For available species and other info, visit <https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/community-programs/trees/>.

Email Natasha Atkins at [natashaatkins1@gmail.com](mailto:natashaatkins1@gmail.com). She can help with species selection and tree placement. She will submit AHCA applications, and then you will get watering alerts and other helpful tree-care info.

## **West Glebe Street Bridge Reconstruction:**

### **Update – CLOSED to vehicular traffic starting May 9th!**

Vehicular travel lanes in both directions have been closed because of the deteriorating bridge conditions and start of new construction, which will continue through summer, 2023. Cyclists and pedestrians may still travel together on the east side. The project webpage includes a detour map, but from 22202 you may want to consider going directly to Mt. Vernon Avenue (bridge also needs reconstruction) or Route 1.

## Transportation Topics

### **VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study – Phase 2**

Is an at-Grade Route 1 inevitable and how can the community best ensure that any proposals going forward provide truly safe intersections for all users without diverting traffic onto our local streets? Please participate in ongoing discussions with VDOT and advocate for our community's needs.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) completed its Phase 1 study last year and recommended that Route 1 be brought down to grade at both 15th Street and at 18th Street. They propose 6 or 7 lanes total (a left-turn lane would be added at 15th; no left turns at 18th from either 18th or Route 1).

VDOT has just started Phase 2 of their study and held their first virtual Public Engagement meeting on Thursday, April 28, 2022. The meeting recording, meeting slide deck, and a compilation of questions and answers from attendees is available on the VDOT project website:

[https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northern\\_virginia/route\\_1\\_multimodal\\_improvements\\_study-phase\\_2\\_first\\_virtual\\_public\\_information\\_meeting.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northern_virginia/route_1_multimodal_improvements_study-phase_2_first_virtual_public_information_meeting.asp)

During Phase 2, VDOT staff and their consultants will begin several new studies and update some of the studies they ran during Phase 1. These include a travel demand management (TDM) plan to lower the traffic volume on Route 1 significantly below 2019 pre-pandemic levels so that a redesigned at-grade boulevard with fewer lanes can support traffic flow. They will also study whether the speed limit can be lowered to 25 mph without significant traffic backups and diversion, and whether a separate bike-ped crossing over or under Route 1 is feasible. Additional enhancements would be major improvements in safety for the intersection of 23rd and Route 1, and new streetscape elements such as planting zones, sidewalks, possible cafe zones next to buildings, street lights, etc. Traffic analyses have already begun. VDOT plans to hold 3 additional Public Information Meetings (PIM) through the end of 2022, when the Phase 2 report will be released. Stay tuned for the dates and content of these additional PIMs. The April 28 VDOT meeting recording and slide deck are available through this [link](#).

During the April 28 meeting, Dan Reinhard, the VDOT project manager, described preliminary ideas for an overpass/underpasses at 18th and a choice of two proposals for improving the intersection of 23rd and Route 1. Now VDOT wants YOUR opinions on the project and on these options. Comments are due by May 20; instructions on how to submit your comments are on this page: [https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northern\\_virginia/route\\_1\\_multimodal\\_improvements\\_study-phase\\_2\\_first\\_virtual\\_public\\_information\\_meeting.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northern_virginia/route_1_multimodal_improvements_study-phase_2_first_virtual_public_information_meeting.asp)

The Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group, concerned about safety and traffic diversion onto neighborhood streets, had supported many alternatives to the proposed at-grade Route 1. The pedestrian bridge, Dutch underpass, and underground tunnels at 18th were based upon discussions with the Working Group, which continues to advocate for truly safe and convenient crossings and traffic mitigation. All Working Group materials and VDOT responses are available on the Working Group website: <https://livability22202.org/route-1-working-group/>

This ARLNow Article contains some captured VDOT slides that might be helpful.

### **Transitway Extension to Pentagon City**

The [12th Street South Complete Streets Project](#) and the [Transitway Extension to Pentagon City](#) are closely linked County transportation projects in the National Landing area. Together these projects will add transit-only center lanes and other infrastructure for the Metroway, as well as new bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Construction has started – so watch for local detours! Expect construction for these projects to continue for more than a year. The completed Transitway will connect to WMATA's planned Pentagon City Center bus bays project on Army Navy Drive, which will include enhanced connections to rapid transit buses along Columbia Pike.

### **CC2DCA**

The VDOT-led NEPA process for a bike-ped passageway connecting Crystal City to DCA is ongoing, with an Environmental Assessment(EA) due by mid-2023. A preferred alternative, including a specific type of facility and alignment, will be identified in the EA, which will also list environmental commitments to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts on the environment from the project. Stay tuned for announcements for the next public engagement, which will cover the preferred alignment and type of facility. The distance from Crystal City to DCA is short, but the planning process is complicated because this small area is managed by so many different organizations – from CSX to the National Park Service to the MWAA – and all relevant partners need to reach an agreement.

### **Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion and Roadway Realignment**

Construction ahead of the expansion of Arlington National Cemetery to the area south of Columbia Pike and west of S. Joyce will cause challenges for driving, cycling, and walking. This project will result in closure of the popular Southgate Road and realignment of Columbia Pike (from east of South Oak to Washington Boulevard) and S. Joyce Street.

### **Dominion Energy Glebe Project Virtual Community Meeting on May 11, 6:30 PM**

Join Dominion Energy for a virtual community meeting to learn an overview of the Glebe pre-construction project which will have notable effects on the Four Mile Run Trail and the surrounding streets. This meeting will provide what to expect throughout construction and an opportunity to discuss questions community members may have. Note: This meeting was scheduled in conflict with the AHCA meeting unfortunately. Community members could join for the first half hour, then switch to the AHCA meeting. A recording of the meeting will be available afterwards, and Dominion Energy project staff will present at the June AHCA meeting.

The Dominion Energy Glebe Transmission Project, at and around the Glebe Substation between S. Eads and Route 1 and S. Glebe and the 4MRT, will:

- Rebuild and modernize the Glebe Substation – deconstruction has started!
- Convert the existing above ground transmission lines to underground (and under Four Mile Run) transmission lines, and
- Decommission the existing Potomac Yard Transition Station and overhead lines.

This multi-year construction project will have major impacts on transportation routes for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Watch for detours and new temporary routes around the area.

Visit <https://www.dominionenergy.com/glebe> for more information.



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## Calendar

See [aurorahighlands.org/events/](http://aurorahighlands.org/events/)

### Open Door Mondays

**Every Monday, 7-8:30pm**

Talk to a County Board member on any topic. [bit.ly/arl-board-mondays](https://bit.ly/arl-board-mondays)

### DPR Programs - Sign Up NOW!

Follow this link to sign up for camps, sports and programs for kids, adults and seniors.

### HOG Pull, Saturday

June 4, 9-11 a.m.

Invasive Plant Pull

Meet at Haley Park, 2400 S.

Meade St., Arlington, VA 22202

Please preregister at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f44acae22a7fa7-haley>

### Ft. Scott Invasives Removal

**May 28, 9 - 11 a.m.**

During COVID, registration is

required. Pre-register at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f44acae22a7fa7-ftscott>

### 55+ Programs @ Aurora Hills

If you are 55 or older, check out the 55+ Pass programs at Aurora Hills.

<https://bit.ly/arl-ah55plus>

### Trash & Treasure Sale, Saturday, May 14, 9:30 to 1:30 Aurora Hills Community Center at 735 18th St. S.

All proceeds are used to support senior programming at the Aurora Hills 55+ Center, including holiday meals, ice cream socials, and musical programs at the Center.

Drop off donations at the Aurora Hills Center on Wednesday, May 11 or Friday, May 13 between 10 and 2: household goods, decorative items, small kitchen appliances, games/toys, jewelry, luggage and garden supplies. No books, clothes, home electronics (TV's, computers, DVDs, CDs, etc.). Contact the Center at 703-228-5722 with any questions.

### Vote in the upcoming June 21 primary

- Deadline to register to vote in the June primary is May 31.
  - You may request a mail-in ballot or you can vote early in person at the County early voting site.
- All the information you need to find out how to vote is on the County [election website](#).

### Please Water Your Street Trees!

If there are new street trees outside your house, please keep an eye on them and water them throughout the summer and fall. The County doesn't have the budget for regular watering and they depend on neighbors giving them a drink periodically. New trees need ten gallons of water per week in their first two years after planting, if there hasn't been at least an inch of rain. Here's a [link to the TreeStewards of Arlington and Alexandria blog](#) on watering new trees.

### >> Dues are Due! <<

Please show your support for AHCA and our community by sending in your annual dues for 2022. It's only \$20 per household and helps support this monthly newsletter, community events, and other neighborhood building activities, and also lets 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!

### Newsletters & Social Media

We have heard from residents that really enjoy having a print newsletter. While we'll do our best to continue it, that will depend on continued support from advertisers and volunteers to assemble it. Sign up for newsletters by email at [aurorahighlands.org/join-ahca](http://aurorahighlands.org/join-ahca) and follow us at @AuroraHighlands on Twitter, Facebook, or Insta to stay connected no matter what.

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## FREE Seller's Workshop

Unlock Your Equity

Have questions about selling your home?

This is the workshop for you.



**May 10**

5:30 - 7:30 PM

Calvary United Methodist

2315 S Grant St,  
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To learn more, go to: [gevaandjane.com](http://gevaandjane.com)



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