

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

Monthly Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2019

DRAFT

Attendees: 30 people signed in

Proceedings:

Scott Miles called the meeting to order at 7:03 in the Aurora Hills Senior Center

Updates:

- Census – neighborhood representative
- New yard signs in the neighborhood
- Livability Framework update:
 - Representatives from the different civic associations have had positive discussions with JBG and Amazon
 - Right now they are focused on requests for the Met Park development. Top requests are improving the Met Park green space, affordable housing, funding for additional studies, and banking funds for future projects.
 - The next SPRC is October 14.
- Officer nominations are coming up in November
 - A slate was proposed.
 - One attendee self-nominated for VP

Regular agenda:

1. Public Safety Discussion - Sergeant Al Taber – Community Outreach, Southside Supervisor, accompanied by Officer Wallace

Primary concerns in this zip code are larceny, shoplifting, fraud, which are higher due to shopping centers.

They see frequent car break-ins. They have a program to send you a text reminder from ACPD to lock your car at 9pm. This is coming from unlocked doors. They have not encountered “ghost fabs” or thieves lifting up garage doors.

Solicitors must have a permit, and they must stop by 5pm. Watch for signs. They have lots of frauds and hoaxes, from both phone and door solicitation.

Concern from attendees about people sleeping in public spaces. Sergeant Taber discussed how they go out with ASPAN to do outreach and help connect people with services.

If you see aggressive panhandling, make a report and take pictures. Arlington is more welcoming than some other jurisdictions, but ACPD will remove aggressive panhandlers. They have a Park Safe program that gives people two warnings for sleeping at night in the park.

The officers discussed the security cameras (ie Ring) and how they are useful for finding suspects in neighborhood incidents.

Virginia has stronger laws to deter violent crime.

2. Crystal City BID strategic plan and expansion - Tracy Gabriel, CEO

Tracy walked through the BID's strategic plan. {Insert powerpoint}

The BID's expansion to include Pentagon City and Potomac Yards was approved on September 21. This was a priority even before Amazon.

They want to think about the neighborhood holistically. They want to unify the downtown portions of the neighborhood, which are the size of Indianapolis or Austin.

This area has the second largest hotel cluster in the region (after DC downtown).

There were question about 23rd Street Restaurant Row and parking concerns, given the redevelopment of the parking lot on 22nd street that many restaurant patrons use.

Tracy also discussed the name change. This area needs a replacement for Jefferson Davis Corridor. National Landing did not come from the BID or Amazon, it came from Arlington/Alexandria staff during the Amazon bid. They thought about Downtown Arlington – but others are vying for that title. They don't want to replace existing neighborhood names.

Tracy encouraged residents to attend the BID's Open House, on October 15, at 251 18th street. You can also contact them at ideas@crystalcity.org.

There was a question about the plan to bring Route 1 to grade. Tracy said that VDOT will lead the effort. The BID believes the pedestrian and cyclist experience first. No one likes 23rd street, don't want this replicated. She said Route 1 will carry the same traffic while having an attractive and safe crossing. Underpasses make some people feel unsafe. They need to balance all goals, with roads that carry enough cars.

3. Arlington County Planning for 22202 – Matt Mattauszek

Attach Powerpoint

Matt's role is to do coordination for planning across the zip code. The position was created after the Crystal City Sector Plan was adopted in 2010.

There was a question about the consideration of overarching proffer/community benefits, rather than going site-by-site (for example, with 3 JBG projects along Crystal Drive).

There was a question about affordable housing, and whether on-site units will be required for new developments. Matt said that in exchange for bonus density, developers can put money into Arlington's AHIF rather than putting units on site. He said that the County Manager is aware of the concern that affordable housing is not in the neighborhoods where it needed.

An audience member was concerned about "Manhattanization" – too many high-rises buildings. She said the neighborhood values green spaces and site lines. She asked if there could be more emphasis on midrise, and a mixture of rental and ownership. Matt said that the Sector Plan allows for significant heights.

Matt said there will be an update to Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan starting this fall. The Amazon developments will max-out Pentagon City's allowed density. They county will have to conduct a study to see if the surrounding transportation can support additional growth. There will be a work session with the County Board.

There was also a question about Housing Arlington, and the initiative's effort to thinking new about housing and types. An audience member asked if the County would touch the "third rail" of zoning – changing single-family zoning to allow multiple units. Matt said we need to approach this even if just to rule it out. He also brought up the planning initiatives around Lee Highway and the Housing Conservation Districts.

New Business

We received a request from Gunston Middle School to make a donation for their Fall Fun Fest (October 18, 4-7:30pm). There was a motion to donate \$250, which passed.