



# AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## NOVEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

As the falling leaves drift by the window, it means that it's election season! Not only the November 8 general election (see details on how to vote on page 2), but also for the officers of our civic association. At our October meeting, two new members were nominated to fill empty slots for 2023. Please see the slate below, and make sure you're a member in good standing (see AHCA Dues article below) in order to vote at the November 9 meeting.

#### Candidates for 2023 AHCA Offices

President: Cory Giacobbe (returning)  
1st Vice President: John Whall (new)  
2nd Vice President: Jill Braun (returning)  
Treasurer: Ben Watts (returning)  
Corresponding Secretary: Natasha Atkins (returning)  
Recording Secretary: Nicholas Giacobbe (new)

Also on the agenda is a Zoning Committee Report on the Americana Hotel site. They will present their findings and ask for comments and concerns. The public comment period closed on Oct. 27. The next engagement opportunity will be the Nov. 28 Site Plan Review Committee meeting. John Whall is our SPRC rep on the project. Read the Zoning Committee report here.

Next, Wendy Zenker, Executive Director of Arlington Neighborhood Village, will give a presentation of this local volunteer organization that provides older adults with extra help they need to age safely and independently in their own homes while remaining connected to the community. She will explain how you can join as a member to receive services, and also how you can volunteer to provide assistance to your neighbors.

Finally, Matt Ginivan of JBGSmith will give an overview of the RiverHouse Design. Please see the article on Page 2 with links to a press release and slides with plan highlights.

-Cory Giacobbe, President, AHCA

### Calendar [See aurorahighlands.org/events/](https://aurorahighlands.org/events/)

- November 5 - Forever Grateful Market at Longbridge Aquatic, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- November 8 - Vote in General Election (Details on Page 2)
- November 9 - November AHCA Meeting, 7 pm, online via Zoom
- November 10 - NLBID premier of Wakanda Forever @ Alamo Drafthouse
- November 12 - Synetic Theater General Auditions, 12 - 5 p.m.
- November 18, Aurora Hills Harvest Fest, 1-2:30 p.m. (see back page for details)
- Through November 25 - Offbeat: Mixed Media Art at Gallery Underground
- November 26 - RIP Fort Scott Invasive Plant Removal, 9-11 a.m. Register here
- December 3 - RIP Haley Park Invasive Plant Removal, 9-11 a.m. Register here
- December 3 - Forever Grateful Market, Holiday Market, 9 a.m - 4 p.m.

Fun activities for 55+ at Virginia Highlands Park. Learn how to get a 55+ pass here. (<https://bit.ly/arl-ah55plus>)

### Aurora Highlands Civic Association (AHCA) Dues for Calendar Year 2022:

Please participate in the AHCA and become involved with issues facing the Aurora Highlands Community. Members discuss and vote on matters that affect our neighborhood at the periodic meetings. The AHCA and neighboring civic associations interact with the Arlington County Board and staff, and express the collective opinion of neighborhoods based on votes taken at meetings. In order to vote on issues and motions, and to vote for officers of the civic association, you must be a member.

There are two (2) criteria needed to become a member of AHCA and vote:

1. Reside within the AHCA borders (see map here: <https://bit.ly/AHCAMap>)
2. Pay the annual AHCA membership fee of \$20 each calendar year.

Dues can be paid in two ways.

1. Pay online at <https://aurorahighlands.org> by clicking the "Donate" button to pay via PayPal.
2. Mail Checks to: AHCA P.O. Box 25201, Arlington, VA 22202

\*\* Email [treasurer@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:treasurer@aurorahighlands.org) with questions or to see if you are paid up. Thank You.

### Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 9

7pm-9pm, Virtual via Zoom (Register Here).  
<https://bit.ly/Nov2022AHCA>

#### AGENDA

- 7:00 pm - Election of AHCA 2023 Officers
- 7:10 pm - Zoning Committee report on Americana
- 7:30 pm - Arlington Neighborhood Village
- 8:00 pm - RiverHouse site design presentation
- 8:45 pm - Other Business
  - New Business
  - Adjourn

### 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](https://aurorahighlands.org/join-ahca) and follow us at @AuroraHighlands on Twitter, Facebook, or Insta to stay connected no matter what.

The 4D-A group list-serve is an alternative to Nextdoor for hyper-local information and to post queries to your neighbors: To subscribe, send a message to :  
4DA-22202+subscribe@groups.io

### Read Up & Reach Out!



[www.aurorahighlands.org](http://www.aurorahighlands.org)



[facebook.com/AuroraHighlands](https://facebook.com/AuroraHighlands)



[@AuroraHighlands](https://twitter.com/AuroraHighlands)



Nextdoor - Aurora Highlands



[info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org)



(703) 594-1344



P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202

## Don't forget to VOTE by Tuesday, November 8!

Everything you need to know to vote in the General Election is on the [County voting website](#) or call 703-228-3456.

Registration:

Are you registered to vote? Check your voter registration through this [portal link](#).

SAME DAY REGISTRATION (New in Virginia with this election). If you are NOT registered to vote, but are qualified to vote, you may now use [Same Day Registration at this link](#). You can now complete your voter registration form and vote on the same day – either through early in person voting at County early voting sites or on Election Day, November 8 [in your precinct](#). Note that you will be casting a Provisional Ballot because election staff will need to verify your eligibility to vote.

Voting options: [Vote by mail](#) – mail or drop box (A drop box is outside the Aurora Highlands Community Center/Library at 735 S. Hayes!), [in person early voting](#), or [in person voting on election day, November 8, in YOUR precinct polling place](#). Polls will be open on November 8 from 6AM until 7PM.

- [In-Person Early Voting](#) started on September 23, 2022 and now continues every day through Saturday, November 5 until 5PM at Courthouse Plaza. The other two sites are open on some days – check their schedules and locations [here](#). Don't forget to bring a [valid ID](#).

**Voter Mail Notices:** All registered voters in Arlington should have received notices in the mail with district and polling place information for the November 8 General Election. District boundaries for federal, state, and local offices have been redrawn as a result of the 2020 census. (Note Precinct list [here](#) – no changes for our neighborhood, but Virginia Senate and Representative Districts have changed – see maps under What are the District Changes in Arlington? on this [page](#).)

**Precincts:** We have eight precincts in 22202, and, if you plan to vote in person, you need to vote at your correct precinct. Know before you go by searching your address [here](#) or check your registration information online through this [link](#).

**Disability Services at the Polls:** Check this section for information on accessible voting options, including Curbside Voting!

**Rides to the Polls:** Find contact information for the Arlington County Democratic and Republican Committees through this [link](#).

**Ballots:** General information on the ballot is [here](#), and a PDF of the ballot is [here](#). Don't forget to vote BOTH SIDES of the ballot!

**ID Requirements:** Most eligible voters can sign the ID Confirmation Statement if they do not have one of the [acceptable](#) forms of identification. However, some HAVA voters may need to show an ID from the list the first time they vote in a Federal election. Note that out-of-state driver's licenses are **not acceptable** for voting.

**Candidate Information:** Links to candidate websites are no longer available from the County or Virginia voting sites. However, you can easily search for these websites online by searching for their names, e.g. [Audrey Clement](#), [Matt de Ferranti](#), [Adam Theo](#).

## County News

### TOSAs (Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas)/FOOD (Future of Outdoor Dining)

Comments are due Friday, November 4.

The County is considering ways to make outdoor dining a permanent attraction through the [FOOD](#) (Future of Outdoor Dining) study. As a first step, the County is evaluating experiences with the TOSA program, which allowed restaurants to offer outdoor seating for dining during Covid-time. Please share your experiences – good and bad – with the County through the FOOD online engagement [here](#), by **November 4**. Have you enjoyed outdoor dining, has it made the sidewalks too crowded, has it impacted parking in our neighborhood? What do you think about the TOSAs on Restaurant Row on 23rd?

## National Landing BID

### National Landing BID develops their [first parklet](#) at 12th & Fern:

The installation is one of many past and future investments by the BID aimed at creating a more vibrant and attractive urban downtown within National Landing, providing the area's residents, workers and visitors with an inspired and functional open space for the community to gather, recreate, and foster connections. The space will include an art wall mural, seating areas, and activity areas. The BID is also working with Restaurant Row to update and activate the little park at the corner of Eads and 23rd.

**Upcoming BID-related events** are listed [here](#). Note the Wakanda Forever event at the Alamo on November 10!

## Site Plan Review Committee Meetings

### Americana (1400 Richmond Highway, building faces S. Eads)

JBG Smith has submitted 4.1 plans to replace the [Americana Hotel](#) with a new 19 story residential building with ground floor retail. The site is a narrow, sloping plot, with the proposed building taking up most of the land. Open space is minimal, and no public access is planned for this open space. Space for trees, other plants, and pick-up-drop-off is also tight. The first online public engagement is now closed – watch the website for a compilation of submitted comments. The first SPRC meeting is scheduled for November 28. The public is welcome to attend the SPRC meetings and give brief public comments at the end of the meeting, time permitting. Check out the staff reports and staff and applicant presentations, the 4.1 plan, and the meeting recordings to date.

### RiverHouse

Matt Ginivan of JBGS Smith will attend our Nov 9 meeting to present the RiverHouse plan and answer any questions our members have about the development. Plans for RiverHouse revisions and additions have not yet been posted on the County website, and no County meeting dates for the project have been set. ARLNow has a good current review of the JBGS plans in this recent [story](#). All 3 civic associations have invited JBGS staff to present about the project at upcoming meetings. Please click these links to read a [notice from JBGS](#) and a [slide presentation on RiverHouse plans](#).

### Crystal Tower 3

Detailed plans for new buildings and redesign of the property landscaping, retail, open spaces, garages, and other features have not yet been posted on the County site plan page nor has a schedule been set for the first SPRC meeting. However, some preliminary information on the Dweck proposals is available. Robert Vaughn of Dweck Properties presented preliminary plans for the Crystal Tower site at the AHCA October meeting ([recording link](#)). Urban Turf posted a story back in May, though plans have been modified a bit since then.

## Transportation

### **Long Bridge Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge Width Update**

On November 1, VPRA announced that it has agreed to widen the proposed Long Bridge bike-ped bridge from 14- to 16'. Cyclists, pedestrians, and planners across the area submitted comments this summer requesting a wider bridge because the initial width was too narrow and too dangerous for shared use. VPRA planners studied the design further and realized they could increase the width to 16' without significant impact on the railroad or Metro bridges across the Potomac. However, VPRA also states that increasing the width beyond 16' is "problematic." The new specifications are included in the [Final Environmental Impact Statement \(FEIS\)/Record of Decision \(ROD\)](#) and described on this [VPRA page](#). For further information, check out the [VPRA Long Bridge Project site](#). WABA recommends a 20' minimum width and explains why this minimum width is needed in [this document](#). This [Street Project video](#) of the earlier rendition of the bike-ped Brooklyn Bridge path clearly shows why a narrower width is quite dangerous.

### **VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study, Phase 2, Public Information Meeting (PIM) 3, Monday, November 14, 6:30 PM**

VDOT will host a third [PIM](#) (Public Information Meeting) for Phase 2 of the [Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study](#), on Monday, November 14, at 6:30 PM. Please pre-register through the [PIM meeting website](#) link and plan to attend this important meeting about VDOT's proposals for Route 1 in OUR neighborhood! Come learn about VDOT's evaluation of lowering speed limits to 25 mph, how VDOT plans to lower Route 1 traffic volumes without adversely impacting traffic on our local streets, and if VDOT has identified funding for this expensive project. Hopefully VDOT staff and consultants will provide updates on their proposals for at-grade intersections at 18th and at 15th, as well as revised and improved designs for the redesign of Route 1. How many travel lanes, how wide will they be, will we have protected bike lanes, sufficiently wide sidewalks, and state of the art urban design for safe intersection infrastructure? Will pedestrians and cyclists crossing Route 1 at 18th be safe with an at-grade crossing? How can through-running commuter trains help lower commuter driving through 22202? Please review the [VDOT project website materials](#) and the [Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group](#) materials before the meeting and be prepared to raise your concerns.

### **Crystal City to Ronald Reagan Airport Multimodal Connection (CC2DCA): Public Engagement was Tuesday, October 25 (Comments due Sunday, November 6)**

The CC2DCA project, which has been exploring a possible bike-ped-micromobile connection between Crystal City and DCA, is currently finishing up its NEPA process. During the October 25 meeting, Project staff released their recommended preferred alternative 7D: This alternative is a series of 3 connected bridges that go from 2011 Crystal Drive, across a new VRE station, across the GW Parkway, across DCA roads, and lands in the DCA parking garage on Level 2, with convenient access into DCA. Through the NEPA process, project staff determined that there was insufficient space to construct a tunnel (or tunnel hybrid), which eliminated most of the remaining alternatives. 7D was chosen over 9D (further south) because it provided more benefits, a more positive impact, and less cost than 9D. The girder design for the Parkway bridge was chosen over the archway design because it can provide a more direct connection between the bridge and the Mount Vernon Trail, a high priority for cyclists and pedestrians traveling to the airport. Project staff promised that most of the bridges would be at least 20' wide (the bridge over the RR tracks may need to be narrower). Get up to speed on this important project by reviewing all meeting materials through the project website. Please submit your comments – using the online form or sending an email – by November 6. What features would you like to see on the bridges, how would you design the intersection with the trail, how wide do you think the bridges need to be to safely accommodate cyclists, micromobile riders, pedestrians checking out the views, travelers with luggage and families in tow? Next steps – staff will evaluate and consolidate comments and share preliminary plans with relevant partners, including MWAA, EPA, and NPS.

### **Metro Yellow Line and Blue Line Closures Continuing**

Metro Yellow Line and Blue Line Closures Continuing – Phase 1 Finishing November 5

WMATA has continued the closure of the Yellow and Blue lines south of DCA through November 5 because the construction for the connection of the new Potomac Yard Metro station to the Metro system is behind schedule due to unforeseen complications. From September 10 through November 5, all Yellow line service is closed. Metro riders can ride the Blue line towards DC, but the Blue line is also closed south of DCA. Metro is providing shuttle buses from Crystal City that will take riders to Yellow and Blue line Metro locations south of DCA, as well as shuttles into DC during rush hour. VRE is also offering their trains. Alexandria's Potomac Water Taxi was also offering free rides for commuters to DC through November 4. When Phase 2 begins on November 5, the Blue line should reopen and also serve Yellow line stations south of DCA, but the Yellow line will remain closed until the second Metro project is completed in May 2023. The second Metro project is the rehabilitation of the Yellow Line tunnel and bridge between L'Enfant Plaza and Pentagon Metro stations.

County info:

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Transportation/Metro-Yellow-Line>

WMATA info:

<https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/plans/Major-Blue-and-Yellow-Line-Construction/index.cfm>

### **Transit Strategic Plan - Feedback Form open through Sunday, November 20**

Share your thoughts and experiences with Arlington Transit, your ideas for improvement, and your feedback on the draft goals and objectives for the TSP. Visit the project page to learn more about the public process and status of the plan.

### **GLUP Studies – In Progress**

#### **750 23rd St. S. (Melwood)**

A request was submitted for the subject properties located on 23rd Street South between South Hayes Street and South Grant Street to change the GLUP designation from "Public" to "Low-Medium" Residential with an associated rezoning from C-1 and R-6 to RA8-18.

#### **South Eads Street Residential**

A request was submitted for the subject properties located on South Eads Street between 22nd St. S. and 24th St. S. in Crystal City to expand the Crystal City Sector Plan boundary on the GLUP to include the southern parcel of the site with an associated rezoning from C-2 and C-1-0 to C-O-Crystal City for both parcels.



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#### Free ART Bus Rides for APS Students:

Middle and high school students from Arlington Public Schools ride free anytime on Arlington Transit (ART), the County's bus transit system, with an iRide SmarTrip card, <https://bit.ly/3B3q84L>

#### Get Onboard the Arlington APS Walking School Bus!

Are you an Arlington senior looking to get more exercise while helping your neighbors or a family with children in elementary school trying to simplify their morning commute? Make walking to school easier for families while maximizing the health benefits of walking and reducing congestion around schools. Andrea Walker, our Arlington Ridge pedestrian and aging advocate, was a key player in developing the County's Walking School Bus, including the pilot program for Oak Ridge Elementary School students <https://bit.ly/3RN5Raj>.

#### Aurora Hills Community Center

##### Aurora Hills Harvest Fest

Let's celebrate the fall with friends, live music and refreshments on Friday, November 18, 1-2:30 p.m. Please bring a donation (canned food items, pasta, rice, beans or cereal) for our AFAC food drive. This event is sponsored by the Aurora Hills Advisory Committee. Sign up [here](#). 55+ Pass holders only. Don't have a 55+ Pass? Learn how to get a pass [here](#).

##### Great Books for the Fall and Winter

Time to cozy up with a book and a blanket...but how do you select a great book? On Wed., Nov., 30, 1-2 p.m., Aurora Hills Adult Services Librarian Vicky McCaffrey will discuss library book and author recommendations so you can pick out your next good read! Sign up [here](#). 55+ Pass holders only. Don't have a 55+ Pass? Learn how to get a pass [here](#).

#### Other County stuff:

Arlington County's first-ever [strategic plan for improving food security in the community](#) is now available. Arlington is considering a different way of funding its stormwater program. Check out [this new tool](#) to get a better idea of your potential stormwater utility fee. Check out the [Engage Arlington](#) page regularly to find more projects that seek your comments! This is one: [Oakridge Elementary School Temporary Road Closure Pilot](#): Provide your input on the temporary road closure along 24th St S between S Ode St and S Nash St, installed to improve arrival and dismissal operations at Oakridge Elementary.

#### Editorial assistant needed

If you're pretty good at desktop publishing-- especially the program Canva-- can you donate a few hours each month? The Aurora Highlands Civic Association could use your help. In order to get neighborhood news to you, we need a volunteer who can help put our monthly newsletter together. Most of the articles -- submitted by AHCA volunteers -- are compiled in draft form but we need assistance with editing and layout. Please contact Cory Giacobbe, AHCA president, if you can help.

#### 2022 AHCA officers

President Cory Giacobbe  
1st Vice President Ben D'Avanzo  
2nd Vice President Jill Braun  
Treasurer Ben Watts  
Recording Secretary Patty Pile  
Corresponding Secretary Natasha Atkins

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## Aurora Highland Experts



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ARLINGTON, VA 22203

