



# AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

### LAST MEETING RECAP

If you missed last month's meeting, four officers from the Arlington County Police Department provided a summary of recent crime statistics, trends, and answered crime and safety questions. State Delegate Mark Levine provided a comprehensive update about what the legislature has been working on as far as voting, evictions, and Mark's primary focus, police and justice reform.

You can catch the recording for September and earlier at <https://www.facebook.com/aurorahighlands/live> (no account required).

### COMMUNITY NEWS

#### AHCA Officer Nominations due October 14th

Are you interested in your community and volunteering? Consider being involved in the Aurora Highlands Civic Association. We need help in informing the community through social media and newsletters, working with the County about issues, representing the neighborhood in meetings involving development, transportation, schools, parks, and infrastructure. AHCA is in need of volunteers to help with advertisements and sponsors, help with events, manage technical aspects like our website and more. There are lots of great opportunities to meet new people, make friends with your fellow neighbors and to get involved and make a hugely positive difference. View officer positions on [www.AuroraHighlands.org/about](http://www.AuroraHighlands.org/about). Nominations are due by the Oct 14th meeting on Wednesday! Write to [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org) to find out more or to submit nominations.

#### Get Ready, Get Set, VOTE!

Tuesday, October 13 is Virginia's deadline to register to vote (so verify that your voting registration information is correct, make any changes, and register if you are not registered). You can vote in various ways: absentee by mail, absentee by dropping off your completed requested absentee ballot, in person by voting early, or in person by voting on November 3 in your own precinct. Absentee applications must be received by October 23 and the mailed ballot must be postmarked by November 3 and received by noon on November 6. Don't wait – vote now!

Starting on Saturday, October 17 through Saturday, October 31, the Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 18th St South, will be a County site for both early voting and for dropping off completed absentee ballots. You can vote or drop off your ballot Monday-Friday, 2-7PM and Saturday 9AM-5PM. All County precincts, including the 8 in 22202, will be open from 6AM-7PM for voting on Election Day, November 3.

Find all the information you need here: <https://vote.arlingtonva.us/>

### Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 14

7-9pm, Virtual -- Zoom / Facebook  
<https://aurorahighlands.org/event/oct2020>

#### Officer Nominations

The proposed slate of candidates from the nominating committee will be presented. Others may be nominated at the meeting, though we'd much rather anyone contact [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org) beforehand to work out the best slate of positions!

#### Schools Working Group

A Livability22202 working group focused on education is being formed. Hear from neighbor and parent Shaz Akram about how you can help.

#### ZeroWaste and Energy Goals

Miriam Gennari will review the county's goals that the community should consider when thinking about future area planning.

#### Open Floor / Discussion

With so many projects, events, and proposals going on in the neighborhood, we'd be happy to talk more about any anything that's going on, hear your thoughts, and answer as many questions as we can.

### 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](https://nextdoor.com/AuroraHighlands)



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



(703) 594-1344



P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202

## Halloween Fun

### ***Celebrate Halloween at Virginia Highlands Park.***

Join your neighbors for safe, socially-distant Halloween activities at Virginia Highlands Park on Saturday, October 31, from 3:00-6:00pm. Throughout the day, enjoy a picnic, participate in a park-wide scavenger hunt, try out the spider-web maze, and boogie down at our Monster Mash Costume Dance Party followed by live music! All activities are located near the Hearts on the softball field. Follow @aurorahighlands to receive a virtual hunt map and event updates.

### **Schedule of events**

- 10:30am - Zumba Class (instructor Natalia Gomez)\*
- 3:00pm - Anytime after 3pm participate in the scavenger hunt, maze, lawn games and enjoy your picnic
- 5:00pm - Costume Dance Party -- all ages, family friendly, learn some new dance moves. Costumes encouraged.
- 6:00-7:30pm - Live music by Gary Chambers\*

\*Please consider a tip of \$5+ for the volunteer instructors and musician.

### ***Are you decorating your house for Halloween?***

AHCA is encouraging neighbors to visit decorated houses in the neighborhood. If your house will be decorated for Halloween, please let us know so we can include you in our map. You can indicate whether or not candy will be passed out on Halloween night. Please let us know by emailing jane.f.green@gmail.com. Thanks!

### **#Halloween22202**

For more spirited fun, post pictures of your decorated houses, adult, kid and even pet costumes for everyone to enjoy. Use and follow #Halloween22202 on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### ***Halloween isn't cancelled, but...***

Arlington County's Health Director and the CDC are discouraging traditional trick or treating this year. Some people are finding creative ways to give out candy including leaving it scattered around the yard, individual grab and go goody bags, or placing candy in "candy shoot" (a 6' pvc pipe used to send candy to kids at the end of the pipe!). If you don't plan to give out treats this year, consider turning off your outside lights or adding a note to your door.



## Virginia Highlands Park Programming

### ***Last month for music at the park this year***

We've had a great summer of daily park usage and events and we hope to continue it! But as the weather gets colder, October will be the last month to enjoy the Saturday Live Music and Picnic in the Park series.

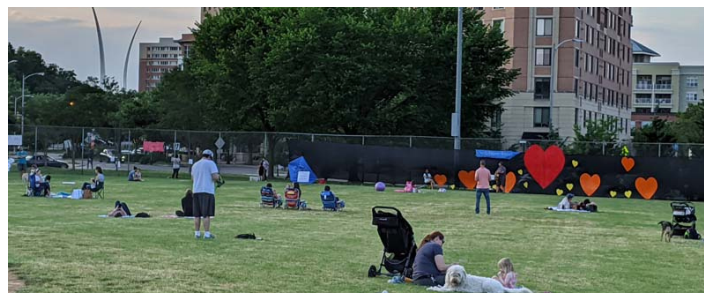
AHCA event calendar: <http://aurorahighlands.org/events/>  
Follow @aurorahighlands for updates.

We hope to have some winter programs and art. So please reach out to AHCA if you'd like to volunteer.

### ***Virginia Highlands Park: You helped to make it a***

***success!*** Please see the wonderful 6 minute video of how our community has weathered the pandemic with safe and socially distant designed events and open space, reaffirming our need for daily access to community open space.

Video: <https://bit.ly/heartsatVHP>



The success of having community open space at Virginia Highlands Park confirms the long-term need for our area to have more park space available for daily casual use and event space. We hope to restart the music along with other weekday evening park activities in the spring. However, there is no guarantee. You can help by sharing why you have enjoyed the events and open space and hope to make it more permanent. This will help AHCA and Livability22202 work with the county towards that goal with your help. Write to [info@aurorahighlands.org](mailto:info@aurorahighlands.org)

### ***Dog Run Survey at Virginia Highlands Park coming soon***

The Department of Parks and Recreation is working on the public outreach survey for the interim dog run at Virginia Highlands Park. Their newest date for rolling out the public survey is the week of October 18th. Sign up for updates at [www.PentagonCityDogs.org](http://www.PentagonCityDogs.org) and look for the outreach link on our social media Follow @aurorahighlands

### ***Ives & 20th Pocket Park--Sponsor a park chair!***

Have you seen the progress on the pocket park at the corner of Ives and 20th St? Volunteers are working hard to beautify it, but donations are needed to supply moveable chairs for people to enjoy the park. Each chair is \$39. Please visit the Ives Park page on the AHCA website to donate via PayPal <https://aurorahighlands.org/ives-park-working-group/>

## Livability 22202 Updates

### **VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Task Force**

The first of five virtual meetings was held September 28. Most of the members of the Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group are on the 38-member task force, which also includes representatives of the BID, County staff and transportation committee/commissions, and many others. VDOT plans at least 3 public engagement events: an online survey going out soon, a workshop in early winter, and discussion of the final report. For information on the project scope and goals, sign up for updates: <http://bit.ly/vdot-route1>

### **Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group**

Our community-led Livability 22202 working group hosted a second virtual community meeting on September 30. Working Group members presented an update on the Pentagon City PDSP transportation study, a review of the first VDOT task force meeting and plans for community engagement, and the results of the community survey on Route 1, which showed a significant dislike for crossing Route 1 at 23rd or bringing Route 1 down to grade at 15th and 18th. BID staff presented a summary of their Reimagine Route 1 document, with 3 sample concepts, all variations on bringing Route 1 down to grade. Meeting attendees asked terrific questions – by speaking and posting through the chat box. Next steps include inviting VDOT staff to present at a future community meeting, probably after they have analyzed their survey data. You can view the entire 2 hour meeting, presentations, survey results, and comments all at <https://livability22202.org/route-1>

### **School and Arts Working Groups forming**

Consider lending a hand, like neighbor Shaz Akram who is volunteering in the effort, who shares "In the eight+ years that we have lived in South Arlington, we have seen a huge increase in high rise apartment complexes sprouting up. In contrast we don't see schools being built to match the increasing population in the area. Coming from a background in Higher Ed, and deeply involved with an organization that promotes international education and cultural diplomacy, I am alarmed with the lack of expansions in new schools particularly elementary schools. Our neighborhoods are expanding with more expensive real estate, with little thought to affordability and availability of schools. What would families like us with younger kids do if the existing school had no space for my daughter when she starts kindergarten next year? As a mother of a 4 year old, I am interested in volunteering with AHCA in order to help find solutions that will alleviate the burden on families. I am also interested in making sure that elementary schools have language immersion programs, provide access to future generations to critical languages, and that highlight and celebrate the rich diversity of the Arlington community."

## Development Updates

### **Pentagon City Planning Study Kickoff**

The County officially kicked off its review of the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan. This one-year process will holistically look at future growth, open space, navigation and other elements that must be planned for to support future development. There will be a series of community workshops to solicit feedback over the year. See the landing page for more information. The next workshop is on October 15. You can also submit your written or illustrated ideas for Pentagon City on a presentation slide. See <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/pentagon-city-planning-study/>

### **Substation expansion planning is progressing**

The planned expansion of the electrical substation at Hayes & 18th and the associated land swap is still progressing. AHCA expressed concern in a letter to the Sept 29 LPRC meeting around unnecessary hardscape, reduction in tree canopy, and condition of the land that would be transferred to the county. Approval of the plan could be as soon as Nov. 14.

### **Amazon buys hotel as vision for HQ2 expands**

"Amazon.com Inc. has purchased the Residence Inn by Marriott in Pentagon City with plans to demolish it and expand its second headquarters, the company tells the Washington Business Journal." <http://bit.ly/hq2hotel>

### **JBG Smith looks to upgrade a Crystal City park with new retail and a 'water bar'**

From the Washington Business Journal, "JBG Smith Properties is pitching a major makeover for a small park at the heart of its Crystal City holdings, envisioning some new retail and even a bar atop water feature." <http://bit.ly/jbg-waterpark>

## County News

### **Sidewalk Ordinance Lapses**

The Emergency Sidewalk Distancing Ordinance adopted July 31 has lapsed as of September 30. Many factors contributed to the inability to enforce the ordinance and many groups spoke out against it. Signs about the ordinance have been removed, but the 6' social distancing mats on the sidewalks remain as reminders. The County will continue to explore other measures to help combat the spread of the virus. Remember to do your part: Wear a mask, practice social distancing, and wash your hands. Read the County news release here: <http://bit.ly/arl-sw-ordinance> and the ARLNow story here: <http://bit.ly/arlnow-sw>

### **Updates on Restaurants & Businesses**

Bed Bath and Beyond at Pentagon Row is closing by the end of the year. Bowlero is open on 23rd Street!

# Mark Your Calendar

## Live Music & Picnic

Saturdays, 6pm-7:30pm

Virginia Highlands Park, 15th & Joyce

## Zumba Outdoors

Saturdays 10:30am (except Oct 17)

Virginia Highlands Park, 15th & Joyce

<https://aurorahighlands.org/news/park-activities-sept/>

## Halloween at Virginia Highlands Park

All ages. Costumes encouraged

3pm+ Scavenger hunt and maze

5pm Costume Dance Party

6pm Live music

(softball field) 15th & Joyce St S. 22202

## Farmers Market

Tuesdays, 3pm-7pm

2011 Crystal Dr

## Ride In Reels - Drive-in Movies

Thursdays, 7pm

Remaining dates:

10/15 - Just Mercy (Rain Date)

10/22 - Surprise Halloween Movie

The Lot at 33rd & Crystal Drive

Registration required; See

<https://nationallanding.org/do/ride-in-reels>

## Feedback Opportunities

### ***Tear-Drop Park at South Eads St & Army Navy Drive!***

Help re-imagine the new park at South Eads Street and Army Navy Drive, formerly known as the tear-drop parcel. Your input will help kick off the County engagement process and shape the Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines. Watch the presentation on the Project Page at <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/new-park-at-south-eads-street-and-army-navy-drive/>. Share your thoughts by Oct. 14 on the Online survey: <https://engage.arlingtonva.us/engagement-initiatives/share-your-vision-new-park-south-eads-street-and-army-navy-drive>

### ***Record your transportation concerns through the County Vision Zero map!***

The nationally-recognized Vision Zero Network, defined as "a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all" was adopted by Arlington County in 2019. The Vision Zero plan is now in its second phase of public feedback, open through October 30. Share your experiences of walking, biking, and taking public transit in Arlington, and help bring attention to areas needing safety attention on the project page. Use the interactive map to report specific locations for speeding, failure to yield, blocked bike lanes, damaged sidewalks, and other issues. See the Vision Zero page at <https://transportation.arlingtonva.us/vision-zero/> and Online Feedback Form at <https://us.openforms.com/Form/940dd4c8-3698-44f8-b316-bba8ebd5e937>

### ***Become a Community Partner in the Missing Middle Housing Study***

The County is enlisting community partners for broader participation in the upcoming Missing Middle Housing Study to expand the study's reach, diversify participating perspectives, and contribute to achieving the study's goals. Concerned individuals or community groups/organizations should apply. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Learn more at <https://housing.arlingtonva.us/missingmiddle/communitypartner/>

### ***VDOT Boundary Channel Public Hearing November 5***

Providing a safe and pleasant route for pedestrians and cyclists traveling between the end of Long Bridge Drive and Boundary Channel Drive will be a major step towards improving connectivity in our area. Share your opinion! VDOT will host a Virtual Design Public Hearing on their plans for the interchange of Boundary Channel Drive and I-395 on Thursday, Nov. 5 at 7-8:30 PM. Comments are due Monday, Nov. 16. Monitor the VDOT project webpage to review plans before the meeting and to find details on accessing the meeting at <http://bit.ly/vdot-boundary-channel>. The County's website is at <http://bit.ly/county-boundary-channel>

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