



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

WE NEED YOU!

You live here, so you probably already know that we live in an amazing neighborhood, but it's also a very consequential time in its history. We can expect more, and significant changes in development, density, transportation, housing, schools, parks, business, and social opportunities in the next few years than at any other time in the past 50 years. Guiding that change and keeping Aurora Highlands an amazing neighborhood for all our residents requires positive contributions from all of us.

Our monthly newsletters reach thousands of individuals between our online postings and print versions, not to mention our growing social media. Volunteers must maintain the services, write content, edit, organize, and deliver it.

We've had tremendous volunteers put on community activities like the Summer Music in the Park series, Zumba, 4th of July, Halloween, neighborhood socials and even celebrations for the National Cherry Blossom Festival. But your fellow neighbors need help so we can continue to enjoy these activities.

The County relies on AHCA to help inform residents and tell them what we're hearing. We have a seat at the table alongside developers and commissioners to review new development projects. Over the past few years, we've fostered communications with local developers, companies, and the Business Improvement District to advocate for residents, before issues arise. But we need people that care about the neighborhood to help with all of that.

It sounds like a lot. And it is. But it is easily manageable if even a few of our 11,000+ Aurora Highlands residents pitch in to help. It can also be very rewarding - using your skills, learning how things really work, and making a difference in your neighbors' lives.

By the way, "Aurora Highlands" includes most everything between Eads & Joyce, including Pentagon City. So yes, if you're reading this, you probably live in Aurora Highlands and we're talking to you!

>> URGENT NEED - 2021 OFFICERS <<

We have six officer positions: President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary. **Many current officers will be leaving in 2021, so we need help filling these positions!** Some leaders will stay around to provide support, so no need to be intimidated. If you can serve as an officer next year, please do!

Nominations must be received by the upcoming October 13 meeting. So if you can serve as an officer next year, please contact us ASAP at officers@aurorahighlands.org. We'd be happy to answer any questions you have.

Next Meeting: **Wednesday, October 13**

7-9pm, Virtual -- Zoom / Facebook
<https://aurorahighlands.org/event/oct2021>

Dillon's Rule

Ask many people why getting things done in Arlington can be hard, and you'll hear "Dillon's Rule." Richard Schragger, Professor of Law at UVA, explains the history of the development of Home Rule and Dillon's Rule and what it means for a County like Arlington.

County Food Scrap Program & Recycling

Adam Riedel from Arlington County will talk about the new food scrap program just launched in September. Find out how it works and get answers to your questions about the program and recycling in general.

Approval of tax reimbursement

Reimburse Gail Fleming \$242 for taxes paid related to the AHCA PayPal account.

Officer Nominations

Nominations for 2021 officer positions.

Vote on Bylaw Changes

Membership eligibility, quorum, and meeting notification requirements reviewed in Sept.

Read Up & Reach Out!



www.aurorahighlands.org



facebook.com/AuroraHighlands



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



[Nextdoor - Aurora Highlands](https://nextdoor.com/AuroraHighlands)



info@aurorahighlands.org



(703) 594-1344



P.O. Box 25201 Arlington, VA 22202

Route 1: Civic Associations push back on VDOT plans

Comments on VDOT's Phase 1 Draft report (<https://bit.ly/rt1-study-workshop>) were due Sept 30. In a 4-page letter with two appendices (<https://bit.ly/L22202-rt1>), the Livability 22202 Route 1 Working Group found that the study goals were not met and concluded: "The proposal in the draft study fails on all accounts: it will compromise both safety and connectivity and negatively affects the pedestrian experience crossing Route 1. Moreover, much depends on the proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) that may or may not mitigate traffic sufficiently. Given the potential for TDM, it isn't clear why immediate implementation wouldn't be appropriate. Therefore, if VDOT's Phase 2 Study fails to support its Phase 1 recommendation, we believe the Phase 1 recommendation will have to be modified or abandoned."

We support the inclusion of many of the VDOT proposed studies in Phase 2 – especially exploring interim solutions for the dangerous intersection at Route 1 and 23rd Street, planning for a bike-ped separate connection on 18th, lowering the speed limit to 25mph, developing an effective TDM program, and preventing Rt 1 traffic diversion to local streets and more. See also the

See the National Landing BID letter (<https://bit.ly/rt1-bid-ltr>), their People before Cars Coalition and shared vision/priorities (<https://bit.ly/rt1-pbcc>) and the BID's separate letter to VDOT (<https://bit.ly/rt1-bid-ltr2>).

CC2DCA: Creating a walkable connection between Crystal City and DCA was first mentioned in the Crystal City Sector Plan, but the idea was developed and fleshed out by the BID in 2018 - see nationallanding.org/get-around/cc2dca. Now the County is leading the CC2DCA proposal, starting with the NEPA Study of Purpose and Needs. The first online survey results for the CC2DCA project have been posted. Note the separate statistical analysis (<https://bit.ly/cc2dca-qresults1>) and compilation of comments (<https://bit.ly/cc2dca-qresults2>). The comments provide important additional ideas and concerns that were not captured through the survey questions. Expect additional public engagement with County staff later this fall. The BID comment letter to the County is at <https://bit.ly/cc2dca-bid-ltr1>.

National Landing BID Renovates Crystal City Metro Plaza: As part of the BID's renovation plans for the Crystal City Metro Plaza, they launched a call for interested visual artists or teams of artists for a major panel for the wall across from the Metro elevators. Lisa Marie Thalhammer, the selected artist, will start her mural project this year. As part of the renovation, the BID has also arranged for the artwork on the walls of 18th under Route 1 to be refurbished.

Columbia Pike Multimodal Street Improvements project – Segment A, next to Arlington National Cemetery: This project, closely related to the Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion (<https://bit.ly/anc-expand>) and FHWA Arlington National Cemetery Defense Access Roads (DAR) Project, is scheduled to begin shortly, with completion expected in 2025. Expect lots of changes to how we move around, including on Joyce and Hayes. Cyclists and pedestrians will lose access to Southgate Road, a relatively easy climb, but we will gain a new wide shared use path on the north side of a realigned Columbia Pike. Expect lots of construction traffic and detours and road closures for the next few years.

BID Transportation Roundtable, Sept 22: The National Landing BID hosts a quarterly transportation roundtable that is open to local transportation advocates. The BID invites key County transportation staff to update participants on all of the many transportation projects ongoing in our neighborhood. It is the best way to get an up to date review of everything going on! The meetings are recorded and available for general viewing. The September Roundtable recording is at <https://bit.ly/bid-xpo-rt-sep>.

County Transportation Staff Public Engagement for 22202 Projects: Local community advocates have commented to County engagement staff about inadequate public engagement opportunities, especially for transportation projects. The engagement opportunities have often been too little, too late, and were too narrowly focused even though the projects have major impact on each other. In response to these comments, County staff are organizing a public open house in which we can interact with all relevant staff. The County hopes that this can be an in-person event, held sometime in mid-November.

18th Street South Complete Street Project (Eads to Fern): This relatively small, stealth County project (<https://bit.ly/18th-striping>), which had no significant public engagement, will create much needed protected bike lanes on both sides of 18th between Eads and Fern and make a current dangerous merge from 18th onto 18th & Fern much safer. The County will create a T-shaped intersection at 18th & Hayes, with a safe pedestrian crosswalk over this new intersection. The slip lane on the NW corner of Fern & 18th will be removed, and pedestrian crossings at all four corners will be easier, safer, and provide shorter crossing distances. Construction is expected to start soon and must be coordinated with construction at the new Dominion Energy facilities across the street. See construction projects below.

Pentagon City Planning Study

AHCA rep on the Pentagon City Planning Study Working Group submitted comments on the first draft of the Study, outlining a slew of concerns with vagueness, timelines, required county investments, impact on existing facilities, green ribbon guidelines, unnecessarily shifting park space, and much more. Read the complete comments at aurorahighlands.org/news/pcps-draft-comments/

A revised draft will be released by October 11. The County will hold a public open house to discuss the plan on Tuesday, October 12 from 6-8PM. Register in advance for the meeting at <https://bit.ly/pcps-arl>.

Crystal City Building Heights Study: The CCBHS has been discussed at several LRPC meetings in the past year, and presentations, reports, and recordings are available. The public will be able to submit comments online on the proposed recommendations soon, before it goes to Zoning Commission. See <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/crystal-city-building-heights-study/documents/>

PenPlace: The PenPlace project – the next phase for Amazon's HQ2 – has completed its LRPC process. The SPRC process will start in late October with an in-person tour of the site, followed by a virtual SPRC meeting with prerecorded presentations from staff and applicants and an online comment form. "Live", though perhaps still virtual, SPRC meetings will start in November; Ben D'Avanzo will continue to be the AHCA rep. Newly revised plans will be available through the website soon. projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/pen-place-2021/

South Eads Residential: The developer that presented at the September AHCA meeting has requested their first change: A General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendment to expand the Crystal City Sector Plan to include their lots and rezone them both to C-O Crystal City. The County meeting is Oct 20, 7pm; all - including impacted neighbors- are welcome to attend. aurorahighlands.org/news/south-eads-glup-review/

Smaller Projects & Amendments: You can read the summaries of General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendments and Minor Site Plan Amendments (MSPA) on aurorahighlands.org and in detail on the county project pages:

Water Park – Minor Site Plan Amendment 2, and Century Center (23rd & Crystal)
projects.arlingtonva.us/planning-county-board-applications/

Garrison Residence
projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/garrison-residence/

Crystal City Substation Improvement & Expansion Project (Dominion Energy): Major road closures scheduled for Saturday, Oct 16 and Oct 30 for the removal of the lattice roof structure with a 550 ton crane! bit.ly/crystal-substation

1900 Crystal Drive project crane coming October 9-10: Speaking of major cranes, the JBGS 1900 Crystal Drive residential towers project will need a huge crane brought in for their next construction phase. The eastern end of 18th Street will be closed for the installation. bit.ly/1900-crane

2001 Richmond Highway: The next construction phase for the JBGS residential towers at 20th & Bell will be underground – closing off parking and access to sections of The Underground, as well as the dog park above ground. See the JBGS notice for more details. bit.ly/2100-demo

MetPark, Americana: JBGS bought the property at 1411 S Eads with plans to develop a residential tower on the site. Meanwhile, JBGS planned to use the property to support construction work for HQ2 buildings at MetPark and PenPlace. Those plans are now on hold – but stay tuned. MetPark construction updates are at metpark678.com

Pentagon City Metro: New elevator: Construction for this much-needed new elevator on the west side of Hayes has begun. The MOT (maintenance of traffic) plan for the project closed the bike lane and parking lane on the west side of Hayes and will close the pedestrian crosswalk south of Hayes. Several bus routes have been temporarily displaced and relocated as well. <https://bit.ly/pc-2nd-elevator>

Should Print Newsletters Continue?

We're still doing the newsletter, but we can't guarantee a print version delivered door-to-door will continue next year. Send your thoughts to info@aurorahighlands.org. Be sure to join the mailing list at aurorahighlands.org/join-ahca/ and follow @aurorahighlands on social media to stay informed!

Notes on October Business - Bylaws & Taxes

Several changes to our bylaws were proposed at the September meeting aimed at improving membership eligibility, voting minimums, and advertising for items to be added and voted upon at meetings. The proposed changes can be reviewed at <https://bit.ly/ahca-bylaw-change> and will be put forth for approval this month.

Due to complications with the AHCA PayPal account, a past treasurer paid \$242 for taxes associated the account. She should not have had to, and it has been a huge inconvenience, so we'd like the Association to reimburse her, which requires approval by membership.

Mark Your Calendar

For details, see related articles and aurorahighlands.org/events/

Open Door Mondays

Every Monday, 7-8:30pm

Talk directly to a County Board member on any topic.

<http://bit.ly/opendoor-monday>

Street Sweeping

Tuesday, October 12

Crystal City Farmers Market

Tuesdays, 3-7pm

Courtyard Green, 2121 Crystal Dr

Movies in the Park

Fridays, Oct 8, 15, 22, 29

6:30-9:30pm

Curbside Kitchen food trucks. Movies begin after sundown. VA Highlands Park, Hearts Field. nationallanding.org/do/movies-in-the-park

Fridays at the Fountain

Fridays in October, 5-8pm

Music, food, beer & wine. 1601 Crystal Dr.

Highlands Urban Garden

Open House

Sat., Oct 23, 10-11:30am

Recognition of volunteers and demonstration of the garden while harvesting produce. 1600 S Hayes St. Almost 300lbs of produce donated already this year!

Westpost Ice Rink

Opens Friday, Oct 29

Yes, A.K.A. Pentagon Row.

Halloween

Sunday, October 31

If you'd like to help put together a family friendly event at the park for Halloween, let us know. With just a few people we can have a nice community event. Last year we had a scavenger hunt, a spider web maze, a Halloween Zumba class, and dance party.

Vote – Lots of Options Available!

Everything you need to know about voting in Arlington is available on or through the County Voting & Elections website including voting early options (through Oct 30), Saturday and Sunday voting options at Walter Reed and Madison Community Centers, vote by mail, the issues and candidates that are on the ballot, ID and local polling information. aurorahighlands.org/news/voting-options-2021/

Recycle Your Pizza Boxes! County Curbside Food Scraps Collection started September 6

The County expanded green cart pickup to include food scraps that range from fruits and vegetables to meats and dairy, peels and bones included. They'll be co-collected with yard trimmings in the green cart either loose or in compostable bags. Those with curb-side refuse collection should have received a small beige-and-white plastic container recently with an instructional packet. If you don't need your bin, you can drop it off next to the glass recycling bin at the Aurora Hills Library. Learn more: <https://recycling.arlingtonva.us/food-scraps-collection/> or join the Oct 13 AHCA meeting to hear directly from the County.

APS and School Resource officers

Complete the community questionnaire to provide feedback on APS & ACPD School Resource Officers by Oct. 20. www.apsva.us/engage/schoolresourceofficer/

When life tells you it's time to buy or sell a home, call the Andors Real Estate Group. We'll guide you every step of the way to a successful closing.

We're different. We do more.

Proudly serving our neighborhood since 1995.



TRUSTED. PROVEN. EFFECTIVE.

6820 Elm St. | McLean, VA 22101 | 703.636.7300 **kw**

Call Louis

703.609.6083

Call James

703.203.1117



Thank you advertisers! Advertise with AHCA and reach over 1,000 of your neighbors! Email newsletter@aurorahighlands.org

GEVA | JANE

REAL ESTATE GROUP

AURORA HIGHLANDS NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIALISTS

www.wesellarlington.com

Questions? Don't hesitate to call or text!

**Curious what
YOUR home is
worth?**



**Call us any time
to find out!
571.249.4382**

Or, for a **free** home valuation, visit: gevaandjane.com/home-valuation-request/

703.636.7300 | 6820 Elm St. McLean, VA 22101
Each office is independently owned and operated

