



AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

Join us for our Virtual AHCA meeting on October 12 at 7pm. Our first guest is David Tracy, President, Classic Cottages to discuss tree preservation on infill construction sites. Judd Isbell, President, Friends of Mount Vernon Trail, will present volunteer opportunities. We will also hear from Robert Vaughn of Dweck Properties who will update us on Crystal Towers.

At the October meeting we will also be accepting nominations for 2 openings on the Civic Association Executive Committee. Ben D'Avanzo will be stepping down as 1st Vice President, and our recording secretary Patty Pile has decided not to return in 2023. Ben and Patty have been an extremely valuable member of our team this year. I will be nominating John Whall as 1st VP and introducing him at the October meeting. However, we are still looking for a candidate for recording secretary.

Editing the newsletter has always been one of my favorite ways to contribute to our community, but the time and responsibilities required as president don't leave me enough time to do both. If you have experience with editing publications, as well as updating websites and social media content, please consider volunteering with the civic association.

.-Cory Giacobbe, President, AHCA

Calendar

See aurorahighlands.org/events/

- October 9 - Army Ten Miler
- October 12 - October AHCA Meeting
- October 13 to Nov 6 - Dracula at Synetic Theatre <https://bit.ly/3KZcK6d>
- October 17 - Last day to register to vote or update existing registration
- October 22, 12-4pm - Celebrate [BID Oktoberfest](#): Restaurant Row Patio and Terraces at 556 22nd
- October 28, 5 pm - Last day to apply for a mail ballot
- October 28, 7PM-midnight - Synetic Theater's [Vampire Ball](#)
- October 29, 3-5 pm - Aurora Hills Halloween Parade (Details on Back Page)
- October 30 - Marine Corps Marathon

55+ Programs @ Aurora Hills - If you are 55 or older, check out the 55+ Pass programs at Aurora Hills. <https://bit.ly/ar1-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 with questions or to see if you are paid up. Thank You.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 12

7pm-9pm, [Virtual via Zoom \(Register Here\)](#)
<https://aurorahighlands.org/event/ahca-october-meeting/>

AGENDA

7:00 pm - Tree preservation Discussion with Classic Cottages

7:30 pm - Friends of Mount Vernon Trail

8:00 pm - Dweck Properties on Crystal Towers

Other Business

- New Business - Nominations for 2023 AHCA
- 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 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!



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Nextdoor - Aurora Highlands



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

- First day of In-Person Early Voting: **September 23, 2022**
- Last day to register to vote or update existing registration: **October 17, 2022**
- Last day to apply for a mail ballot: **5pm, October 28, 2022**

Voter Mail Notices: All registered voters in Arlington will be receiving 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](#).)

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

Registration: Check your registration or register to vote through this [portal](#). You can also [register to vote](#) via mail or in person.

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](#) (NO early voting sites in 22202, but 3 are in the County), or in person on election day in YOUR precinct!

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 checking 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](#).

New process for Site Plan Review Committees (SPRC)

With the September 1, 2022 implementation of the revised [HB 444](#) Va. Freedom of Information Act: meetings conducted through electronic meetings, states of emergency, many of the County's Commissions had to change how they met in order to be in compliance. County attorneys and planning staff determined that each SPRC set of meetings for a specific project would be a separate legal entity – an SPRC subgroup - with its own roster of members that would be approved by the Planning Commission before the first meeting of that subgroup. In order to have a "seat at the table", each commission and civic association needs to be invited to participate, and must submit names of a representative (and preferably an alternate) to County staff in time for the Planning Commission vote. Once the roster has been voted upon, it becomes the official list of participating SPRC members. Any relevant groups that did not submit names in time for the roster vote can only submit public comments, not fully participate in the SPRC process, including relevant civic associations. SPRC members are also required to participate in person, unless excused by the SPRC Chair, with the reason included in the official record. Needless to say, the round of SPRCs in September were challenging.

Arlington, We Need Your Help With Bad Bugs!

The [Spotted Lanternfly Has Landed!](#)

You can help by reporting [sightings](#) and/or submitting actual samples to the [Virginia Cooperative Extension Help Desk](#).

Register for a free tree from the County

In order to increase the tree canopy in Arlington, the County distributes free native trees 2' to 4' tall to County residents to plant in their yards. The species selection includes both canopy trees and small ornamental trees. Visit this [website](#) for more details and register for your free tree through [this link](#). You must pick up your tree at Barcroft on either Saturday October 22 or Tuesday October 25. Later this fall, the Tree Canopy Fund will be taking applications for larger trees, which the County will plant free in the spring. Stay tuned.

FOOD for Thought

During COVID-time, the County developed plans for adding outdoor dining for restaurants called TOSAS (Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas). With the reversal of many temporary COVID protections in Virginia this year, the County was able to extend the use of TOSAs, but only through February, 2023. Meanwhile, County staff have been evaluating the effectiveness of the TOSA program and considering how to provide outdoor dining options in the future. The post-TOSA program is called FOOD - Future of Outdoor Dining. County staff are seeking YOUR opinions on how existing TOSAs have worked and how they could be improved. We have many examples of TOSAs in our neighborhood, especially for Restaurant Row on 23rd Street. Have these TOSAs impacted parking in our neighborhood, have they made it harder to walk or bike or drive around them? Have you enjoyed outdoor dining at them and hope that outdoor dining continues to thrive in Arlington? Have you dined at other outdoor restaurants in the region with designs that you think the County should emulate? How would YOU improve outdoor dining in Arlington? Please review the materials on the FOOD website and complete the online survey.

What do you think about allowing alcohol at special events in parks?

At many outdoor events in our neighborhood, like Wine in the Waterpark, alcohol is available. However, that's not the case on public property. Now the County is considering allowing alcohol for special events at parks. Here's a [link to a video about the issue](#). You can weigh in by taking [this survey](#). More information is available from the County at [this website](#).

Construction and Detours:

The National Landing BID tracks and posts important information and links to many construction alerts for commercial developments and transportation projects in the National Landing area. The County's Crystal City-Pentagon City Area Map also tracks development and construction. You can also report transportation problems around construction sites through the [County's Report a Problem system at this link](#): <https://bit.ly/3TWSoyE>

Bridge and Trail Construction: (Click on each project)

- [West Glebe Road Bridge Reconstruction Project](#):
- [Arlington Ridge Road/Mount Vernon Avenue Bridge Reconstruction Project](#)
- [Dominion Energy Glebe Electric Transmission Project Four Mile Run Trail Detour](#):
- [Potomac Yard-Four Mile Run Connector](#):
- [Alexandria Four Mile Run Bridge Project](#):

Americana: JBG Smith proposes replacing the Americana Hotel with a new 19 story residential building with ground floor retail. Although the project address is 1500 Richmond Highway, the actual entrance to the proposed project will remain the same as the Americana Hotel – off of S. Eads Street. The plot is long and narrow and slopes down from Eads towards Route 1, so creating the optimal design is challenging. Watch for – and participate in – these Americana events: first online project update (posted late September-early October), online public engagement (October 17-24), and first SPRC meeting (hybrid, probably November 28). The public is welcome to attend the SPRC meetings and give brief public comments at the end of the meeting, time permitting.

BID Transportation Quarterly Roundtable

The National Landing BID hosted its quarterly Transportation Roundtable on September 14. As this roundtable forum is focused on all kinds of transportation plans and construction that impact the National Landing area, it's a terrific summary of key transportation activities in our area – County projects, commercial development, VDOT, VRE, WMATA, and National Landing BID activities. View the meeting recording [here](#). The BID will be releasing their wayfinding documents and a revised version of [Mobility Next](#) soon.

During the Transportation Roundtable, County staff again recommended using their online interactive [Crystal City-Pentagon City Area Map](#) to keep up to date on new projects and construction activities, whether from developers, the County, or others, such as VDOT and Dominion Energy. Please send staff corrections and suggestions for improving this resource. The National Landing BID [construction alert site](#) is also useful to track construction.

Crystal Plaza 5

The JBG Smith Crystal Plaza 5 project proposes two new residential towers, with ground floor retail, at 2250 Crystal Drive and at 223 23rd Street. The project provides a temporary green open space adjacent to 223 23rd and a new pedestrian corridor connecting the new entrance to the Underground to Crystal Drive. The southernmost section of the existing Underground is removed, and 23rd Street is shifted to the south, with the existing wide median replaced by a 6' wide median, and protected bike lanes added to both sides of 23rd. The proposed new protected bike lanes on both sides of the revised 23rd Street South are a critical part of the final plans for the [Crystal City Bike Network](#).

The second – and final – SPRC meeting for Crystal Park 5 was held on September 15 as a hybrid meeting. Much of the meeting was focused on transportation issues, with some discussion of the revised architecture and landscaping designs. Little time was left for the discussion of community benefits, but comments from the ARCA, CCCA, and CCCRC representatives were significant – and show the importance of always “having a seat at the table.” See the meeting recording [here](#); watch the community benefits discussion starting at 1:58:35. The Crystal Park 5 project next goes to the Planning Commission before going to the County Board.

Boundary Channel Drive Groundbreaking and RAISE Award for the Bike-Ped Bridge for the Long Bridge Project

On September 28 and 30 in the parking lot of the Long Bridge Park Aquatics Center, our community celebrated two major new planned connections to the regional bike-ped network: [Boundary Channel Drive](#) and the bike-ped bridge in the [Long Bridge Project](#).

VDOT, NVTA and Arlington County officials and staff joined community members to celebrate the start of construction on the new Boundary Channel Drive Interchange at I-395. This important safety and mobility project seeks to reduce congestion, connect people to jobs and recreational opportunities, and improve safety for people walking, biking, taking transit and driving. The project will create a safe multimodal path along the east side of the Drive and a new connecting path to the Mount Vernon Trail.

Senator Mark Warner, other officials, staff, and community members celebrated receiving [RAISE](#) funding for the bike-ped bridge that will connect the northern end of the Long Bridge Park Esplanade to DC, with an extension to the Mount Vernon Trail as well. According to the WABA website, The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) will receive \$20M to build a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Potomac River between Long Bridge Park in Arlington, VA and East and West Potomac Parks in Washington, DC. This new bike/pedestrian span, part of the larger Long Bridge rail expansion project, will create a safer and more accessible way for residents and visitors to cross the river.

Learn more about these exciting projects through their project websites.

Metro Yellow Line and Blue Line Closures Continuing

The entire Yellow line and the Blue line south of DCA will be closed at least through November 5 for tunnel work and to prepare for connecting the Potomac Yard Metro station. Metro shuttle buses from Crystal City will take riders to Yellow and Blue line Metro locations south of DCA and into DC during rush hour. VRE is also offering their trains. After November 5, the Blue line should reopen, and serve Yellow line stations. Yellow line will remain closed until May 2023.

County info: [https://www.arlingtonva.us/About-](https://www.arlingtonva.us/About-Arlington/News/Articles/2022/WMATA-Yellow-Line-Closures)

[Arlington/News/Articles/2022/WMATA-Yellow-Line-Closures](https://www.arlingtonva.us/About-Arlington/News/Articles/2022/WMATA-Yellow-Line-Closures)

WMATA info: <https://wmata.com/initiatives/plans/Major-Blue-and-Yellow-Line-Construction/>

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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>.

Crystal City to Ronald Reagan Airport Multimodal Connection (CC2DCA): Next Public Engagement Tuesday, October 25

Project staff will release information from the Environmental Assessment of the proposed pedestrian/bike connection, which is required because the project would use federal funds and impact the GW National Parkway. You can learn about their recommended preferred alternative for siting and type of facility and alignment, as well as mitigation of expected environmental impacts. More info at this [link to the project website](#). Updates to the website are promised by October 4. Comments may be submitted through November 5.

WABA Vision Zero 2022 Regional Summit

On Tuesday, September 13th WABA hosted the 6th annual Washington Region Vision Zero Summit. The WABA summit is a great update on general and regional Vision Zero policies, programs, and activities. This year the National Landing BID offered a session on their Mobility Next initiative and a review of the People before Cars Coalition activities. Both keynote speakers – at the beginning and end of the summit – were also terrific.

18th Annual Aurora Hills Halloween Parade!

Saturday, October 29, 3-5 pm. Parade will start at 4 pm. Meet at South 26th Road off Fort Scott Drive. Bring your kids in costumes. To volunteer, contribute snacks/drinks or make a donation, contact Lane Penry, 202-294-5739.

Fun activities for 55+ at Virginia Highlands Park (Learn how to get a 55+ pass here).

Halloween Treats: Wednesday, October 12, 1PM.

Learn from a Virginia Cooperative Extension volunteer and make tasty holiday treats. Sign up [here](#).

Pumpkin Carving and Painting Wed., Oct. 19, 1-3 p.m., Aurora Hills Community Center Sign up [here](#).

Cheer the runners coming through our neighborhood in October!

- Army 10 Miler, Sunday, October 9: [Course map](#)
- Marine Corps Marathon, Sunday, October 30: [Course map](#)

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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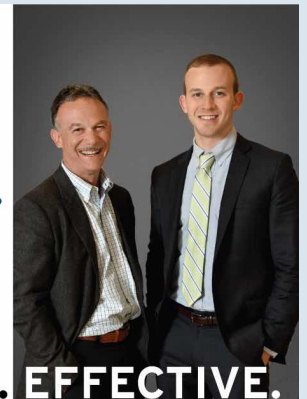
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