

Membership Meeting Minutes
Aurora Highlands Civic Association
January 11, 2023 via Zoom

Opening

President Cory Giacobbe opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with a welcome to the membership and introduction of the officers for calendar year 2023:

President Cory Giacobbe
1st Vice President John Whall
2nd Vice President Jill Braun
Treasurer Ben Watts
Recording Secretary Nick Giacobbe
Corresponding Secretary Natasha Atkins

Route 1 Update

Dana Bres gave an update on the Route 1 study VDOT is undertaking as a result of the 2018 MOU between the Commonwealth of Virginia and Amazon. The current focus is creating an urban boulevard at the north end of Route 1 in Crystal City, lowering the crossings at 15th and 18th Streets to grade and lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour in the corridor. The current elevated crossings are a result of the previous effort to create a new I-595 connecting I-395 to the airport.

Dana summarized some the concerns of the three civic associations and Livability 22202:

- At grade crossings unlikely to improve the pedestrian experience
- Arlington County Fire Department uses 18th Street for quick and safe access to Crystal City
- 150 seconds proposed for pedestrian crossing is inadequate, creating a safety hazard
- A “Dutch underpass” proposal was rejected by VDOT
- Need more transportation demand management in the area
- Eliminating the bridges will slow traffic and push it into the neighborhood streets
- Buildable land will be freed up with the elimination of the bridges and associated ramps
- New I-395 exit design will impact Army Navy Drive, which is currently being redesigned through the Complete Streets effort
- 140’ width is not adequate for the proposed urban boulevard that Amazon wants

What can we do? Engage, visit the [VDOT project web site](#); raise the issue with elected officials, participate in the next Public Information Meeting (PIM4) when it is scheduled in the spring.

Arlington Neighborhoods Program (ANP)

Our representative to the ANP, David Litman, gave an update on the transition of the Neighborhood Conservation program to the new ANP as a result of a review ordered by the County Board five years ago and [published in February 2021](#). The newly minted ANP will expand the types of programs and continue to evaluate the review criteria, nomination process, and simplify the neighborhood conservation plans (our [plan](#) dates from 2008).

AHCA currently has two projects in the queue, a sidewalk on 21st Street South from Ives to Joyce which likely does not have support of sufficient abutters (60% of frontage must currently concur). The second priority is a sidewalk on 19th Street South from Hayes to Ives, for which we need a volunteer to serve as block captain and survey the abutters. We will also need to solicit other potential projects to submit. President Cory Giacobbe suggested forming a committee to develop proposals that the Association can consider at a future meeting.

Site Plan Review Committee Updates

John Whall was unable to attend to give an update on the Americana Hotel site redevelopment effort. Nick Giacobbe noted that the [project](#) is a 19-story residential building with 636 apartments being developed by JBG Smith.

Advent Lutheran Food Drive

Cory Giacobbe flagged the notice in the January newsletter about the Advent Lutheran Church food collection for AFAC. Donations are being accepted at the front door on Arlington Ridge Road through Super Bowl Sunday (February 12) on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 11-3 and weekends from 9 to noon.

GW Parkway and Mount Vernon Trail Comments

Pam Van Hine flagged the [notice](#) posted to the AHCA web site about the opportunity to comment by January 18 on National Park Service plans to improve the south section of George Washington Memorial Parkway and Mount Vernon Trail.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Nicholas J. Giacobbe, Jr.
Recording Secretary