

Arlington Heights Civic Association, February 12, 2019 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

The February 12, 2019 meeting of the Arlington Heights Civic Association (AHCA) was called to order by President Kristi Sawert at 7:06 PM in a classroom at Patrick Henry Elementary School. Ms. Sawert noted that the AHCA Newsletter was sent out via the list serve because AHCA funds were insufficient to cover the printing. There was a recent announcement that renovations scheduled for this summer at the Career Center to accommodate 150 additional students will not be done, so there will be 10 trailers there this fall. The quarterly Fleet School update is scheduled for Wednesday at the TJ library.

Attendees: Fikne Abebe, Emilie Bruchon, Nick Carrasco, Marcus Cox, Thomas Dacaray, Mahender Dudani, Evan Farley, Eileen Janas, Sandy Janwatin, M. S. Marton, Gail Massot, Habte Michael, Dan Morrissey, Dan Perch, William Potapuchuk, Tia Scales, Amelia Self, Charles Self, Betty Siegel, Brian Sigriz, Izzie Taveras, Tsehaye Teferra, Aklilu Tesfa, Amy Vennett, Jay Vennett, Diane Waters,

Minutes of the November 13, 2018 were approved.

Reports:

Eileen Janas:

- 1) Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee: AHCA projects awaiting enough points for funding are 1st Road South Traffic Calming, and sidewalk accessibility improvements on 2nd St. South. The Arlington Blvd. Trail project is funded but waiting for Department of Environmental Services to find a new contractor. Reduction in the bond funding for NCAC projects has increased the wait time.
- 2) Arlington County Civic Federation had a presentation on the Amazon contract.

Arlington County Board members Christian Dorsey and Libby Garvey provided an overview of the Amazon contract. The commercial vacancy rate that was 5-8% in the late '70s is 17.5% in 2019, having fallen from a height of 24%. Historically 50% of Arlington County tax revenue has been from commercial entities; 50% from homeowners. As the vacancy rate has risen, more of the revenue must come from homeowners. Business practice changes like hoteling and telework have reduced office footprints; sequestration, the '08 recession, consolidations of federal government offices as a result of BRAC (base realignment and closing) have reduced office personnel in Arlington by 35,000 people. Every 1% of vacancy equals \$3.4 million in tax revenue. The agreement with Amazon to bring 25,000 jobs to the area over 12 years will take us back to previous levels.

The State of VA is providing \$195 million in transportation funds for 5 projects that are already in the CIP; Arlington and Alexandria will provide \$150 million in housing over 10 years for creation and preservation of affordable housing units; State of VA and Virginia Tech will provide \$375 million for an Innovation campus at Potomac Yards. The County has posted a series of videos at <https://www.arlingtonva.us/amazon/> about impacts on transportation, housing, schools. We already have the needed traffic capacity in Crystal City and Pentagon City. There is a huge vacant parcel in Pentagon City. The investments in transportation are already part of the Crystal City Sector Plan. The return on investment is estimated as 14:1. Some of the people who will be hired already live in the area; won't move from out of state. Amazon thinks the talent pool already exists in the region. Housing is the biggest unknown; could have an impact on rents.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Janas
Secretary