

The Arlington Heights Civic Association meeting held in the cafeteria at Alice West Fleet Elementary School on November 12 2024 was called to order by President Brian Sigriz at 7:07 PM

Attendees: Jeff Bartlett; Veronica Bartlett; Kelly Davison, Mahender Dudani; Evan Farley; Stephen Hughes; Eileen Janas; Lauren Johnstone; Susannah Keefe; Alisa Key; Steven Kleppin; Carole Lieber; Marilyn Marton; Mark Muzawski; Cathy Peterson, Ron Peterson; David Poulioti; Tatjane Pouliote; Janet Presswood; Jim Presswood; Susan Scott; Brian Sigriz; Betty Siegel; Miles Townes; Tom Wacker; Joseph Kulick (Penrose.)

Minutes of the August 13, 2024 meeting were approved.

Kelly Davison, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$2335. Please pay dues for 2025 via cash, check or Venmo. Please send any ideas for the budget to Brian Sigriz.

President's Report:

Grace Hopper Career Center:

Construction has started on the Grace Hopper Career Center, with an anticipated opening in fall 2026. Two cranes are operating and flashing beacons for the crosswalk across Walter Reed were installed November 12. Brian has been promised monthly updates from APS. There have been some issues with dust and there are some dust control measures on site. Construction crew members are supposed to park in a lot across Columbia Pike. It is against the terms of their contract to park in the neighborhood. If you see construction workers parking in the neighborhood, contact the on-site manager or Steve Stricker, APS.

Steve Stricker
Senior Project Manager
Arlington Public Schools
Department of Design & Construction Services
O 703-228-7749
C 571-220-0048
steven.stricker@apsva.us

Mr. Stricker is working with the arborist to advocate for a path around the building on the north side past door 9 so that neighbors can cut through the field to the library during non-school hours.

APS funded the next phase of construction at the Career Center site in the June 2024 CIP: retrofit the current Career Center for Montessori; demolish the Patrick Henry Building; design and construct green space.

Arlington Blvd Safety Improvements:

October 30, 2024 VDOT gave another community engagement presentation at Fleet Elementary. Attendees didn't notice changes from their earlier presentations, although the start date has shifted to 2029. The Q and A session included discussions about interim measures but without any commitments from VDOT or Arlington County. Attendees at the CA meeting were concerned about the delay.

Arlington Neighborhoods Program:

Eileen Janas, AHCA representative to the Arlington Neighborhoods Program reported the status of the 1st Road South Traffic Calming Project. It will be briefed to the Arlington Neighborhoods Advisory Committee November 14; voted on at the December meeting;

presented to the County Board in February or March and scheduled for additional design and construction.

The advancement of 1st Road South to the funding round stage allows Arlington Heights the opportunity to advance our next projects in the ANP queue. The next project on our list is "Sidewalks on Highland St between Route 50 and 2nd St. S", followed by "2nd Street South -Sidewalk Improvements," to fix drainage and walkability on 2nd St. S from Irving to S. Glebe. Attendees agreed that Highland St will move from our 2nd to 1st priority project. Betty Siegel suggested that the drainage problem near the tennis courts should be handled by the county as a maintenance issue and should not require waiting for ANP funding. Eileen will investigate. Walkability on 2nd St S will move to our 2nd priority project.

Other Construction Projects:

Brian Sigritz reported the status of other projects:

7th and Irving - still scheduled for 2025

Irving 2nd-6th sidewalk- in the works

Walter Reed Complete Streets - postponed until Grace Hopper is finished

Columbia Pike Multimodal improvements - construction continues

Old Glebe/Glebe safety improvements have been installed (near the Automotive Service Center in front of Dominion Apartments)

Elkins (Penrose CA) moving forward

Westmont will have a CVS, Jersey Mike's, Five Guys

Next Meeting and other AHCA activities:

At the February meeting, Brian will have representatives from the county fair to address issues: insufficient trash pick-up, lack of traffic enforcement, cooking oils. He has also asked Arlington County Police Dept. to give us an update on crimes in and around AHCA: shooting near Harris Teeter on Columbia Pike; Fillmore raid, drone activity reported as a training exercise; drunk driver on 7th St; lack of traffic enforcement at the fair. The February meeting will be via Zoom.

Brian would like to resume more AHCA community events like the cookout and Halloween parade. Please send him an email if you have suggestions. Miles Townes volunteered to be our Second Vice President and to help plan events.

The new website is live but not advertised until he can make a few changes.

Brian would like to distribute a flyer in December inviting new members, listing our meeting dates, list serve address, and website.

Election of Officers:

Stephen Hughes, head of the nominating committee, conducted the election of officers.

Elected by unanimous consent are:

Brian Sigritz - President

Steve Kleppin - 1st Vice President

Miles Townes - 2nd Vice President

Kelly Davison - Treasurer

Eileen Janas - Secretary

Guest Speaker - Alfonso Lopez, 3rd District, Virginia House of Delegates:

Delegate Lopez thanked us for being engaged citizens. He has been meeting with immigrant rights groups. People are really scared and he asked us to be cognizant of the concerns of our friends, neighbors, work colleagues. He will stand up for our values. His dad was undocumented. In 1958 it took him 5 days to get a green card; now it takes 13 years.

Susannah Keefe reported that Superintendent Duran sent a letter to all parents of APS students that APS is “committed to fostering a safe, supportive, inclusive community.”

While he spends two months in Richmond, his main job is constituent services. Contact his office if you are having difficulty getting responses from government. Feel free to cc him and Barbara Favola on emails or letters. He thinks next year will be difficult. He expects the governor will veto everything. The legislature is working on three constitutional amendments: on protecting the right to abortion, marriage*, and restoration of voting rights to criminals who have completed their sentences, which will need to be passed in 2025; then passed again in the 2026 session following the election.

Delegate Lopez thanked us again for our engagement regarding the problems at the Purple Lounge. The efforts of citizens in Arlington Heights led to a change in state policy that allowed jurisdictions all over the state the power to deal with those kind of problems. He is working with the Economic Development Partnership to help businesses along Columbia Pike, which do well on weekends but have fewer customers during the day.

He keeps a spreadsheet of ideas for bills; has 121 on the list. He always wants to listen to the community. Contact him if you have issues that can be resolved with legislation.

Delegate Lopez presented a resolution commending Arlington Heights friendship relationship with Bibury Parish to Mark Muzawski.

The meeting was concluded at 8:47 PM.

Susan Scott provided Information about the third constitutional amendment in her November 14 email following the meeting. Susannah Keefe forwarded the letter from Superintendent Duran to the listserve in her email of November 13, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Janas
Secretary