



# Arlington Ridge Civic Association

2206 South Knoll Street, Arlington, Virginia 22202

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## Crystal City Redevelopment

Arlington County is finalizing plans for a massive overhaul and expansion of Crystal City. The County Board recently adopted guiding principles and objectives for private developers to nearly double the total number of office workers and residents there. County staff has drafted a first phase implementation plan for County Board adoption in June of this year. ARCA has invited Mr. Anthony Fusarelli of the County Planning office to a special meeting on May 14, 2009 to present the draft plan and respond to neighborhood concerns.

The County aims to densify commercial areas adjacent to our neighborhood. Over the next 20-30 years, the combined population of the Crystal City/Pentagon City/Pentagon area would swell to approximately 100,000 workers and 50,000 residents. That's larger than all but about a dozen central business districts in the United States today. One-third of the redevelopment would be west of Route 1, abutting the neighborhood along Fern and Eads Streets. The average density increase south of 20<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Route 1 would be over 600%. To the east of Route 1, height and density would be greater. Several 330-foot buildings, taller than the tallest buildings in Ballston, are proposed. A solid wall of 200-330 foot buildings would extend from the north end of Crystal City down Route 1 to the airport entrance. The largest cluster of 250-plus foot buildings would be centered along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and extend south. Crystal City will continue to be the largest and densest development in Arlington.

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## Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety

*By Andrea Walker, ARCA Traffic Calming Coordinator*

ARCA seeks to capitalize on the lessons and momentum from our Ridge Road improvement efforts, and expand our focus to calm traffic and create safe pedestrian crossings throughout our neighborhood. We continue to work on Ridge Road and S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. issues, but now seek participants to deal with streets and crossings throughout the neighborhood. Funding sources are limited, but we are working to improve our chances of obtaining Neighborhood Conservation Funds and Developer Set-asides.

We currently have \$266,750 in developer set-aside funds obtained from Pentagon Row and Potomac Yard developers for use by ARCA and Aurora Highlands Civic Association (AHCA) on traffic calming. \$170,000 is allocated for arterials, including Ridge Road, and S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. Another \$96,700 is allocated for "community improvements in the Pentagon City area" which the County interprets as S. Joyce St. It is urgent that we reach agreement with the County, AHCA and the Southampton Homeowners Association on use of these funds, as they have sat unused for 8 years.

For Ridge Road, we propose to: add two more radar speed indicators; reconfigure the Lang St./Gunston School intersection to eliminate the high-speed southbound right turn, and create safe crosswalks; and provide safe pedestrian space for schoolchildren and pedestrians on the southwest corner of S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. and Ridge Road.

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***"One needs to be slow to form convictions, but once formed they must be defended against the heaviest of odds."***

*- Mahatma Gandhi*

***It's time to reflect on what we value most about our community, and work to protect these precious assets. Get involved to make a difference.***

**Next ARCA Meeting: April 16, 2009**

at Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington VA 22202

## Arlington County Budget Proposal to Reduce Aurora Hills Library Hours

By Bonnie Flynn

A County budget proposal that would cripple the Aurora Hills Library by cutting hours by over 50% and openings to 3 days a week was met with swift and massive citizen and Association response. Over 200 neighbors attended the March 11<sup>th</sup> AHCA meeting with Arlington Director of Libraries Diane Kresh and expressed their opposition to her proposal. The community also sponsored an Aurora Hills Library Read-In on March 18<sup>th</sup> which was covered by Fox News: [http://www.myfoxdc.com/dpp/news/031809\\_arlington\\_county\\_library\\_protest](http://www.myfoxdc.com/dpp/news/031809_arlington_county_library_protest).

AHCA member William Gillen organized a community-wide petition and awareness effort. Mr. Gillen, AHCA President Bruce Cameron, ARCA VP Chick Walter, and Ladies' Club President Diane Perry met with all five County Board members and found them to be receptive to the issues and information presented.

ARCA's position was stated publicly before the County Board at their 2010 Budget Hearing on March 24<sup>th</sup> by ARCA Secretary Elizabeth Mailander. Also present were scores of neighbors supporting the ARCA and AHCA speakers, as well as many supporters of the similarly threatened Cherrydale and Glencarlyn libraries. Bill Gillen presented the neighborhood petition which included over 3,000 signatures.

## ARCA Budget Update

By Chuck McFadden

As of the end of March, 78 of our 2,000 households have paid membership dues and collections total \$1,660. The current annual budget, adjusted for the \$200 approved for the Library petition, is \$4,200; therefore, we need at least another 127 members to pay dues.

Half of the budget goes towards funding the newsletter which is our most important means of communication. We plan to publish 4 editions this year. Several people have commented on the high cost of the newsletter and we are looking into alternatives. Suggestions are welcome and should be sent to the editor. ARCA is also planning to host a website to keep the members more up-to-date, especially on hot-topic subjects like the library and Crystal City.

Elizabeth and others stressed several key points, including Aurora Hills Library:

- Is the ONLY library in Arlington that is within walking distance of 2 Metro stations
- Is the ONLY library in Arlington east of I-395
- Is the least expensive library in Arlington based on the cost per patron served
- Supports an extremely diverse, growing population of children, adults, seniors and the disabled – more than 21,000 residents within ONE mile of the library
- Should not be unfairly targeted in the County's proposed reductions – if a reduction in library hours is necessary, it should be spread equitably across the system, taking into consideration previous budget reductions.
- Has children's programs which are over-subscribed and waitlisted even at current 6 day service levels.
- Is experiencing higher than normal service levels during these difficult economic times.

We are amenable to equitable sharing of the burden of schedule cuts with all libraries – most of which still have 7-day schedules. We want Sundays restored, so the library is open on weekends for school children and working parents. For questions, contact Bonnie Flynn at 703-920-1157 or [bflynn1914@verizon.net](mailto:bflynn1914@verizon.net).

The remaining budget goes towards the clean-up at Hume School, grass cutting, supporting the Wakefield graduation cruise (non-alcoholic), and small contributions to the police unity tour, Arlington Food Assistance Center, and Arlington Retired Teachers fund (\$50 each). ARCA would like to continue to support these community activities if funds are available.

So if you have not paid your dues, please bring a check payable to "ARCA" to the next meeting, or forward to Chuck McFadden, 2322 S. Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA 22202.

## ARCA Revitalization Update

By Chuck McFadden

The ARCA revitalization is moving slowly forward. The effort to reshape the Civic Association has taken a back seat to other high-priority initiatives, such as fighting to keep the library open and understanding the impacts of the Crystal City redevelopment on our neighborhood. These efforts highlight the need to expand ARCA and increase the number of committees in order to do more than one or two things at a time. ARCA has a great reputation for successfully fighting different issues. But we also need to focus effort on developing a community atmosphere, especially activities involving and supporting our children and beautifying the

neighborhood. In order to do this we need more volunteers. We need people to come forward and set up committees on Social Activities, Beautification and Community Interface (coordinating efforts with various County charities, library, police and the fire department.) We have established committees for Membership, Schools Interface and Code Enforcement. If you are interested in leading or joining one of these groups or be involved in the other activities discussed in the newsletter, please contact: Chick Walter 703.519.9487 chickandsandy@msn.com Chuck McFadden 703.684.8532 CMSD100@comcast.net

## ARCA's Neighborhood Conservation Plan

The Neighborhood Conservation (NC) program provides funding for a variety of capital improvement projects including sidewalks, curbs and gutters, streetlights, park improvements, neighborhood art, and beautification. With cutbacks to County budget, this is the primary source of funds to accomplish any neighborhood improvements. Projects are based on a written NC plan submitted to the County for review and acceptance. Developing our NC plan involves getting the community's input on their long-term vision for the neighborhood through a survey (a requisite) and work sessions. Volunteers are required to assist with the survey and development of the plan.

We also need to update the inventory of infrastructure of existing conditions, including land use, zoning, curb, gutter, sidewalk, drainage problems, street lights, traffic, housing, park and recreational facilities, schools, libraries, and other public facilities. Volunteers are needed for this time-intensive effort.

Once these steps are completed, the NC plan document can be drafted. The document will include an analysis of the community input (tabulation of survey results), recommendations, and a list of prioritized projects. A draft plan will be submitted to

County staff for comments. The finalized plan will be presented to the NC Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission and the County Board. Every six months, the NCAC recommends projects for funding to the County Board. High-priority projects in a newly updated plan have a high chance of being funded.

Most importantly, the plan serves as a tool to communicate the community's vision and recommendations to the County staff and Board as they allocate funds from various sources, including developer set-asides from projects in the Crystal City and Pentagon City areas. So it is critical to get our plan written and submitted as soon as possible.

A brainstorming session was held at the March meeting which generated a list of potential projects. We also plan to conduct a survey this summer to gather more community input. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Tim McIntosh, our NC coordinator, will make a presentation about the NC program. For more information or to volunteer to support this effort, please contact Sonali Soneji (703-867-6042 or sonali\_soneji@post.harvard.edu) or Michael Reamy (mreamy@acsysinc.com).

## ARCA Elections

The ARCA Revitalization Committee has been recruiting among those who have supported its activities, or otherwise expressed interest, to form a slate of candidates to serve as officers for the coming year. The current officers and Executive Committee have concurred that this activity constitutes a Nominating Committee, as defined by ARCA's by-laws. This slate will be announced at the April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, to be considered by the members and voted on at the next meeting of ARCA. At that meeting, others interested in serving may be nominated from the floor and will be able to participate in the election. Please contact an ARCA officer if you would like to nominate a candidate.

## School News

By Kathie Laird

### Oakridge Elementary

Mark your calendars for Oakridge's Annual Spring Fling Carnival, on Sunday, April 26, 2-6 pm. Don't miss the premier neighborhood event, the 2009 Taste of South Arlington and children's Carnival, at Oakridge. This is the PTA's main fund-raiser, and proceeds will go toward purchasing SmartBoards for classrooms.

At Taste of South Arlington, enjoy the scrumptious food from favorite South Arlington restaurants, in Oakridge's cafeteria, from 3-6 pm. Tickets to the Taste of South Arlington are limited, so be sure to arrive early.

The children's Carnival will have fun rides and activities for various ages.

Volunteers Needed! The Carnival is staffed solely by volunteers. To volunteer, please contact Jennifer Long at longj@georgetown.edu or Cris Gardner at crisgardner@comcast.net.

Become a Sponsor –To support our neighborhood school by sponsoring a ride, contact Carole Russo at carolerusso@yahoo.com.

At the Silent Auction, (2-5 pm) in the gym, bid on great goodies, tickets, and services. If you'd like to contribute an item or service, contact Erin Parsons, at 703.769.4648 or ErinRParsons@comcast.net.

### Oakridge Tutors

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:40-4:40 pm: Most tutors come both days, but some tutor once a week. You will be assigned one student. There's no need to bring in outside materials or plan lessons. You will mainly assist a student with homework, but math and reading materials (both 'manual' and computer - there is a computer lab) are also available. There is an orientation in the fall; tutoring starts in October, after teachers select student participants. We wrap up in May, before the SOLs. It's a wonderfully rewarding program. NOTE: It's not too late to volunteer during the next 2 months, to substitute or just check it out. Contact: Malcolm Tronic at 703.228.8820.

## Did you know YOU can be a Friend of the Aurora Hills Library?

By Bonnie Flynn

Probably many of you are already "Friends of Arlington Public Library" – but did you know that you can make donations directly to the Aurora Hills branch so that they directly support our neighborhood library? Actually, you can specify whether you want your donation to go to purchase books or DVDs or magazine subscriptions or whatever Aurora Hills provides that is most important to YOU.

### Gunston Middle School

Everyone is welcome to check out Celebrate Gunston, an annual festival featuring student performances, ethnic foods, and productions, at GMS, on April 24, 6-8 pm.

On May 13 & 14, at 7 pm, Gunston student musicians will give their spring concerts. The community is welcome to attend.

Note: Gunston's principal requests that anyone in our community who has a lead on good grant resources to please contact her (Madge Gill, at 703.228.6900). Gunston also welcomes neighbors to volunteer as tutors or readers.

### Wakefield High School (WHS)

On Feb 10, WHS was pleased to host Secretary of Education Arne Duncan for a classroom visit, school tour, and press conference. He was accompanied by numerous state and local leaders.

On March 13-14, WHS hosted the District Band Festival, and would like to thank the many parent & student volunteers from Wakefield & Gunston, as well as volunteers from the community who made it such a smoothly run success. Thanks!

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual WHS Booster & Alumni Golf Tournament will be Saturday, April 25, 2009 at Fairfax National Golf Club, Centreville. WHS alumni and neighbors are invited to participate in this fun event, which will benefit scholarship and booster programs. A special Booster goal is to replace the stadium scoreboard. For more information, please contact Paul B. Greenfield at 703.928.0228, or see <http://www.golfdigestplanner.com/9547-2ndAnnualWakefieldHighSchoolBoos>.

The WHS Drama Dept. invites you to their production of A Chorus Line, in the Wakefield auditorium, at 7 pm on May 1 & 2, 8 & 9.

WHS music students will perform their spring concerts, free and open to the public, the evenings of May 27 (Band) and May 28 (Orchestra).

You can join the Friends of Arlington Library online – BUT, if you want to make a donation that directly supports "our" library, please make your check out to "Friends of Arlington Public Library – Aurora Hills Branch" and give it to either Branch Manager Cathy Robinson or Librarian Noorani Karim the next time you visit the Aurora Hills Library.

April 2009

## Crystal City Redevelopment *Continued from page 1*

Growth does not occur without byproducts—there will be positive benefits and negative side effects of Crystal City's expansion. From a regional perspective, high-density infill reduces vehicle dependency, encourages walking, and enhances economic vitality. At the local level, infill will impose new costs on our neighborhood as it lies between Crystal City and I-395. We will experience more noise, pollution, crime, transit overcrowding, and traffic. The quality, sufficiency, and diversity of existing services—cultural, retail, medical, schools, and libraries—will be strained.

The County recently proposed cutting back neighborhood library services to 3 days per week in order to save \$160,000 a year. What adversities would the County be willing to subject our neighborhood to in order to achieve the \$20 billion increase in property values proposed by developers?

Phase 1 starts at the bottom of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street between Route 1 and Crystal Drive. The tree-lined pedestrian plaza in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street median would be bulldozed to make room for several 20-30 story buildings. On this block alone, developers are seeking almost one million square feet above the maximum density allowed by the general land use plan (GLUP). Despite transit use projections, the resultant traffic cutting through the neighborhood would overwhelm the traffic management many ARCA volunteers have worked so hard to achieve. The County is aiming

traffic at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and Ridge Road. As long as they are classified by the County as arterials, these neighborhood streets are ineligible for traffic calming.

The policy framework adopted by the County Board does not acknowledge neighborhood burdens; developers have denied that the Aurora Highlands and Arlington Ridge neighborhoods will suffer adverse impacts as a result of the proposed redevelopment. Negative impacts can be addressed, but only through reasonable and open dialogue with affected citizens.

The May meeting provides an opportunity for the County to indicate whether it will accommodate neighborhood concerns. A necessary first step is the reclassification of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and Ridge Road as collector streets. A commitment to develop and fund a comprehensive neighborhood traffic calming plan is needed. The enhancement of community assets such as the Aurora Hills library would also be welcome. The County stands to generate over \$200 million in tax revenue per year by Crystal City's build-out. It can afford to use a small fraction of those revenues to protect our neighborhood and make smart growth a winning proposition for all.

For questions on the Crystal City Redevelopment, contact an ARCA officer.

### Tree Canopy Fund Applications

Are you interested in seeing a beautiful canopy of trees again while you drive down Ridge Road or other roads within our neighborhood – or possibly in other public areas? Well here's your chance!! Arlington County, together with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment, is offering financial support to community groups, businesses and residents, who plant trees, maintain Arlington's Champion Trees or develop tree education programs. The Tree Canopy Fund is a new program to increase Arlington County's tree cover – it is funded by developers who pay into the fund when they cannot meet tree-planting requirements on their property due to site constraints – NOT from our tax dollars.

If you have suggestions on where to plant a tree on Ridge Rd or at Hume School - or if you wish to help coordinate with the planning and planting, please contact me at [daloftus@aol.com](mailto:daloftus@aol.com).

Letters of Intent will be accepted until April 17 and applications are due by July 17. The grants will be awarded in the fall, and the first trees planted in late fall. For more information on the Tree Canopy Fund, go to [www.arlingtonenvironment.org](http://www.arlingtonenvironment.org).

## Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety

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For S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St., we propose two radar speed indicators near the base of the hill toward Crystal City, and at least two well-marked pedestrian crossings (e.g. at S. Hayes St. and at S. Joyce St.) We continue to seek input on suggested improvements for S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. and S. Joyce St. Please forward comments on S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. to Andrew Smith at [asmith@vxpopuli.com](mailto:asmith@vxpopuli.com), and on S. Joyce St. or S. Ridge Road to Andrea Walker at [tasteless@verizon.net](mailto:tasteless@verizon.net).

We recently had an organization meeting for traffic calming along Ft. Scott Drive, organized by Michael Reamy and Andres Tremols. We would like to have similar community organizing (e.g. for S. 26th St.)

ARCA has concluded that traffic calming issues at the I-395 exit onto Ridge Road and at the S. Glebe intersection with Ridge Road require us to contact State and Federal legislators, as VDOT has been unresponsive to ARCA requests. If you are interested in being part of this contact effort, please contact me via email ([tasteless@verizon.net](mailto:tasteless@verizon.net)) or at 703-838-6244.

### ARCA MEETING SCHEDULE

◆ April 16 – ARCA quarterly meeting at Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington VA 22202

6:30 pm - Social

7:00 pm - Welcome and agenda

7:10 pm - Presentation by Arlington Co. (Tim McIntosh) on the Neighborhood Conservation Program followed by Q&A

7:40 pm - NC Plan update and proposed schedule

7:50 pm - ARCA Revitalization and Elections update

8:10 pm - Traffic Calming (status, explanation, and proposals)

8:30 pm - Brainstorming and comments to Traffic Calming proposals

8:45 pm - Update on Crystal City

8:50 pm - Close meeting

◆ May 14, 7:00 pm – Special meeting on Crystal City Redevelopment and presentation by Arlington Co. (Anthony Fusarelli)

◆ July 16, 7:00 pm – ARCA quarterly meeting

**To be updated on meetings and other issues, please ensure ARCA has your contact information.**

**Email: [ARCAneighbor@gmail.com](mailto:ARCAneighbor@gmail.com)**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

◆ April 25, 1-3 pm – Spring Native Plant Sale at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204 (ph: 703-228-6535): a variety of spring and summer bloomers along with ferns, vines and shrubs. Rain date: Apr 26.

◆ April 29, 7 pm – Police update at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, 830 S. 23rd Street, Arlington VA 22202. Meetings will also be held on the last Wednesday of July and Oct.

◆ Tuesdays, May 12 to Oct 27, 3-7 pm – New Crystal City Farmer's Market on Crystal Drive between 18th and 20th Streets

◆ May 15 – Bike to Work Day. More information at: <http://www.waba.org/>

◆ May 17, 12 noon-5 pm rain or shine – Taste of Arlington on Wilson Boulevard in front of Ballston Common Mall

To keep up with events in Arlington County, go to: <http://www.arlingtonva.us/calendar/>

#### ARCA Officers:

President	Dick Herbst	703-892-5290
Vice-President	Chick Walter	703-519-9487
Secretary	Elizabeth Mailander	703-920-3013
Acting Treasurer	Chuck McFadden	703-684-8532

#### Executive Committee:

Michael Carver	703-521-8031
Desda Moss	703-519-5677
Lynn Primo	703-920-4485
Carol Rademaker	703-684-8744

Police 703-558-2222  
(Non-emergency crimes/ suspicious events)

Arlington County Web Site: [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us)

For bulletins of neighborhood interest, request to join: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/4D-A/>. The group is administered by Alice Andors of Aurora Highlands Civic Association (AHCA).

#### We would love to hear from you!

Please send comments and questions on the contents of this newsletter to the editor:

Ms. Sonali Soneji

2623 S. Arlington Ridge Road

Arlington VA 22202

Email: [sonali\\_soneji@post.harvard.edu](mailto:sonali_soneji@post.harvard.edu)