



Arlington Ridge Civic Association

2604 South Grant Street, Arlington, Virginia 22202
Website: www.arcaonline.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 1

- ◆ *At What Cost—Reality Check*
- ◆ *Why Is Updating the NC Plan Important?*

Page 2

- ◆ *At What Cost? (contd.)*

Page 3

- ◆ *At What Cost? (contd.)*
- ◆ *Nighttime Assault on 23rd St.*

Page 4

- ◆ *Why Is Updating the NC Plan Important? (contd.)*
- ◆ *NC Plan 2012 [?} Sets ARCA Priorities*

Page 5

- ◆ *Passport to Summer*
- ◆ *Thank You For Your Support*

Page 6

- ◆ *Crystal City Redevelopment Juggernaut: County Hearing Dates*
- ◆ *Upcoming Events/ARCA Meetings*
- ◆ *ARCA Points of Contact*

At What Cost—Reality Check

By Joan Quinn

Arlington County's Crystal City redevelopment plan is becoming a boondoggle of the highest order. It dangles highly lucrative incentives before developers to entice them to forego their presently profitable presence in Crystal City in favor of projected massive returns if they will agree to tear down and/or redesign existing buildings to accommodate nearly twice the present density on the site. Since Crystal City is already Arlington's golden goose, the County seeks to remake it into its platinum bird.

Besides the gleam of a stream of gold, the County is blinded by former and present investment in Crystal City. To encourage original development, the County (i.e., Arlington's taxpayers) spent heavily to create the infrastructure for Crystal City, including the redesign of Clark Street especially to suit Charles E. Smith's desires. The new plan envisions the County's spending another quarter billion dollars on Crystal City road and transit infrastructure.

This whole Crystal City effort started with the County's cry that the sky was falling above this blue-chip location because of DoD's pending withdrawal—under Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations—to more secure locations. Interestingly, buildings already vacated because of BRAC decrees have been rented despite County assertions that they were not marketable; and developers have indicated willingness to upgrade existing facilities and to redevelop within existing guidelines. New building has occurred in Crystal City without benefit of the redevelopment plan. ARCA and AHCA have largely accommodated to the impacts of the existing development and co-exist in reasonable harmony with those impacts. However, the proposed redevelopment scheme enlarges the defined Crystal City area and doubles its density changing the impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

What is the County's approach to achieve its plan for Crystal City?

Continued on page 2

Why Is Updating the NC Plan Important?

By Chick Walter

ARCA's existing, 1973 Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Plan is outdated—the issues and improvements it envisioned have largely been accomplished. From a practical point of view, this has not hindered us in making continuing improvements to the neighborhood, as we had a fairly recent NC Survey in 1997. The resulting 1998 summary of survey results and problem definitions has provided a guide, and we have corrected many issues from that survey. Unfortunately, a leader of the survey and plan effort passed away and the drafting of the Plan never occurred. Recently, ARCA has been warned by the County that funding for future improvements may be in jeopardy without an up-to-date Survey and Plan. Guidance on the NC Program suggests a Plan update every 10 years.

Continued on page 4

Next ARCA Meeting: July 15, 2010 at 7 pm

at Aurora Hills Community Center, 735 S. 18th Street, Arlington VA 22202

Guest Speaker: Tim McIntosh, Neighborhood Conservation & Missing Links Programs
Other Agenda Items: MTP Streets Element, Shirley Park renovation, Wakefield HS renovation, Ridge Rd., S 23rd St. traffic controls, Ft. Scott sidewalk for Eads Park, Bike path easement through ANCC, Aurora Hills Community center and much more

**What makes
Arlington Ridge such
a great place to live,
work and play?
You do!!**

**Come share your
thoughts, meet your
neighbors, and
get involved
in ARCA's efforts.
Join us at an
upcoming meeting
or event.
See you soon!**

At What Cost—Reality Check *Continued from page 1*

First, the County proposes the creation of the "Crystal City Coordinated Revitalization District", thereby providing legal definition and recognition of the redevelopment plan. This will enable "potential eligibility for special regulations and incentives in the Plan".

Second, the County proposes to change the land use designations on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) thereby removing safe guards that presently curtail development. The result will be incursions into single-family neighborhoods; revised present use/mix specifications for apartment, hotel, office, and public use spaces throughout the Coordinated District allowing for vastly higher buildings and shadowed/cramped "open" space (open space that may have nothing to do with the ground); the elimination of service industry space in favor of office, hotel, or apartment space; and the incorporation of the proposed new street configuration for Crystal City—a new street configuration that will require the elimination of an existing building and the destruction of the park on 23rd Street.

Third, the County proposes to amend the boundary of the Crystal City Metro Station area. Heretofore, central to all County arguments about the benefits of Smart Growth has been the claim that the densest development would be sited within ¼ mile of a Metro station as this distance was most conducive to a station's use. However, that boundary is stretched to ½ mile within Crystal City, thereby limiting its feasibility for individuals with mobility issues as well as markedly increasing the time required for a pedestrian to reach a station.

Fourth, the County will change the zoning ordinance to create a new district, "C-O Crystal City" specifically intended to "achieve the goals and implement the recommendations of the Plan", enabling properties already within the designated District to request rezoning to "C-O Crystal City". The allure of the rezoning for more height and density is designed to entice existing property owners to undertake rebuilding projects in accordance with the "goals, policies, and recommendations of the Plan"; thus achieving the County's desire for a massively enlarged and massively more dense, including several 30 story buildings, Crystal City. Adoption of the zoning ordinance amendments is contingent upon the adoption of the Crystal City Plan.

Fifth, there will be a Phased Development Site Plan intended to "limit disruptions to the existing public

infrastructure network" while assuring the creation of the "major public infrastructure pieces" envisioned; redevelopment to occur at the block level. The PDSP is the point for detailing specifics: uses, densities, parks, transportation facilities within a block, and etc. The County would like to spur the redevelopment of blocks that involve the creation of new streets or of open spaces but the staff recognizes that market forces will determine the timing for the sequencing of buildings on a block.

Sixth, the County contends that Metro can accommodate the additional demand for transit occasioned by the redevelopment by using 6 to 8 car train sets—travel demands verified by the consultant used for the Crystal City Multimodal Transportation Study. However, there is a significant capacity issue with the CC Metro's station's single entry point that the Plan proposes to rectify in Phase 2 as a high priority item under recommended improvements. This solution ignores the impact on train capacity of increased ridership between Alexandria and downtown D.C. occasioned by development in Alexandria.

It is very clear from the above that Arlington County is massively invested in reconfiguring Crystal City and willing to rewrite all the guidelines governing redevelopment that have previously resulted in economically feasible development and protected neighboring communities. Owning no property in the area, the County has become the biggest developer, proposing the destruction of viable buildings, the enlargement of others, and the creation of new roads and transit systems. Property owners (i.e., developers) are happy to oblige if the County will foot the infrastructure costs.

Guaranteed funding for the infrastructure costs must be in place before the developers will consent to the dictates of the Crystal City Coordinated Revitalization District. The cost to taxpayers for the necessary improvements is estimated at \$200 to \$250 million through the year 2030. Of that amount, \$91 million is programmed for payout over a 6-year period in the proposed Capital Improvement Program budget for fiscal years 2011 to 2016. The payouts are described under innocuous headings as "Crystal City Street Improvements", "Crystal City Potomac Yard Streetcar", and "Crystal City Parks and Open Space". Do we want higher taxes, more bond issues to pay for this County redevelopment scheme? Is this how our money should be spent?

Continued on page 3

At What Cost—Reality Check *Continued from page 2*

In addition to the dubious claims about the economic viability of the proposed Crystal City redevelopment plan under present and foreseeable economic realities, the County refuses to acknowledge that there are serious traffic issues along Route 1 as well as serious adverse traffic effects in the ARCA and AHCA neighborhoods with the proposed density. It maintains an improbable faith in the structure, safety, and capacity of Metro to handle projected growth in the area over the next 20 years as well as in the ability of Metro to fund the means needed to adequately address these problems. Major negative impacts to the health and wellbeing of the community regarding noise, air, and the visceral stress such dense development imposes are ignored. The environment is always fungible, but the people's health is not. Reliance upon bike paths and pedestrian walkways are nice to have but work only for those who can walk and bike and work well only if the air is healthy enough to breathe.

The Crystal City Coordinated Revitalization District is a County Board pipedream of a stream of gold, paid for by Arlington taxpayers, with the only sure winners the developers. The Crystal City redevelopment plan should be ditched and redevelopment of the area accomplished in a manner concurrent with present and projected economic realities in which developers modify and replace buildings in accordance with economic viability.

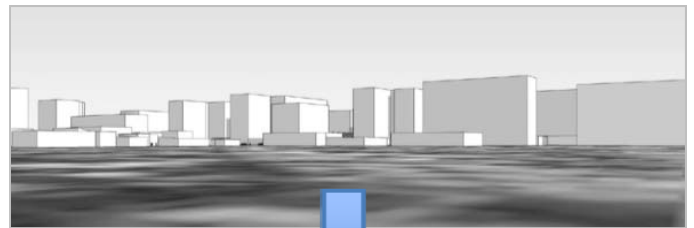
Nighttime Assault on 23rd St. Highlights Needs for Lighting, Caution

By Andrea Walker, Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Coordinator

A neighbor was robbed at gunpoint by two males at 9:30 pm several Sundays ago, while walking home from restaurant row. This occurred on S. 23rd St near Kent St. The neighbor was unhurt. (About a year ago a neighbor was similarly robbed by two males at 11 pm one evening in the 600 block of S. 26th St.) Residents have noted how dark it is on 23rd between Lynn and Kent Sts. and on Ridge between 24th and Lang Sts. Our district police commander, Lt. Reiten, has noted the increase in robberies in the last month. The lack of lighting could be a contributing factor.

The Neighborhood Conservation Plan is one vehicle to address lighting needs in the neighborhood, in the long term. The following short-term solution has been identified and can be implemented pretty quickly with your help.

We need to check whether existing street lights are working. If a light on 23rd St or Ridge Rd is not on after



Proposed CIP FY2011-16 Costs

6 YEAR PROGRAMMED SUMMARY (in \$1,000s)

	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	Total
1 Crystal City Street Improvements	300	1,700	4,500	6,000	5,000	2,200	22,700
2 Crystal City Pedestrian Walk System	700	700	10,000	32,500	17,500	10,000	83,200
3 Crystal City Public and Open Space			250				250
Total Recommendations	300	2,400	5,250	28,500	16,250	22,200	92,900

• Estimated \$200-\$250 million needed through 2030 (including proposed \$91 million in the six-year plan) to pay for improvements.

Complete streets and facilities to encourage walking and biking.
 Traffic signals to be updated, bike lanes added, signage and striping added.
 High-capacity, high-frequency transit, including a new streetcar line.
 High-quality parks and plazas.

Proposed Funding Strategies

PROGRAM FUNDING SOURCES (in \$1,000s)

	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	Total
Revenue from the Commonwealth	140	140	2,200	4,500	4,500	4,500	12,380
Federal Funds					2,000	7,500	9,500
Transportation Environment Fund	300	2,200	3,200	10,000	6,000	5,000	28,700
Commonwealth Loan Funds							
Moray Lease				4,200			4,200
Tax Incremental/Other Tax Sources							
PAYG							
Bond Issue							
Total Funding Sources	300	2,400	5,250	28,500	16,250	22,200	92,900

• Investing in Crystal City public infrastructure to support private reinvestment in redeveloped properties will have significant long-term benefits.
 - Opportunity to rezone the area with high-quality neighborhood form.
 - Improved properties result in deeper, more diverse tax base.
 • Beyond first six years, program costs proposed to be largely funded through portion of tax increment within the district.



dusk, call Dominion Power with the pole number (it's clearly marked) and the exact location (e.g., SE corner of Kent and 23rd) at 1-866-366-4357 (1-866-DOM-HELP). I've done this with the light in front of my house and Dominion Power is very responsive. Of course, if you rather I call, just email (tasteless@verizon.net) or call (at 703-838-6244) me.

If the lights are nonexistent or ineffective, email or call me to request that the County place a light on an existing power pole, giving me the location where you believe a light fixture would be the most effective. I will prepare a formal request for ARCA's president, to send to the County. We will also ask the County for a study on where other street lights should be installed.

In the meantime, if you notice any suspicious activity, call the police at their non-emergency number, 703-558-2222.

Why Is Updating the NC Plan Important? *Continued from page 1*

The high density developments proposed and ongoing in Pentagon City, Crystal City, and Potomac Yards-- including Alexandria--pressure us to look again at our community and assess what we need to do to preserve the small-town, family atmosphere in the face of density on our borders that will roughly double in coming decades. The enormity of this development is expected to bring added outsider traffic, congestion, noise, pollution, litter and crime – in spite of County estimates that there will be no negative impacts. In every quarterly police meeting we see statistics showing that the overwhelming majority of crimes in our neighborhood are committed by outsiders.



Is this your vision for the Neighborhood?

NC Plan 2012 [?] Sets ARCA Priorities – Committees Forming

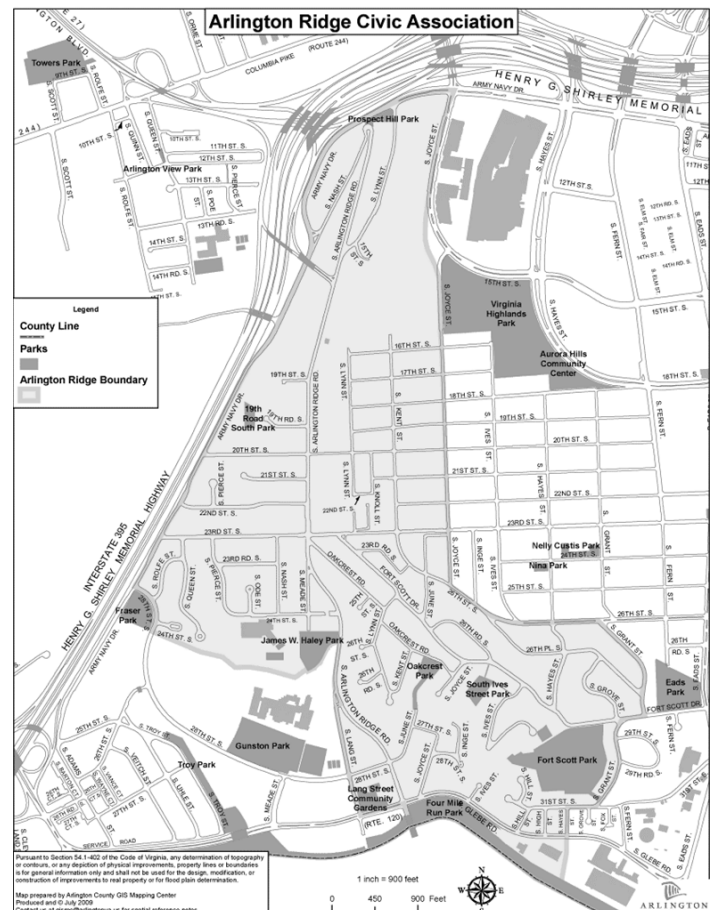
ARCA's pending Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Survey and Plan are expected to cover the following topics:

- 1) Community Description; Demographics; History; Trends;
 - a) Positive features
 - b) Problematic features
- 2) Neighborhood Vision & Goals
- 3) Land Use, Zoning, and Surrounding High Density Development
- 4) Infrastructure conditions: Streets, Sidewalks, Curb & Gutter, Drainage, Lighting
- 5) Traffic Controls, Street & Intersection design for Safety & Access of Pedestrians and residents
- 6) Parks and recreation; vegetation
- 7) Community Services; Public Facilities; Businesses
- 8) Housing; owner-occupied single-family; rental S.F.; apartment; condominium
- 9) Public Safety
- 10) Transit

Please contact arcaneighbor@gmail.com to register your interest in assisting in formulating specific topics in the survey and/or Plan. We expect the survey and Plan drafting will occur over the next two years. We will discuss these topics, and how other Associations have addressed them, at the upcoming meeting. The Survey and Plan are expected to inventory and assess community features, set over-arching goals, and define problem areas and recommend solutions to the County.

Volunteers are needed to lead and staff efforts for each individual Plan segment. Many of you have expressed interest in some of these areas, and we will be contacting you. If you wish to be part of the

overall steering committee, let us know, as we need champion[s] to guide the efforts, and backup is needed to keep efforts moving when others are otherwise committed to job, travel, and family issues. A cross-section of age, experience and perspective is welcome. We will list prior expressions of topical interests, and begin listing Committees on our website www.arcaonline.org



Passport to Summer

Thanks to a small but energized group of our neighbors, efforts to revitalize our Aurora Hills Library/Community center are well underway. Taking the input received from the opinion survey conducted in April (posted on our website at www.arcaonline.org/docs/AHCC_Survey_Results_042010.pdf), these volunteers have been meeting with the County to develop a partnership to enhance community center activities. A committee has been formed and planning is underway to develop programs and solicit volunteers for future activities.

The team's efforts have begun to show results. Passport to Summer, is the team's first attempt to expand the center programming and was designed to gather the community together for a couple hours of reading, word games, working on puzzles and reciting poetry.

The effort is fortunate to have former teacher, Nanette Franks who leads these themed reading nights that are geared from toddlers to teens. The inaugural June event exceeded all expectations

Thank You For Your Support

Thanks to all for making our 2010 membership drive so successful! And we are still not finished. We have over 200 dues-paying households. This money will allow us to continue to produce our bi-monthly newsletters, keep the website updated and contribute to various neighborhood causes (e.g. Halloween parade, Hume School & I-395 exit beautification, etc.), and react to issues and opportunities that arise.

Added thanks to neighbors who made donations in addition to ARCA dues: Sarah Berg & Martin Seidler, Lowell & Jean Fisher, Nicholas & Andrea Fritz, Bart & Carolyn Gohman, Ernie & Nancy Graves, James Haight, Pat Hickerson & Dennis Fogarty, Lee Himes, Chuck & Teresa McFadden, John Mentis, Aidan Joshua Milsapps, Robert Mrozzek, Aaron Ringel & Brooke Fineberg, Jim & Veronica Rubin, Kenneth & Darlene Setter, Robert & Jane Seigel, Roy & Betsy Stanford, Judith Taggart, Andrea Walker, and Gerald & Judith Werner.

This year, an initiative was taken to increase membership by organizing Membership Coffees in neighbors' homes. The first round of Membership Coffees was a huge success! Thanks to the ARCA Social Committee for planning, to Miriam Gennari,

when over 250 guests arrived to meet their neighbors, read stories and share 25 pizzas from our own Café Pizzaiolo on 23rd Street.

Almost 90 new library cards were issued that night to new readers. Posters and flyers dot the neighborhood and each week's theme or guest speaker is announced by neighborhood list serve.

Up to now, AHCA has been spearheading the Passport to Summer effort—paying for food, organizing the volunteers, and getting the word out. As the revitalization effort progresses, we are looking for additional ARCA volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved please contact us at arcaneighbor@gmail.com. The next committee meeting is scheduled for the week of July 12.

So, come see what all the buzz is about. Bring your kids, meet your neighbors and enjoy some summer fun. We'll be there every Wednesday night from 5pm-7pm through August 25th. Join us in bringing Aurora Highlands Community Center back to life.

Ann Lane, and Elizabeth Mailander for opening their homes, and to Stephanie Antosca Boright, Susanne Fyffe, Susan Hand, Patty Joyce and Molly Watson for co-hosting. We saw a combined total of about 50 neighbors, and attendance at each coffee was larger than the one before. It looks like the beginning of a great neighborhood tradition... so let's keep it going!

In September, neighbors Scott McCoy and Steve McLendon, 2713 S Arlington Ridge Road, and also neighbor Katie Buck, at 1225 S. 23rd Street have graciously agreed to open their homes to the next round of coffees. Details will be announced in the September newsletter. Would you like to host a neighborhood coffee this fall? If so, please contact Patty Joyce at arcaneighbor@gmail.com.

More good news is that Renee Messale, our Asst. Treasurer, has agreed to take on the Treasurer's job (thanks to everyone who offered to help). Continue however to send (\$20) dues payments to our Secretary: Kit Whitely, 2729 S. Grove Street, Arlington, VA 22202. You may also drop off a check at a Membership Coffee.

Crystal City Redevelopment Juggernaut: County Hearing Dates

By Nancy Swain

On July 13th at a recessed meeting of the Arlington County Board, the Board will consider a Request to Advertise for the proposed Crystal City Sector Plan. The evening session begins at 6:30pm and according to the agenda, our item will start "no earlier than 6:45." Public testimony may well be taken.

The Request to Advertise is meant to alert the public that the County Board is considering action on the item, so that the public has a chance to comment and give their views to the authorities. This is a legal step in the process. The plan is proposed to be adopted on September 25, 2010.

The first building to be built will be an office building at 23rd Street and Crystal Drive across from a park which will be destroyed. The current building there will be torn down and replaced by an office building 330' high—about 28 stories. This will be built very soon.

To recap, why does ARCA care about this? ARCA cares because the plan includes features that will significantly impact our community. The density will be about doubled when the inevitable bonuses are

included. There are inevitable impacts of traffic, air pollution and noise pollution. Additionally, the visual impact of some 28-30 story buildings on the CC side of 23rd Street, and many 20 story buildings in other places, will significantly affect our neighborhood.

If you would like to join the Crystal City effort, your presence and skills would be warmly welcomed. Please contact us at arcanighbor@gmail.com

Website Help Needed

Wanted: HTML and CSS skills to assist in the upkeep of the ARCA website.

If you have basic HTML skills, you can help our webmaster by updating the website with new content. Although the job needs only a small time-commitment, you will need to respond promptly to requests from the Executive Board. This is a good resume-builder for a high-school student looking to demonstrate their programming skills!

We are also looking for someone with WordPress development skills to help upgrade the website. If you are willing to donate a few hours of design consulting time, contact Chris King at 571-228-0253.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ARCA MEETINGS

◆ 15 July, 7pm – ARCA bimonthly meeting at Aurora Hills Community Center (735 S. 18th Street, Arlington VA)

Meeting Agenda:

○ Preparing ARCA's Vision Plan - NC Plan
**Guest Speaker: Tim McIntosh, Arlington County
Neighborhood Conservation & Missing Links Programs**

- Crystal City Plan schedule
- Potomac Yards, Alexandria
- Streets Element, Master Transportation Plan; 25 mph
- Shirley Park renovation
- Wakefield HS renovation
- Ridge Rd., S 23rd St. traffic controls
- Ft. Scott sidewalk for Eads Park
- Membership status update; coffees
- Snow ordinance passed
- Bike path easement thru ANCC—legal action
- Aurora Hills Community Center

◆ 22 Jul 7-9pm – Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) Meeting of the Planning Commission (Crystal City Sector Plan, Draft 2.0.) 2100 Clarendon Blvd, room 311

◆ 16 Sept, 7pm – ARCA bimonthly meeting

◆ 13 Oct, 7pm – Candidate Night, Joint Meeting with AHCA at the Aurora Hills Community Center

Check www.arcaonline.org for updated event details.

Please email ARCAneighbor@gmail.com with your phone no. and email address to be used for ARCA's membership records & official ARCA notifications only.

ARCA Officers and Points of Contacts

President	Chick Walter	703-519-9487
Vice-President	Jeff Orner	703-836-6647
Vice-President	Andrew Smith	703-486-4224
Secretary	Kit Whitely	703-739-9515
Treasurer	Renee Messalle	703-931-4842
Traffic Control	Andrea Walker	703-838-6244
Crystal City Dev.	Joan Quinn	703-892-5050
	Nancy Swain	703-684-7830
NC Plan	Sonali Soneji	703-867-6042
NCAC Rep	Michael Reamy	703-683-7499
ARCA History	Dick Herbst	703-892-5290
Membership	Patty Joyce	703-283-2522
Beautification	Bonnie Flynn	703-920-1157
	Chick Walter	703-519-9487
Schools	Kathie Laird	703-685-4371
Webmaster	Chris King	703-931-4842

We would love to hear from you!

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

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