

## **BVSCA MEETING – SEPTEMBER 25, 2017**

- **Minutes of July 24 meeting** – no changes
- **ACPD District Update** – Officer Levy is out of the country but will return by next meeting
  - “Coffee with a Cop” is October 4 at Lee Heights Starbucks 9am
  - Town Hall Oct. 12 at library 7pm regarding drug problems in Arlington
- **Charles McCullough, candidate for county board**
  - Child of two public servants (postal worker and police officer)
  - Attorney; helped run a Gates Fund Initiative to develop public education standards
  - Lives in South Arlington and has served locally and regionally in the past
  - Owner of a small business, worked as a business ambassador
  - Need to understand that just because a neighborhood is complaining about a proposal, it should not be written off as NIMBY-ism. Communities want to preserve their culture and character.
  - Independent because wants to look at issues individually rather than from the view of a party platform. Wants more inclusive policy-making that brings in more community stakeholders and encourages committee members to take community members’ input to heart.
    - Shouldn’t feel like the board has already made up its mind in favor of a developer before it even hears from the community members
    - Need to take a long-term view of planning and not be subject to political or partisan influences
  - States that his background and experience allows him to look at what has been done in other communities and countries and bring good practices back to Arlington
  - Need to be willing to question practices and not just do what have always done.
  - Questions
    - Allyson Ugarte: Do you think the board will be receptive to your views?

- We all share a vision of Arlington as inclusive and progressive. However, this often means just attracting more millennials. We also need to focus on those aging in place – e.g.:
  - How can we help them move to consulting businesses in retirement? Cut through red tape for new businesses and taxes on items already owned
  - What about health and human services/attracting first responders?
  - What are we doing about housing affordability and including those units in upcoming developments (e.g., 11<sup>th</sup> and Vermont)?
- Allyson: suggest connecting with Arlington Neighborhood Village
- Alice Swan: what other major concerns are driving your candidacy?
  - Board is defaulting to status quo in terms of trying to attract new businesses – throwing money at them. What about instead supporting existing businesses that serve community needs? Also, instead of chasing startups that might not fit, look for startups that serve current needs of the community (affordability, transportation)?
  - NOTE: Christian Dorsey is participating on WMATA board, but does not have a vote because Arlington gave it away to the Governor based on party affiliation. Mr. McCollough would seek to get that vote back, and he can do that because he is not bound by party politics.
- Nia: You mentioned that often it is just the usual suspects who are involved in community decision making. Do you have an idea on how to address that?
  - Should not default to only electronic communication; for some communities that does not work

- Maximize the utility of existing resources; e.g., put surveys in The Citizen quarterly paper that can cut out and mail in
  - Leverage resources from our many nonprofits, some of which have knowledge directly applicable to current problems
  - Make sure the existing volunteers feel supported and are properly staffed so that folks are willing to volunteer again in the future
- **New Use Permit Application – Sycamore School**
  - Zach Williams, attorney
    - School is a new private school located next to the Holiday Inn at 4600 Fairfax. Currently operating under temporary permit. Seeking a use permit. Board hearing is at end of October.
    - Small middle school with 20-ish students; max would be around 200 for middle and high school.
    - This space was previously used by NVCC for administration and classrooms; NVCC used 3 floors but Sycamore will use only 1 floor (4000 square feet at this time, with possible expansion as noted above).
    - There is ample parking & there are 3 separate entrances
  - Karyn Ewart, founder of the school
    - Clinical psychologist
    - Focused on developing school that involves experiential learning and helps students who learn differently
    - Use a lot of public transportation and partner with local facilities for frequent outings
    - Also a focus on community service. Would like to partner with a senior home to engage in a buddy program; also looking into reading partnerships with younger children.
    - Currently 1:7 teacher student ratio; intend to stay small with max 1:10 ratio so that can maintain vigorous program of outings
  - Also present, Justin Miller, part of ownership of property

- Questions:
  - Grades?
    - Kids are in mixed grade middle school classrooms. As expand will separate out high school (9-10) mixed grade class and then eventually have single grade classes for high school levels.
  - Not charter?
    - Charters not allowed in Arlington. But we are nonprofit.
  - How is assessment done?
    - Seeking accreditation by Advanced Ed and VIS, but these require 2 and 5 years respectively. Virginia does not allow licensing for private school.
    - “Authentic assessment” using common core’s learning strands for feedback rubric, along with students’ self-assessments
  - Since this was already an educational facility, what is the plan approval you need?
    - It is a use permit necessitated by an amendment to the zoning code that post-dates NVCC’s use.
  - Will there be a transportation plan?
    - Yes. It is in progress with the county. Collier suggests bikes as appropriate for this age group. They agree; bikes with bike parking, Metro, public bussing are encouraged. Building already has bike parking and changing room facilities.
  - Is there a gymnasium?
    - We do yoga indoors as well as using the parks for games and activities outdoors.
  - What is the growth plan?
    - The transportation plan likely will be tiered to account for the planned growth. Also, notes that small student-teacher ratio likely means fewer people per room than would be typical for an office, etc.

- Also hope to grow several specialty spaces, e.g., theater, woodworking, etc.
  - Applications open to all?
    - Yes, and do give scholarship spaces for those with economic need.
    - Base tuition is \$20,000. Existing students will be grandfathered at this rate.
    - Majority are from Arlington; some do come from neighboring communities and their parents Metro in with them.
  - How is the school being marketed?
    - Arlington Magazine, Arlington Now, parenting groups, free lecture series at library, “Peach Jar” digital flyer at schools, outreach to public school counselors
    - Two upcoming events at Holiday Inn open to the community – left flyers with Nia
  - Languages?
    - Started with Spanish, and that instructor also speaks several other languages including French and Arabic. Will be guided by students’ interests and needs.
  - Kristine Kassekert comments in favor of this model as a needed alternative to mega-schools.
- **A-Town Quarterly BVSCA Update - Scott**
    - Most recent meetings with neighboring condos went well
    - Most recent renewal was a consent agenda item rather than having to appear for a hearing, for the first time ever
    - Continuing efforts to limit over-serving and ensure security as intend to remain a long term contributor to this community
    - Collier: what of Berkeley condo’s claims that A-Town patrons are misbehaving on its public space and its request to close that public space as a result?
      - Last meeting 3 months ago there was no mention of this

- Next meeting is coming up next Monday and will be hosted at Berkeley at Berkeley's request, so perhaps it will be brought up then?
  - However, this has been a major focus for A-Town as to how to ensure patrons who have left the property are not creating a spillover problem
- Alice: will your additional businesses in the area stretch you thin?
  - Ballston is a different neighborhood feel than Clarendon, so Clarendon has built in resources with police and operations there do not present as much of an issue for neighbors' expectations. However, we have learned a lot about how noise and issues travel. Because of separate management and staff at each location, I don't believe we'll be stretched thin.
- Nia notes that football season is upon us and she hopes that progress will continue.
- **Restaurant 946 N. Jackson St. – Darna**
  - Review as to their use for live entertainment and dancing
  - No comments as to any problems
- **Restaurant 4201 Wilson Blvd. – The Front Page**
  - Dana questions where the proposed live entertainment would be? This is a small venue and located near residential. How will neighbors be protected from excessive noise?
- **Site Plan Amendment Ballston Quarter**
  - Request to change timing of certain conditions to get the retail constructed before the residential
  - No objections
- **Monique O'Grady, Democratic candidate for school board**
  - 2 decades of service to APS. 2 children have gone all through APS (including Washington-Lee), 1 child currently in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Has volunteered with schools and school-focused county committees, was on strategic planning committee for APS as well as 2016 bond campaign.
  - 3 priorities:

- Academics – growth should not undermine academic standards and ensure that meet needs for future employment
  - Boundaries – more schools mean changing boundaries. Diversity is important and a strength in Arlington. We are a minority-majority school district, but not all schools reflect that.
  - Communication – has been a television reporter and worked in public relations. When information is disseminated it should be the right information the first time. We also need more opportunity for input from students and teachers direct to the board, rather than filtered through the superintendent. Also, to get in front of capacity crisis, need better collaboration with the county board.
- Questions:
- Allyson voices her support. Why were capacity issues such a surprise?
    - The metrics received from the demographer were not really reflecting what was coming. They are working to resolve that issue now. They did not see the trend of expanding single-family homes and more families staying in Arlington instead of moving elsewhere.
    - From residents: immigration has also been an influence. The new demographic tends to bring with it larger families.
  - Alice notes that the county board continues to approve development as though apartments are going to house only single, unmarried millennials. What are your ideas on how to address?
    - Money is an issue. As increase capacity to live, there needs to be increased capacity to educate, with money not just for spaces for kids but also for teachers to teach those kids.
    - Note: there are also initiatives to give Ipads to young children. Need to evaluate whether this is a good

educational practice and a good use of monetary investment.

- Also need to come up with space solutions, which requires good planning in collaboration with the county.
- Nia: notes problems with access for stakeholders to school board, exacerbated by high turnover of board members. Hopeful that this new pattern of communication will continue.
  - Agrees communication is key.
  - Notes APS Engage site as an opportunity to communicate.
- Dana: can you talk more about your vision for the interplay between boundaries, maintaining neighborhood schools, and fostering diversity?
  - Keep neighborhood elementary schools as the core, but options for diversity would include allowing students who go to preschool in another location to remain at those schools, and also where there is additional room in a school to give parents options to have their students attend elsewhere
  - Also, walk-zones need to be looked at, as a mile is not really particularly walkable for a lot of families
- **Other neighborhood updates**
  - Washington Blvd.-Kirkwood Road Special GLUP Study Plus
    - There is not yet an official recommendation going to the planning commission, but there are moves to go forward with a request to advertise as to the YMCA site in the interest of time.
    - There was an email to YMCA members that made it sound as though “the sky was falling,” which BVSCA views as somewhat unfair
    - Watch the announcements for more info
  - Additional seats at Education Center for Washington-Lee High
    - Historic designation was not approved but Nia is meeting with stakeholders to ensure that as planning goes forward the neighbors will have a voice and their concerns can be heard



- 11<sup>th</sup> and Vermont
  - SPRC is coming but dates not yet made public. BVSCA will have a seat at the table. Public comment periods will be included.
- Notes from 9/19 Open Door Monday with Libby Garvey
  - Residential Parking Working Group
    - Meeting of Mr. Crim with transportation commission was concerning as some commissioners think there should not be any parking minimums
    - Another commissioner noted there are public parking structures; that is true in Crystal City but not many in Ballston-Virginia Square
    - Another said visitors to multi-family buildings, if they can't find parking, should just have to uber, take the bus, or ride a bike
    - Nia voiced these concerns to Libby Garvey, who was receptive
  - There is a moratorium on the Residential Parking Permit program
  - Arcland and Buck site – no update
  - Nia noted that Washington Blvd transportation/safety will need a plan for when tolling on 66 goes live
  - Public Open Space at Berkeley – the board did forward BVSCA's concern to staff
- **Officer Reports**
  - Collier: NCAC – county is looking at changing requirements for accessory dwellings (e.g., in-law suites). They are legal but there are very few, so may liberalize some of the requirements. Still would require separate entrances and have size requirements.
    - Allows for both the conversion of existing structures & new builds
    - Generally the view at NCAC was supportive; could be a way to allow for increased diversity/affordability in well-established neighborhoods

- No concerns raised by BVSCA
- Dana: Civ Fed county board candidate debate is available via video online; next meeting is October 3.
- Nia: some talk of Ballston as “district” for affordable housing. Nia is not sure what this means and will try to find out more.
- **Announcements**
  - JFAC is meeting tomorrow at 7pm – agenda of this meeting unclear
  - October 4 celebration of women – see BVSCA agenda for details
  - County is seeking volunteers for budget roundtables – see Nia if interested
  - Ballston Quarter/mall will be making closures while placing new air handler units on October 13
  - Kristine notes that the Methodist church project might be seeking to construct fewer parking spaces than originally approved. Nia has not heard anything on this yet, so stay tuned if a request is received.
  - Nia reached out to all county board candidates and school board candidates. Did not hear from Audrey Clement for county board. Other school board candidates did not have clear avenues for contact but Nia will keep trying.