



SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

14 March 2023

Greetings Neighbors,

Highlights from the March SRCA Board meeting are included below.

Addressing conditions of Ft. Williams Parkway and Ft. Worth Avenue Medians:

SRCA President Richie Weiblinger has been working with TN&S and Parks & Recreation to coordinate the clean-up of the leaves on Ft. Williams. Additionally, there's a strip of land on Fort Worth Avenue that these groups are now in the process of treating. A lot of the overgrowth has been removed and they are currently treating the area for invasive species. These groups also have some ideas for additional work that can be completed in the Spring.

Reports from SRCA's ACPD Liaison/Alexandria's Sheriff's Liaison:

Sgt. Tony Moore shared that they will be starting their body cam program next month and will be looking for feedback from residents soon.

Lt. Houston reported that received an ACA Accreditation score 98.1 this year. This is a voluntary process and the ACPD volunteers for it every time. They had to maintain adequate medical care on site for accreditation as well, which just passed at 100%. This is a big deal because the Alexandria Detention Center is a \$28 million dollar a year operation. They're now looking at the human landscape and a lot of promotions will be forthcoming. Carjacking is a trending crime right now but it's not specific to Alexandria - it's happening regionally, and it typically occurs with nicer cars. Lt. Houston explained that they're seeing a lot more collaboration between the Sheriff's office and police department because crimes in the first quarter have increased.

St. Patrick's Day Gathering - Sunday, March 19, 4-6pm

We hope you'll join us in the N. Garland cul-de-sac on Sunday, March 19 from 4-6pm for some Irish beer and snacks! Adults and children are welcome!

Community Topics of Interest:

City Manager James Parajon Proposes FY 2024 Budget:

On Tuesday, February 28, City Manager James Parajon presented City Council with a proposed operating and capital budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. The FY 2024 budget adoption is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3. Read City Manager James Parajon's full message at alexandriava.gov/Budget. City Manager Parajon proposed a General Fund Base Operating Budget of \$881.1 million (beginning July 1), as well as

a \$2.39 billion 10-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for FY 2024 – 2033. City Council adopted six priorities that provide a cohesive framework for budget and policy decisions for the next fiscal year: Public Safety, Affordable Housing, Multi-lingual Community Engagement, Our Youth and Families, Economic Development Growth, Staff Retention and Recruitment, Climate Action.

Other major features of the FY 2024 budget proposal include:

- No tax rate increase for City residents or businesses.
- The continued full support of ACPS' Operating Budget of \$258.7 million.
- Financial support of our two historic Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) and APD.

The next steps in the budget process now belong to City Council, **who will adopt a budget on Wednesday, May 3**. Employees and the public will have opportunities to voice their opinions and ask questions in public meetings this spring.

Participate in Alexandria's FY2024 Budget:

To hear about the budget, you may attend a City Council Work Session on **March 15, March 22, March 29, April 25, or May 1**.

To ask questions and provide feedback about the budget, you can attend the following events:

- **Monday, March 13: FY 2024 Budget Public Hearing**
- **Saturday, March 18: FY 2024 Budget Public Hearing**
- **Tuesday, April 25: Tax Rate Public Hearing**

Details about community events, including times, locations, and virtual participation options, can be found at alexandriava.gov/Budget.

Zoning for Housing/Housing for All Program

On March 3, the City announced **meetings on March 7, 20, and 21 related to the Zoning for Housing/Housing for All Program**. *Zoning for Housing* is a proposal of zoning reforms with the goal of expanding housing production and affordability and addressing past and current barriers to equitable housing access.

Beginning this month, the City is continuing its *Zoning for Housing* work [begun in 2020](#) by exploring additional solutions to these long-standing challenges through [proposed amendments](#) to the Zoning Ordinance.

The community will have opportunities to engage in the process beginning with a March 20 (half day) and 21 (full day) kick-off event at the Holiday Inn Holiday Inn Alexandria - Carlyle, an IHG Hotel 2460 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, VA 22314 on March 20 and 21. Over these two days, stakeholders can hear from industry experts, participate in conversations, and learn more about the current state of housing in Alexandria, the connection between housing supply and economic competitiveness and the city's quality of life, and the City's Zoning Ordinance. You must register to attend. Seating is limited. Click on the links contained in this write-up and below for more information and to [register](#).

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning-and-zoning/zoning-for-housinghousing-for-all>

Renaming Confederate-Named Streets.

Regarding the name changing, SRCA First Vice President Krista Poretz will do her best to keep our community closely connected to the issue so that our community can provide input and be part of the changes. She encourages other residents, **especially those living on Hardee Place**, to get involved. At the last SHA meeting, members mentioned that the following City Council members are advocates for the name changing and are most closely connected to the City's plans: Sarah Begley, John Chapman, Alyia Gaskins. Providing their names for your information in the event you would like to contact these representatives directly. Hardee Place is on the list of confederate street names the City maintains (see attached list). Poretz found the following links helpful for educating oneself about this issue and process:

[Alexandria Starts Pilot Program to Rename Confederate-Named Streets - Alexandria Living Magazine](#)

[FY 23 Budget Q&A #094:How many streets are named after Confederate generals, soldiers or political figures in Alexandria, and what would it cost to rename each one? | City of Alexandria, VA \(alexandriava.gov\)](#) – link contains process for citizens to initiate changes

Alexandria Living Legends

Jack Sullivan has been named an Alexandria Living Legend this year. Carter Flemming writes that Jack has been a force for Seminary Hill Association and our whole city for decades. There will be a ceremony honoring all the recently-named Living Legends sometime in the fall.

Seminary Hill Civic Association (SHA) Report:

Bill Rossello, new SHA President, opened meeting and welcomed those attending by Zoom on February 9, 2023.

Alexandria Department of Police – Sgt. Report

Death of 17-year-old. Suspect caught. Students were from Falls Church, not Alexandria, Suspect and victim knew each other. Two officers being paid overtime to cover ACHS. Night-time activities are increasing among Hammond students. Keeping an eye on this.

[ALEX West Presentation](#) – Richard Lawrence, City of Alexandria and Jeff Farmer, Deputy Director of Planning. Lawrence is not the project planner for ALEX West, but he was seeking a dialogue at the meeting.

- Plan is between 395 and King Street, West beyond Beauregard. Planning started in 1992.
- Large # of renters in West End plus 100+ acres of parks.
- West End is composed of 37% tree canopy compared to 31% in the rest of Alexandria.
- 14,000 students are currently enrolled at NVCC.
- 19% of City's population live in West End with 45% of essential workers.
- Median Income is \$78,647 compared to \$115, 719 City wide.
- 42% of residents are foreign born.
- 15-20% of rental units are marked affordable.
- 67% of property is apartments; 8% is single family; 25% condominiums.
- The Del Pepper City Building is now open in the West end.

Five phases of community involvement: November 2022-June 2024. There will be monthly video updates collecting data. 970 polls completed in four languages. Rents have been increasing. Affordable housing is a problem all over Alexandria. Appears there is no strategy yet for affordable housing for West end. Concerned about Southern Towers moving from affordable to luxury. Question about BRAC being only 1/3 full and other empty or nearly empty office space.

Concerns stated:

- Traffic and parking
- Rental costs will rise
- Safety and crime
- Housing needs to be affordable; fear of displacement with new building
- Fear of reduced open spaces
- Concern about infrastructure support

Fort Ward Playground

Still working on location due to many concerns. Report more next month.

Duke Street

Project team meets monthly. Public welcome. Meetings at Dash building off of Duke Street. Colonial Heights town houses on Duke have created a civic association due to concerns that the City will take property by eminent domain. SHA tracking what is being proposed. Currently, the Project Team has recommended that no center lane for busses be in the area from Jordan to Quaker (Wheeler). No signal at FWP and the bus station (stops) will be located further east. Next meeting on February 16 will discuss service roads. Grant \$87M, but cost is now \$116M of which \$75M coming from No VA Transportation Authority.

Fair Housing Report

Putzu reported on the Fair Housing Report, which is 220 pages with a focus on density and affordable housing. The report states that communities are a problem. Putzu stated that it is a rather inflammatory report. Noted that a top priority is to take public land for affordable housing, i.e., Parks! Historic districts make it difficult to increase density. Environmental health is not good. Putzu thought there was a disconnect between source material and what they report.

Hammond Lights

Could be a lawsuit filed after being blocked by Zoning. What they plan to do doesn't meet zoning code.

Fairlington Presbyterian Church

Considering a second affordable housing building on their site. Concern about how much more crowded the area will be as the first does not have enough parking.

Strawberry Run Stream

Community group is still meeting with IEN, the group facilitating conversation between neighbors and the City over what the City wishes to undertake in Strawberry Run. The question continually raised by the community group is why the City just doesn't repair the damage to the private property and not do any other expense, unnecessary work on the stream. Great concern about the damage to the area is more work is undertaken. Meetings in February/March. Taylor Run is different from Strawberry Run as it has a sewer pipe running through it. Strawberry Run has only storm water pipes emptying into it.

West End Coalition (WEC) Report:**Alexandria West**

At the SHA February meeting on Feb 9, 2023, City representatives presented on Alexandria West. [Click](#)

[here](#) to view their presentation, which includes interesting charts and information on West End demographics, footprint, and community needs.

What the City says they have heard from Community Engagement events (Community Pop-Ups) with residents of the West End: • Need for more gathering places/community rooms • Need for more playspaces • Rent increases and displacement • Traffic and parking

Community Poll Responses: • 970 polls completed (4 languages, mix of printed/online) Themes: • Housing affordability and fear of displacement • Traffic, safety + mobility • Community services and retail • Public open space and connections • Neighborhood safety and crime

Alexandria West Plan POCs: – Jose Delcid, Jeff Farner and Richard Lawrence, City Planning and Zoning Project Webpage: alexandriava.gov/AlexandriaWest

The City is currently engaging the community in development plans for the West End. All engagement materials and feedback are posted to the [project website](#) and shared with the community. In addition to engaging individual stakeholders through the options discussed above, Staff is also contacting all civic, business, non-profit and community organizations and agencies to gather feedback and guidance. To request a meeting, information, provide suggestions or be placed on our distribution list, please contact José DelCid at jose.delcid@alexandriava.gov.

Per WEC President, Arthur “Sash” Impastato on 1 Feb: “Please send this to your associations and make sure they comment online on the Washington Council of Government’s (COG) "fair" housing plan that will exponentially increase density and eventually lead to eliminating single family and townhouse zoning like is happening in Arlington.” The survey is open until 31 March 2023.

The link to provide comments is as follows: https://www.mwcog.org/community/planning-areas/housing-and-homelessness/regional-fair-housing-plan-comment-form/?fbclid=IwAR1v4K12wwJFejPU9q8lcdPz5D_7aYBThwC9iSc8bDra65dnLcHQwVkgILM&mibextid=Zxz2cZ

Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) Report:

AFCA’s website is www.alexafca.org if you wish to listen to a recording of meetings.

February 22, 2023 Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) meeting that can be found at the “News & Resources” page of the AFCA website at: <https://www.alexafca.org/news-resources>.

The video recording of the February 22, 2023 AFCA Meeting with **Helen McIlvaine, Director, Alexandria Office of Housing discussing “Housing for All”; and representatives from the Department of Planning and Zoning providing an update on the “The Alexandria West Plan”** is now available on the News & Resources page of the AFCA Website: [HOME \(alexafca.org\)](http://HOME(alexafca.org))

Duke Street-in-Motion Updates:

Report on the February 16, 2023 Meeting of Duke Street in Motion Advisory Committee:

The focus of the meeting was curb features. The project’s consultants presented multiple options of curb configurations being used in other parts of the country and the world. There was a lot of conversation amongst the committee about their priorities for the edges of Duke Street. After extended

conversation about the pros and cons of certain aspects the city's staff took a poll of the committee on several topics.

The City's project manager, Jen Monaco, went over the next steps.

- They are in the process of refining the design so they can do a full analysis.
- They plan to continue community engagement.
- They are planning meetings with HOAs and community groups and reaching out to Duke Street businesses. They are doing targeted engagement where the design is a bit more set –getting input and reactions.
- They are likely going to launch a new communications effort called “Hello Duke Street”.
- Residents will see signs at bus stops, on sidewalks, at businesses and will be able to scan or text a QR code to learn more about the project and share their thoughts. Look for that in the next couple weeks.
- The next Advisory Group meeting will be on March 16 at the DASH headquarters building. At that meeting the city shared the engagement plan for the remainder of the project. They will also provide a design update and review a draft recommendation that could come from the Advisory group.
- The mid-April meeting will kick off another round of community engagement.
- The mid-May meeting will likely include deciding on a recommended alternative for the reconfiguration of Duke Street.
- They would like to present a recommended alternative to City Council when they meet in July.

Inova Hospital Project Updates:

The Inova Hospital Project is moving forward at the Landmark site and is planned for opening in 2028. For details on the design plans, schedule, and construction of the Landmark site, please visit [Inova Alexandria Hospital at Landmark | Inova](#) and [Landmark/Van Dorn Area Planning | City of Alexandria, VA \(alexandriava.gov\)](#). The goal is to start construction by 2023 and have the new hospital open by 2028. Construction at the Seminary Road site would begin soon after that happens.

The current Inova Hospital site on Seminary Road is currently zoned for low density development (i.e., single-family home and townhome construction), however, if a prospective buyer/developer petitions the City to have a high-density plan considered, the City could accept this petition and change the zoning. Our community should continue to stay close to this and work with our elected officials to monitor and participate in the zoning process. For more information on Seminary Road Rezoning associated with this project, please visit: [Seminary Road Property Rezoning | Inova](#)

SSSAS Updates

SSSAS will be closed March 17-26 for Spring Break. During this time, some utilities relocation work will be completed which will involve some heavy equipment on campus over the next couple of weeks.

Regarding the SSSAS street adoption signs that were put up around the neighborhood, this was a student-driven initiative and students have been seen doing service work on those streets. Many thanks to SSSAS for keeping our streets clean!

Meeting Notes: At the March meeting, the minutes from the February meeting were approved and have been posted on [seminaryridge.net](#).

Next SRCA Board Meeting: In lieu of our regularly scheduled April Board meeting that would take place on Thursday, April 6, we are going to have a guest speaker provide an update to residents on the City's housing and zoning initiatives at a later date in April. More details will be forthcoming soon.