

Arlington Heights Civic Association (AHCA) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 24, 2013
Patrick Henry Elementary School
(ADOPTED November 12, 2013)

1. Attendees: Stacey Whyte, Megan Haydasz, Cameron G., Dan Morrissey, Emily Tsai, Stephen Hughes, Jeanne Haggerty, Scott Winn, Rebecca Mashaw, James M. "Jay" Vennett, Ella Nargele, Jim Presswood.

2. Call to Order: Stacey Whyte, AHCA President, called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

3. Opening Remarks:

- **Question (Dan Morrissey):** It's dark near the group of homes on the access road off Route 50. Can we get better street lighting there? **Answer:** Stacey Whyte will look into that.

4. Approval of Minutes (Megan Haydasz, Secretary): Minutes from our last quarterly meeting on May 14th were distributed for review. There were no comments or changes requested, and the minutes were approved and adopted. *(After-the-fact, it was noted that Maureen Critchley's last name was misspelled. This has been corrected and the updated minutes have been redistributed to the Executive Committee.)*

5. Treasurer's Report (Scott Winn, Treasurer): We currently have 66 paid members (up to and including this meeting) and \$2,098 in our bank account. We have 6 business members: P. Brennan's, RedRocks, Simplicity Urgent Care, Twisted Vines, Etz Hayim and Papa John's. If you haven't already, please pay your membership dues to Treasurer Scott Winn as soon as possible.

6. "Meet the Neighbors" Series with Arlington Free Clinic (AFC) -- Speakers: Pat McDermott - Director of Development, Mark Buchholz - AFC Board Member

- The clinic, recently featured in a Washington Post article (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/09/08/left-behind-stories-from-obamacares-31-million-uninsured/>), was created as part of the Arlington County Medical Society in 1994 to provide medical services to low income individuals with no health insurance.
- AFC was originally located next to Arlington Hardware, then, briefly, next to Marymount University in Ballston. When this location proved difficult for its patients, who mainly reside within the 22204 zip code, the County Board assisted the clinic in relocating to its present space on 11th St. South at S. Walter Reed Dr.
- AFC patients must be residents of Arlington County for at least 1yr, have no other means of healthcare coverage, and then still go thru a monthly lottery of 100-150 people, in which only 25 new patients are taken upfront, and 25 more are taken over the course of the month from Virginia Hospital Center outpatients and shelters, for a total of 50 patients per month.
- The clinic is currently working at maximum capacity with many patients in dire need of care, immunizations, flu shots, treatment for pneumonia, etc.
- All staff with exception of a few nurse-practitioners are volunteers, but they are still in-need of translators and fundraisers (including help with their annual gala), and always welcome financial contributions.
- AFC's services include Mental Health/Psychiatry and Pharmacy -- drug companies donate a lot of medicine, which often means a lot of paperwork for its staff, but they are still glad to have it!
- Expected Impact of ObamaCare: The 12,000 uninsured people currently residing in Arlington County will be reduced to 7,000 after ObamaCare. In other words, 450 of the 1,700 patients AFC currently serves will be able to receive coverage under OC.
- During the OC transition, the clinic will need to provide a warm hand-off for its patients, but they're not sure how long that will take, not to mention the follow-up needed to make sure these patients are cared for properly.
- Then, 450 new patients will fill the AFC spots vacated by ObamaCare. As Virginia did not renew its Medicaid coverage, the people not poor enough to receive Medicaid, but still not making enough to purchase insurance coverage, will be the group that is better-served.

- As many undocumented people are the ones who don't have insurance coverage, the clinic only requires proof of one year of Arlington County residence, not citizenship, to become a patient.
- AFC provides both primary care & specialty medicine, including physical therapy, depression-, anxiety-, and stress-related mental health issues, and its pharmacy wrote approximately 18,000 prescriptions last year.
- Volunteers will see patients in their offices or at the clinic.
- The clinic is for adults aged 18 and older only, as there is a pediatric clinic to serve children in the County.
- AFC also provides patient education classes, teaching patients to take [better] care of themselves.
- Patient 1 example: Jenny, a nonsmoker who ran marathons and was full time PhD student, started feeling rundown and was diagnosed with acute leukemia. She quickly became a full-time cancer patient, but, 3 days into her hospital treatment, her student insurance policy maxed out at \$50K, when her treatment was expected to take 2yrs! AFC treated all her needs for FREE, and she recently ran a half-marathon.
- Patient 2 example: Erica, 37, is a housekeeper from Peru. A 10-year clinic patient, she has rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Through the clinic's care, she has had both hips replaced, sees a rheumatologist regularly, receives physical therapy, and is on 5 meds per month (an estimated cost of \$2,400), all for FREE.
- For 2013, the clinic had a \$2.6M budget, 98% of which is privately raised through civic organizations, its annual gala, etc. AFC does not receive any federal funding and welcomes any size gift or volunteer. There is a Donation Now link on their website at ArlingtonFreeClinic.org.
- Arlington Heights neighbors are welcome to come take a tour; there are generally around 30-40 people in the clinic's waiting room at all times.
- Q&A:
 - **Question 1:** Why does the clinic provide immunizations if Arlington County is supposed to do that?
Answer 1: The County provides a lot of the immunization meds, but not all the shots.
 - **Q2:** Does AFC do surgery? **A2:** VHC and AFC's surgeons, etc., do surgeries for free whenever possible. Since AFC keeps many people out of VHC's ER, they have a close relationship, with VHC having 2-3 members on AFC's Board.
 - **Q3:** Does AFC provide preventive care? **A3:** Yes, the clinic provides screenings, e.g. mammograms and cancer screenings, and they even do plastic surgery for reconstruction. Patients have to sit down with their doctor at the end of every appointment to review why/how/etc., and give them extra assurance. They are also automating their patient records and becoming integrated with VHC, which helps everyone's access to care.
 - **Q4:** Is AFC an "approved" charity? **A4:** Yes, the clinic received 4 stars from Charity Navigator, and only 6 charities in the nation can claim that.
 - **Q5:** What is AFC's position on the current Medicaid gap? **A5:** They are cautiously optimistic that Medicaid will be approved, which hinges on the November elections. However, there is a Medicaid organization looking for feedback, and Pat would be happy to pass along the URL.
 - **Q6:** Who are the 25 people who win the AFC's lottery each month? **A6:** They don't provide a lot of triage at AFC. Other doctors see their patients until they are well-enough for AFC help, or they go to the ER if they're too sick. After 6 lottery non-selections (6 months), a patient gets into AFC no matter what, as long as they qualify with the requirements (see website).
 - **Pat comment:** ObamaCare is VERY complex...a whole other job to administrate. Many patients don't know English, and can't read or write in their native language.
 - **Q7:** Is AFC aware of the ObamaCare Navigator program? **A7:** There is an Alexandria/Arlandria program that they're hoping can use their Navigators to help AFC patients understand ObamaCare. Arlington County only gives \$20K annually to AFC, and they receive no federal funding, but Arlandria does get some - AFC patients could be referred there for help. It is a difficult time for clinics.
- Pat & Mark distributed an AFC FAQ sheet, an article on healthcare reform, and a copy of their newsletter.
- Stacey Whyte said there will be information in the next AHCA newsletter regarding a group tour for our neighborhood.

7. Announcements

- **Comment (Stacey Whyte):** Jim Presswood, commuting back to Arlington from Richmond, is running late to the meeting, so we will rearrange the agenda, putting announcements before his NC update...

- **Arlington Fun Ride (Oct. 5th):** This is a scenic, family-friendly 17 mile ride (with various length options) taking you on the paved multi-use trails that make up the Arlington Loop. It is sponsored by Phoenix Bikes, a local non-profit organization that trains kids to refurbish and resell bikes to the community, while learning valuable technical and business management skills. Phoenix Bikes currently has a shop adjacent to Barcroft Park and is set to open a bigger shop right on the trail soon. The entry fee for the Fun Ride is \$10, including a free t-shirt, and there will be a health festival afterward. You can even donate one of your own bikes! Learn more at ArlingtonFunRide.org and PhoenixBikes.org, and both are also on Facebook.
- **Halloween Parade and Party (Oct. 26th):** This is our annual Fall event, which begins and ends on the playground at Patrick Henry Elementary bordering S. 7th St. and S. Walter Reed Dr. We'll be delivering the newsletter early (weekend of Oct. 18th-20th) to publicize this event. Papa John's has offered to donate pizza, and Simplicity Urgent Care is donating the moon bounce.
- **Community Partner Award (Oct. 26th):** This is our annual award given to an outside individual or organization that has gone above & beyond to assist our neighborhood over the past year. In 2012, it was given to the Arlington County Police; however, our frequency of interaction has abated this year. For 2013, we have decided to give the award to **Papa John's** for their 5 years of support and generous pizza donations to our quarterly meetings and other neighborhood events. We plan to present the award at the Halloween Party, which is generally well-attended. Simplicity Urgent Care is already a contender for 2014, with their generous donations and offer to write a recurring column for our newsletter.
- **Neighborhood Hero Award (Nov. 12th):** This is a new, annual award created in 2013 to recognize the neighborhood resident(s) who made the most significant contribution in the past year. We plan to present this year's award to the gardeners who generously donate their time to our various neighborhood gardens' upkeep and also hosted June's popular and well-attended garden tour. Individuals we know were involved are: Rebecca and John Mashaw, Phil Mackall, Ruth(?)... Please email Stacey Whyte with any suggestions for individuals who should be recognized for this award.
- **AHCA Elections (Nov. 12th @ 7pm Quarterly Meeting):** While all our current Executive Committee members have agreed to stay-on for the coming year, we would love volunteers for any positions (open or not!). We also do need a Neighborhood Conservation Alternate, Civic Federation Alternate, and a Social Chair (new position), as we had to cancel some events this year due to lack of "manpower."
- **Winter Holiday Event (Dec. 20th):** Caroling at the Sobolas' house! In the past, it was a lot of fun to participate because people having holiday parties came out to watch, and the Sobolas hosted a wonderful party afterward. This event is fun for everyone - kids or no, good voices or no - come join us!
- **Stolen Shoes (ongoing):** Neighbors are encouraged to keep their shoes inside (esp. off the front porch!), as there has been a pattern of (used) shoe thefts in the neighborhood this year, even during daylight hours. County police have been informed and are working the issue. Stolen shoes have typically been a men's size 10 or 11, and the individual responsible for the thefts is described as a middle-aged, white male with gray/white hair, wearing jeans and a blue shirt.
- **Indian-Bangladeshi Festival on S. 9th St. (early Sept.):** A few Saturdays ago, a nonprofit festival was held on S. 9th St. behind the Career Center. While many neighbors enjoyed it, and we would love to support it going-forward, we would appreciate more notice to neighbors beforehand. There were some minor issues with noise, trash, and portable toilet mess; they need to do a better job cleaning up next year. Stacey inquired with the County about this, and, apparently, event organizers have no legal obligation to inform residents in advance (or otherwise!). Another example of this would be the run associated with the County Fair this summer, for which streets were closed, but residents were unaware until the day-of.
- **Questions:**
 - **Do we have a Bikeshare station update?** The fact that the stations are on school property is causing administrative delays. We're hoping to have an update for the next newsletter. Paul(?), who is in charge of it, said they hope to have it done by Christmas. We'll have a ribbon-cutting whenever it's completed.
 - **Do we have a Walter Reed/9th St. Street-Scape/Complete Streets update?** There have been a variety of VDOT issues, so these projects are on-hold with no updates until VDOT gives the go-ahead. Currently, Arlington County is reworking their plans for resubmission to VDOT.
 - **Why the last-minute rescheduling/cancellation of the August Meeting/Spring Picnic?** Pertinent Executive Committee members were out-of-town, and the newsletter was printed without their requested date changes. In addition, Stacey was not aware that the kiosks had been updated with the new dates, so

she did not update the listserv once the events were rescheduled/canceled, until she received notice from those who had seen the kiosks. The good news is that people are paying attention to our kiosks!

8. Neighborhood Conservation Update (Jim Presswood, NC Representative):

- VDOT Vortex - All NC projects slated for completion along S. Fillmore/Walter Reed Dr. have been stalled, for various reasons, by VDOT.
- **Question:** Jay Vennett requested an update on the S. Irving St. lighting project, which he has been working to have completed for 13 years! **Answer (Jim):** That project was approved by NCAC last fall and is scheduled for completion in 2014.
- **Question:** Has the County reached any resolution on the glare problem with the LED streetlights? **Answer (Stacey):** The Sun-Gazette recently gave the County a “thumbs down” on this issue. They are reportedly “working on it,” but the lights meet the criteria for the Dark Skies initiative. Jay Vennett commented that they are a different kind of light and therefore hard to damp-down.
- Our neighborhood NC plan was last updated in 2008, which is fairly recent, historically speaking, but we wanted to submit a new plan this year to keep our accumulated “points” toward future projects. The County has since informed us that they would be unable to process our plan, if submitted, for at least another 2-3 years, due to its current backlog.
- We are continuing to move forward with drafting the new NC plan, and will distribute a questionnaire to neighbors in November via SurveyMonkey and hard copy. Currently, we’re awaiting County feedback on the survey questions.
- The new Bike Boulevard signs are up on 9th St. S. and 12th St. S., as an alternative to biking down the Pike. Asphalt issues have delayed completion of the street markings, and there is a County backlog right now.
- The 5th St. S. project between Glebe and Ivy is the last pending streetlight project from our current plan.
- Our next newsletter will have information on voting for and/or submitting new NC project ideas, which currently include:
 - Improvements to and/or redesign of the existing TJ Tot Playground
 - New water fountain at 4th of July Park at S. Garfield St. & Rt. 50 -- 2-tier plus a spout for water bottles. This project is surprisingly costly, but right on the bike trail. Jim is working on getting the fountain from the County just because, “we want a walkable community,” and will keep us posted on any progress.

9. Meeting adjourned 8:54.