NEWSLETTER OF THE CIVIC PRIDE YORKTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Yorktown Civic Association General Membership meeting was held on Wednesday, January 31 at 7:30 PM in the Yorktown High School Library. We had a great turnout with lots of spirited conversations. The increased turnout was most likely the result of the YCA newsletter being delivered to everyone's home a few weeks before the meeting. Please reach out if you would like to contribute an article or advertisement to the newsletter. We plan to continue the production and distribution of the paper newsletter, but we need community members to "step up" and pay their annual dues and buy ads. Topics discussed at the meeting included

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STAY INFORMED!

Change your email?

We are updating the Civic Association Email List, so even if we have had your email in the past, please send it once again to: yorktowncivicassociation@gmail.com.

Civic News

Follow all the Yorktown Civic Association news on our own yorktowncivic.org website, facebook.com/groups/YorktownCivic, and Nextdoor.

Our Neighbors

Consider helping your elderly and disabled neighbors. Consider helping water their garden in the heat, and help shovel a driveway in the winter.

If you need help, please post your request on Nextdoor.

the Langston Boulevard Area Plan (LBAP), the 25th Place North/North Emerson St./25th Road North sidewalk project, pedestrian safety, Neighborhood Day Planning, Treasurers report, and a membership update. We are still looking for someone to chair the Neighborhood Day committee. Please volunteer.

Over the last few months, Leslie and David Humes conducted a "clipboard survey" of residents who may be affected by the proposed sidewalk project. Over 60% of the residents indicated that they would like to see the project move forward to the Concept Design phase. The Design Concept Review meeting was held on April 2 at Yorktown High School. For more information, please visit the Yorktown Civic Association website.

On February 19, a local resident discovered a swastika painted on the sidewalk in front of his house on the 5700 block of 27th Street N. Arlington police canvassed the area and located two vehicles in the 2700 block of N. Jefferson Street that had been spray painted, one of which included a swastika and a racial slur. In response to this incident, I collaborated with the paster of the Rock Spring Church and organized the "Rally Against Hate." Church leaders, civic leaders, local elected officials, Arlington County police officers, and dozens of local residents gathered on March 1 at 11 AM at Rock Spring Church to condemn the vandalism and hate speech. The "Rally Against Hate" received extensive media coverage. In my remarks, I stated that hate has no place in the Yorktown community and how we must all be on the lookout for people engaging in graffiti crimes. Please join me in working with your neighbors to prevent incidents like this from happening in the future.



Follow all the Yorktown Civic Association news on our website, Facebook, and Nextdoor.

See ya around the neighborhood!

Mike Cantwell President **Yorktown Civic Association** Arlington Yorktown Civic Association

Membership Form

Name of Applicant (one form per person)

Address in the Civic Association

Mailing Address (Enter only if not the same as your property address above)

Phone Number(s)

E-Mail Address

Mail To: Dustin Anderson

YCA Treasurer

5104 23rd Road N Arlington, VA 22207

\$20 Membership Fee for an Annual Membership Make check payable to: Yorktown Civic Association



Please include:

RALLY AGAINST HATE DRAWS CROWD



Some homes in the Yorktown Civic Association footprint discovered graffiti featuring swastikas and a racial slur earlier this year. In response, dozens of residents gathered outside the Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ on Little Falls Road in a "Rally Against Hate." The event was organized by the civic association and church. A member of the Arlington County Board, the Arlington School Board, local civil rights leaders, including the leader of the Arlington branch of the NAACP, and local faith leaders spoke out against the hate symbols.

Together, the speakers made clear that "hate has no place here," as Mike Cantwell, the Yorktown Civic Association president, declared. The rally was inspired to not only to support the victims of the graffiti, but also to "make it clear that this kind of behavior is completely unacceptable," Cantwell said.

Michael Hemminger, the Arlington NAACP president, spoke at the rally and urged neighbors to turn their concern over the hate-related incidents into action, to "not just be a bystander, and not just be an ally." Kathy Dwyer, the senior pastor at the Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ, said that it is "important that we confront" the "hate and racism running underneath the surface."

THE YCA WOULD LOVE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

If you have any ideas for articles, features, or interviews, please contact: Zach Newkirk at ZJAnewkirk@gmail.com and/or Caryn Wagner at carynannewagner@icloud.com

JOIN THE YORKTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION!

Your Annual Membership for \$20 supports the cost of the Civic Pride newsletter, management of the website, and other outreach. Formal membership in the Yorktown Civic Association is open to all adults (18 years old or older) that live within our neighborhood boundaries. If you own residential property within our boundaries, but rent your home to someone else, you also can be a member. Only members in good standing will be allowed to vote. Several adults in one household may become a member. Use one form per person, and pay dues for each applicant.

Business owners within the neighborhood can also serve as non-voting members in the Association. Businesses are asked to name a specific representative for membership.

The Yorktown Civic Association covers the area of north Arlington, bound by Langston Boulevard (formerly Lee Highway) / Route 29 on the south, Old Dominion Drive to the east, Little Falls Road and Rock Spring Road on the north, and North lefferson Street to the west.

There are three ways to make your membership official. Apply:

- Online at yorktowncivic.org/membership
- By Mail
- By Email

Apply by Mail and Pay by Check

- Fill out our Membership form, available online and on page 2 here.
- Write a check of \$20 to the Yorktown Civic Association for your annual membership.
- Mail form and check to our treasurer:

Dustin Anderson YCA Treasurer 5104 23rd Road N Arlington, VA 22207

Apply by Email and Pay with PayPal Email yorktowncivicassociation@gmail.com.

Be sure to include:

- Your Name
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- Phone Number
- Email

Thank you!



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-- Amy H, Arlington, VA

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ARLINGTON'S VISION ZERO AND YOU

Vision Zero aims to learn more about disparities and close the gaps to safe transportation

By James Churbuck



ARLINGTON COUNTY

Vision Zero is "a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all." The effort began in Sweden in the 1990s and has since taken root in Western Europe and then spread to parts of the United States. Approximately 40 American municipalities have subscribed to Vision Zero, including the District of Columbia, Montgomery County MD, and Alexandria.

In July 2019 the Arlington County Board adopted a <u>resolution</u> see https://tinyurl.com/vision-zero-strategy/ to integrate Vision Zero's strategies into the County's street planning processes and tasked the County Manager with developing an Action Plan.

The County Board adopted Arlington's <u>first five-year Vision Zero Action Plan</u> see https://tinyurl.com/vision-zero-action-plan/ in a public hearing on May 15, 2021. The plan sets a goal of zero serious injuries or fatalities on our transportation system by 2030. That goal is hard to argue against.

Arlington's transportation network is already relatively safe by national standards, with an annual average of 0.84 traffic deaths per 100,000 people, compared to the national average of 11.17 traffic deaths per 100,000 people. In the Yorktown Civic Association footprint there is a single traffic hot spot (defined as 15 or more crashes in a three-year period). This hot spot is at the intersection of US Route 29 and North George Mason Drive.

Reducing deaths and serious injury are the primary concerns of Vision Zero as adopted in Arlington, but not the only concerns. Social equity is at the core of Vision Zero in Arlington.

All people have the right to move about our community safely. People of color, low-income households, people with disabilities, older adults and youth, people with limited English proficiency and households with limited vehicle access often face more challenges and barriers to safe transportation.



26th St North and North Harrison St

Vision Zero aims to learn more about these disparities and close the gaps to safe transportation.

How will you experience Vision Zero in Arlington? Hopefully by safer use of travel spaces no matter how you choose to move about. There will be visible evidence of the program at work, too. Intersections will be reengineered to ensure better safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Examples are the reworked intersection at 26th St North and North Harrison Street as well as the intersection at Yorktown Boulevard and North George Mason Drive. Lighting and signage will provide more and better information. The streets will get more colorful with green markings for cyclists and new stop lines aside crosswalks. Sidewalks will be improved by reducing trip hazards and by incorporating curb extensions and ramped transitions to crosswalks.

While Vision Zero's implementation measures will increase awareness of hazards and help manage risks, behaviors will be the key to success. Transit spaces require that everyone pays attention to what's going on around them so that mishaps don't occur. It's easy to say put the phone down when you're walking, don't speed when you're driving, and don't ignore the traffic rules when you're cycling. But the reality is that each of us is likely to experience (or even exhibit) imperfect behavior that could turn into a mishap if we don't act to prevent an accident. Vision Zero's success depends on people playing an active role in making mobility safe. That can happen if we all do our part.



Yorktown Boulevard and George Mason Drive



THE LANGSTON-BROWN COMMUNITY CENTER

A Community Gem

By Caryn Wagner



Arlington County provides a network of Community Centers that offer a wide range of programs and activities to county residents. In the Yorktown neighborhood, our closest Community Center is Langston-Brown, right across Langston Boulevard from us and just across North Culpeper Street from the Heidelberg Pastry Shoppe.

This community center was established in the late 1970s and was named after noted lawyer and abolitionist John Mercer Langston, who. among manv accomplishments, was the founding dean of the Howard University Law School and the first African American elected to Congress from Virginia. However, it was decided that he should share billing with an Arlington icon, Lillian Brown, who was raised in Halls Hill, the historically African-American neighborhood where the Community Center now stands. Ms. Brown directed the local Head Start program and was instrumental in developing the Community Action Agency during the 1960s. She succeeded in lobbying the General Assembly to pass the Community Action Act in 1982, creating the Virginia Community Action Network that exists today. She served on numerous local boards, including for Virginia Hospital and the local Red Cross chapter, and chaired the board and taught Sunday school at Calloway United Methodist Church.

I communicated with Tim Stroble, the facility director, to find out a little more about Langston-Brown. He told me the current facility opened in 2003. It features a dance studio, a teen lounge, an indoor basketball court open from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, a lighted tennis court, and an adjacent playground.

When I asked him what makes Langston-Brown unique among the community centers, he answered "Langston-Brown is a joint facility housing a community center and high school." The Langston High School Continuation Program shares the facility with the Community Center and provides about 120 students the opportunity to earn a standard high school diploma through a flexible approach tailored to their needs. This unique arrangement requires some scheduling accommodations, so the fitness center is open to the general public's use from 4:15 to 9:00 pm—after the school day.

The Community Center is not just for the young. As Tim told me, "There are currently five senior center locations across the county, and the first floor of Langston is active with 55+ programming from Monday through Friday from 9 am to 3pm, during the school day." Tim encourages people to check out the Arlington County 55+ Guide and the offerings available to those with a 55+ pass—"the pass gives you access to a variety of 55+ programming that includes special events, sports and fitness, learning and enrichment, arts, travel, social connections and more!" Having performed cooking demonstrations at the Langston-Brown senior center, I can vouch that they have an active and engaged group of participating seniors. Tim also highlighted the Social 60+ Café program that provides meals and programs for Arlington seniors over 60.

Finally, I asked what it was like to be right across the street from the Heidelberg Pastry Shoppe—he replied "it's famous and it's hard to stay away from!"

Life Lessons



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Q&A WITH THE LANGSTON BOULEVARD ALLIANCE

Learn more about the organization at the forefront of developing a vision for the Langston Boulevard corridor.



Q: First, tell me about yourself and the Langston Boulevard Alliance

I'm Ginger Brown and I'm the executive director of the Langston Boulevard Alliance. It's a non-profit partnership that evolved from a grassroots effort from the civic associations along the corridor to revitalize the area. Our goal was to have a plan in place for the development of the corridor.

Beginning back in 2012, the Waverly Hills Civic Association was working on its neighborhood conservation plan (which the county requires to get improvements like sidewalks, parks, and so on) and we started looking at the neighborhoods along the corridor. We wondered why there hadn't been any plans for improvement for decades. At the same time, piecemeal development was happening without any strong community benefits. In Waverly Hills, we had byright development, so properties could be developed without needing to fit into a larger vision or plan.

So, seventeen civic associations met on Saturdays for several years to discuss the need for a new vision for the corridor. We had educational forums involving topics on transportation, ability, affordable housing, schools, and many other topics. We were able to lobby the county to

include the corridor in the county's annual work plan. We lobbied to get planning dollars into the county budget and along the way we were asked to become a non-profit—a "Columbia Pike Partnership of the North."

Q: So this eventually led to Plan Langston Boulevard. Can you describe what this is?

Plan Langston Boulevard is a high-level comprehensive vision for the next thirty years along the corridor. It will guide public and private investment. It calls out which intersections should be studied, the various heights along the corridor, where new gathering spaces will be, creates policies to support affordable housing, and calls for future and improved transit and parks along the corridor. The Plan passed the county board unanimously on November 18, 2023, and we're now in the early stages of implementation.

Q: What are some of the short-term effects of the Plan on Yorktown residents?

There might not be any activity in the private realm for a while. Public investment could occur through transportation and intersection processes. Right now, the county is about to begin the Capital Improvement Plan process, which is the county's ten-year plan for building, maintaining, upgrading, or replacing county facilities and infrastructure. Harrison Street is a strong contender for improvements. These improvements would likely focus on safety, more or better sidewalks. First, there would be funds to study the intersection. Then, there could be funding to actually improve the intersection. Plan Langston Boulevard calls out intersections to study and Harrison could be one of those that will be studied in the near-term. It could make it safer to cross as a pedestrian or cyclist.

One important point about the Plan—and the Alliance—is that we're focused on commercial areas. Even though we originated from the work of civic associations, the Plan doesn't really dip deep into the bordering neighborhoods. The focus is on the commercial corridor of Langston Boulevard.

Q: What sort of changes could Yorktown residents expect to see deeper in the future?

It's really dependent on the health of the retail area. For instance, Harris Teeter has a lengthy lease so it probably won't change much in the near-term. On the other hand, because of changing market conditions and consolidation of grocery store changes, there could potentially be change in other shopping centers, though we have not heard anything specific. Overall, the intersection at Harrison and

Continued on page 9

Langston is likely to move slower than other intersections. But even for other intersections, it's tricky to predict because of interest rates—and the cost of construction and development. We should have a better sense as people absorb the plan and interest rates stabilize hopefully over the next six to twelve months.

Q: If I wanted to learn more about the Plan and LBA, what should I do?

You are welcome to visit our website (https://langstonblvdalliance.com/), contact me at ginger.brown@langstonblvdalliance.com, and sign up for our newsletter to stay up-to-date on all the latest news. I hope many of you enjoyed the Earth Day event that we held on April 21.

On May 17, Bike To Work Day, check out our afternoon pit stop at the Lyon Village Shopping Center. We're there from 3 to 6 PM. And if you sign up at https://www.bikearlington.com/biketoworkday/, you can pick up a free T-Shirt!

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For ad info, contact Dustin Anderson at: dustinanderson@mac.com

While the YCA EC enjoys frequenting the many wonderful businesses in our neighborhood, newsletter ads should not be considered an endorsement.

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A SHORT HISTORY OF CHESTNUT HILLS PARK

On Donated Properties in the 1950s and developed through Visions from Arlingtonians

By Brian Young



In my office sits a picture of my daughter (about nine months at the time) riding in a bucket swing in Chestnut Hills Park laughing with delight – hair blown back, eyes smiling. As far as my kids are concerned, the playground at Chestnut Hills has always been there, just a short walk or scoot away. But of course, that's not the case. Over the past decades, countless Arlingtonians contributed to the park's creation. I'll tell you about two of them.

During the 1940s and 50s, Jane Wilhelm (1914-2002) raised four children in her home at 2723 North Harrison Street. Wilhelm, a teacher and advocate for school integration in the wake of Brown v. Board of Education, frequently took her children to play at Greenbrier Park, but thought that the kids in the Yorktown neighborhood needed additional open space. She convinced her two neighbors, both with relatively small homes abutting big back yards, to sell their lots to the County for use as park space. The County completed the acquisitions in the 1950s, and Chestnut Hills Park was born.

The Park remained green space for several decades, but saw its footprint expand in the late 90s, when the County acquired three additional parcels. The County built the 5-12 playground in 1999 and the 2-5 playground in 2002. Wilhelm, who moved to another part of Arlington after selling her house on Harrison, spent many days in her later years at the Park enjoying what her generosity set in motion.

The 5-12 playground looks much the same today as it did when it was built. But the 2-5 playground is vastly improved

thanks to the efforts of many Arlingtonians. Prominent among them is Joshua Serck, a landscape architect with the Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation. When initially constructed, the 2-5 playground was essentially a giant sandbox with a slide and concrete turtle in the center.

Although a concrete turtle in a sand pit is always a good time, members of the Yorktown Civic Association saw room for improvement and in November of 2012 began a series of meetings with Serck to form a design concept to improve the space.

Serck's vision for the space included hills not only because they make for an interesting design concept but also because hills are, well, fun. His design had to preserve two beloved features: the trophy trees on the eastern end of the lot and the turtle. He accomplished the former by employing a non-geometric perimeter with bulges away from the trees and the latter by creating a natural sandbox with enough room for the turtle to sit in the middle. The County broke ground in 2015 and completed construction in 2016, at a cost of about \$500,000. Around that time, the County purchased two additional lots, which expanded the Park's green space to the north and south.

Serck considers Chestnut Hills to be one of his greatest professional accomplishments. During a Teams video call, I showed him the picture of my daughter at the park as a token of my family's appreciation. I would have liked to have shown that picture to Jane Wilhelm too.



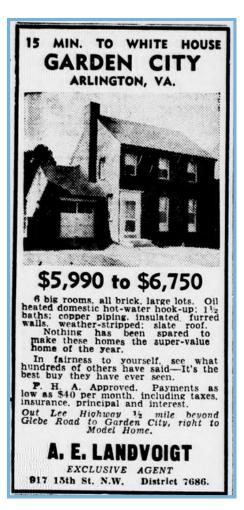
A BLAST FROM THE PAST

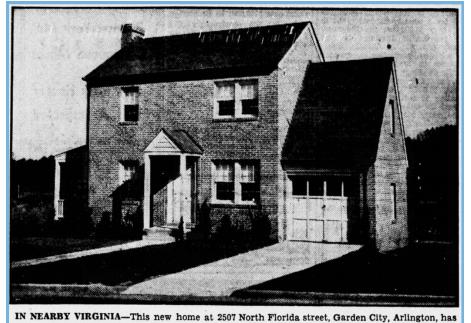
The Evening Star November 25, 1939

Real estate ads from Washington D.C.'s Evening Star feature homes in Arlington's Garden City and Waverly Village.

Those were the days!







been purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Dean Murphy from John L. Douglas, builder and developer.

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-Star Staff Photo.



Yorktown Civic Association

Send Address changes to: 5104 23rd Road N Arlington, VA 22207

YorktownCivic.org



Wednesday, May 1, 2024
7:30 pm
Yorktown High School
Patriot Hall

Enter through Door #8 on 28th Street N. by the Basketball Court

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- 25th Place N / N Emerson St / 25th Rd N sidewalk project status update
- Yorktown Neighborhood Plan update
- Fall Neighborhood Day... we still need a chair!
- Revised YCA By-Laws
- Membership update and dues reminder

ARLINGTON COUNTY ONLINE TOOL: REQUEST SERVICE OR REPORT PROBLEMS

For many services or problems, you can use Arlington County's online Request Service / Report a Problem tool:

arlingtonva.us/Government/Topics/Report-Problem
Or download the app My Arlington

For Traffic Light Outages:

Call Police non-emergency Number at 703-558-2222 For Water and Sewer Emergencies, call 703-228-6555 (24 hrs)

What you can report or request online includes:

- Trash/recycling and Litter
- Street lights/park lights
- Streets (potholes, concrete, gutter)
- Parks (dog park, facility, field, playground, trails)
- Water repair (utility cover)
- Signs (traffic, stop, parking)
- Parking meters
- Trees & mowing
- Bus stops
- Public art conditions
- Graffiti

