

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee
October 10, 2019

Meeting Notes - Final

Meeting location: The Navy League Building
2300 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

1. Roll Call and Brief Neighborhood Report
 - a. Sarah McKinley (Columbia Heights) her Civic Association is interested in having a playground upgraded and will be inviting staff from the County's Parks & Recreation (P&R) to come speak about how they might work with them on it. If P&R is an option, she is interested in knowing if they have a faster process for completing this work than through the NCAC.
2. Approval of Minutes from the July 2019 NCAC Meeting:

The Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Officers and Staff Report
 - a. Tim McIntosh notified the group that November 15th is the deadline for submitting new projects and confirming priority projects.
 - b. The Spring Funding Round Package will be presented to the County board in November, and 2 projects will have more accurate cost estimates, as their construction designs have been advanced to 90%
 - c. Tim is forming a committee and looking for NCAC member volunteers to nominate new Executive Committee members for elections at the end of the year. Rob Swennes will become the new NCAC Chair. Both Vice-Chair positions will be open. Email Tim if interested.
4. Discussion / Action Items:
 - a. Phil Klingelhofer (Boulevard Manor)

The NCAC is interested in providing more value to neighborhoods by informing our respective Civic Associations about the good presentations and information we receive at our monthly NCAC meetings. The NCAC leadership is proposing to have presentation information provided to us by the presenter, packaged in a format that can be used by each of us, maybe in the form of powerpoint with notes or pdf handouts, as well as the contact information to the expert or presenter of the topic. The goal is to make this easy for each NCAC Representative to pass the information on and educate our neighbors, letting them know why this matters to them.

The first presentation and information we are providing is from the recent Urban Forestry presentation by Vincent Verweij at our June 2019 monthly meeting.

Rob – this could be done through civic association meetings, listserves, facebook, newsletters. Whatever works best for each NCAC Representative.

Phil – NCAC leadership would also like to create an adhoc Communications Committee that could help facilitate this endeavor. If anyone is interested, contact Phil.

[ADD IN NOTE: See meeting minutes from June 2019 and attached presentation summary for Urban Forestry information.]

- b. Talk with Erik Gutshall, Arlington County Board Member (CB Liaison to the NCAC)

Summary of talk:

Important issues in the County – Housing, what will Arlington offer for the future?

Improving “Livability” and what that means. Infrastructure – storm water management in particular. Biophilic cities and principles – bringing natural systems into your built environment. Challenges the NCAC to be involved with these. CB interested in the NCAC being the eyes and ears of neighborhoods, and asks that they think about how we solve issues around improving the quality of life for all Arlingtonians.

Questions/Comments:

- i. Bernie Berne (Buckingham) – expressed concern about the conflict between preserving trees and increasing housing density

Erik responded that the County has passed policies to improve affordable housing, but also is interested in a biophilic approach with ways to have a good balance between trees and housing.

- ii. David Litman (Aurora Highlands) – raised concerns his neighborhood has about flooding that occurs in the newly built Nellie Custis Park, and asked if the County has tools to address storm water from one property affecting neighboring ones.

Erik responded that there are federal requirements that limit disturbance to neighboring properties. He noted that the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance is more focused on the quality of water runoff and not on the amount, so this does not solve some of our water problems. The County needs more solutions that come from the state because there are restrictions on what the County can do.

- iii. Liz Kauffman (Arlington Forest) – asked Erik what changes he would like to see?

Erik views mature trees as an important part in storm water management, and currently they are not counted in any way for this. Often infiltration trenches that are built for storm water management cut into the root structure of a tree. He views quantity of water as important, just as quality of water, and would like to see developers receive a credit for mitigating quantity in their projects. He is also interested in having the County Manager investigate tax options for impervious area/coverage on a property.

Bill Braswell (Tara Leeway Heights) – the Stormwater Management Presentation that was made to the CB recently had a wealth of information. Bill believes NC could be a tremendous asset in helping educate and come up with or promote priorities with residents.

Eric – noted getting property owners to support or agree to easements (temporary access or permanent) can be difficult, and it would be helpful to have NCAC assist with a back and forth conversation on how to address these issues around flooding. What is the property owner and what is the County’s responsibility around managing it?

Tim – commented that currently the NC Program works with the County’s storm water management group and has successfully incorporated several bio-retention projects alongside NC projects in neighborhoods over the past few years and continues to do so.

Erik summarized a broader way to look at storm water management - the issue is not how to move water more quickly until it collects into a large pool of water, but rather, how to move it more slowly and closer to its source so there is less water to deal with at the end.

- iv. Sarah McKinley (Courthouse) – expressed disappointment that the County Board cut funding to the program in the 2018 bond and asked about Erik’s support of the program.

Erik felt the funding was appropriate and allows for enough time to review and improve the program through the working group following their analysis of the program before the next bond funding round. He is eager and optimistic for great ideas to come out of the working group to modernize the program and make it more consistent with the current needs and budgeting of the County. He would like to see the program have greater impact on more residents of the County. His vote on the previous bond funding was not meant to signal a lack of support for the long-term viability of the NC program.

- v. Erik concluded by stating his perspective - the value of this program is that it is neighborhood driven, and with that, neighborhood needs must be balanced with multiple others throughout the County, including school overcrowding and aging infrastructure. He would not want the County to squander the contributions and assets the NCAC brings, and therefore would like to see the program evolve.

5. Other/New Business:

None.

6. Meeting adjourned.