

# CRYSTAL CITY INSIDER

The monthly newsletter of the Crystal City Civic Association



March 2021

## ***A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT***

**Lots of issues, lots of meetings. Please stay engaged, offer your ideas, and lend support.**

- Carol Fuller, CCCA President

## **COVID NEWS**

### **Virginia Launched a New Centralized Vaccine Preregistration System**

The Commonwealth launched a [Statewide Vaccine Preregistration System](#) to provide a unified and comprehensive process for people in Virginia to preregister for the COVID-19 vaccine. [Learn more about the statewide preregistration system](#)

### **Record with CDC for Vaccination Side Effects**

V-safe is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information. V-safe will also remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one. [Register here.](#)

### **Governor Lifts Some COVID Restrictions**

As COVID-19 hospitalizations and infection rates continue to decline and vaccinations rise in Virginia, Governor Ralph Northam announced the next steps of the “Forward Virginia” plan to safely and gradually ease public health restrictions while mitigating the spread of the virus, effective March 1. The key changes include: The maximum number of individuals permitted in a social gathering will increase from 10 to 25 people for outdoor settings (remains 10 people for indoor settings); Outdoor entertainment and public amusement venues will be able to operate with up to 1,000 individuals or at 30% capacity, whichever is lower; The on-site sale, consumption, and possession of alcohol will be permitted until midnight, extended from 10:00 p.m. (All restaurants must be closed between midnight and 5:00 a.m.) The full text of Third Amended Executive Order Seventy-Two and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine is available [here](#). Updated guidelines for specific sectors can be found [here](#).

### **Searching for a COVID-19 vaccine?**

A new centralized online portal that launched this week aims to ease the process. Run in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [VaccineFinder.org](#) provides a list of nearby vaccination sites based on your ZIP code, including the type of vaccine currently in stock. It is currently limited to pharmacies that get doses directly from the federal government, but the list is expected to expand in the coming weeks. Appointments still need to be made through the provider.

## CIVIC ASSOCIATION AND LIVABILITY 22202 ISSUES

### SAVE THE DATES:

#### **March 2 Livability Open Space Working Group Meeting (discussed below)**

The meeting will be mostly informational. If afterwards, you'd like to stay engaged, great! But join us March 2 to learn what's happening and where you could join in, if you'd like to.

#### **March 3 VDOT Public Meeting on Route 1 Feasibility Study (discussed below)**

Is this what we want for Route 1 in National Landing? Come to the VDOT public meeting on March 3rd and find out!

#### **March 9 Sustainable Mobility for Arlington (SUSMO) meeting at 7:30 (discussed below)**

Come learn what is wrong with the proposed Crystal City Bike Network.

#### **March 17 CCCA Meeting**

The **Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority** (MWAA) has agreed to provide a video and PowerPoint update on all the work that is being done at National Airport and which is expected to be completed by summer 2021. Stay tuned for more details. **The Arlington County Police Department** will also present on crime statistics and car jackings.

## CRYSTAL CITY (AND NEARBY)

### **Development/Construction Timelines (TBD)**

The following timelines are very tentative but will give residents an idea of what to expect and when from a variety of projects. We will go over these timelines at our CCCA meeting as well.

#### **Upcoming Meetings:**

- Livability22202 Open Space Working Group Meeting; **March 2** (discussed below)
- VDOT Multimodal Feasibility Study on Route 1: Livability22202 open meeting February 22 (discussed below); **March 3** VDOT public workshop; May draft report and public meeting; June final report
- Sustainable Mobility for Arlington meeting on County's proposed Crystal City Bike Network; **March 9** (discussed below)
- CCCA General Meeting March 17: MWAA Project Journey (Target construction completion summer 2021); Arlington County Police Department presentation on crime and car jackings in 22202
- 2000 S Bell/2001 S Clark Streets: Public Comment held December 28-January 11; 3 SPRCs February 18, **March 18**, April 12; Planning/Transportation Commissions and County Board in April; County Board in May
- Water Park Site Plan Amendment: PAC and PRC meetings Feb 10 and 16 discussed below; County Board deferred until **March 21 or 24**

**Other Issues:**

- Crystal Square Central District Construction/Opening: Staged openings in 2021; **CVS** grand opening February 27 to March 13; **Mah Ze Dahr Bakery** may open in April; **grocery** still not announced; **Alamo Draft House** last
- 1900 Crystal Drive construction: March 15 start date; 3 years construction
- PenPlace: site plan application submitted February 2; dates of a virtual SPRC process pending.
- 2121 Crystal Drive (Dining in the Park) site plan amendment (approved at December County Board); no construction earlier than end 2021 with summer 2022 opening if a restaurant tenant lease is signed in 2021
- Marriott Residence Inn, Army Navy Drive: building demolition to be completed by June 2021
- VRE Design for New Station: final design 2021-2022; award and construction 2022-2024
- 101 S 12<sup>th</sup> Street: approved by County Board December; no construction in 2021 until tenant signed; Gateway Park design when construction finished in 2-3 years
- Long Bridge Aquatic Center: target construction completion/opening summer 2021
- Boundary Channel (VDOT): award contract summer 2021; construction 2022; target construction completion fall 2023
- MetPark Amazon HQ2: Target construction completion mid-2023

[The National Landing BID also has a useful map showing all ongoing and potential projects.](#)

**CVS Grand Opening in Central District**

CVS has finally opened on Crystal Drive at 15th Street. The grand opening is February 27 to March 13. Store hours: M-Sat 8-10 and Sunday 8-9 pm; pharmacy M-Sat 8-9 pm and Sunday 9-6 pm.

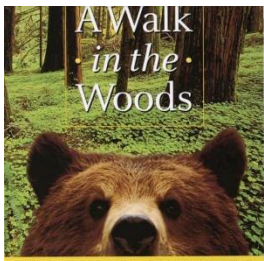
**Livability22202 Open Space Working Group Meeting**

*Open Space: Is it important to you?*

COVID has shown us how important it is to have parks, trails, and open spaces. Yet 22202 is very lacking in those amenities, except for Virginia Highlands Park and Long Bridge Park. The Livability22202 working group created an open space report in December 2020, but this is no time to rest on our laurels. There is so much more to be done. **Come join us March 2 from 7-9 pm** to plan activities for 2021: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86003221590?pwd=NzA1YWhtRlVMT3laaGtnSIVHVmYxdz09>

Email [fullercarols@gmail.com](mailto:fullercarols@gmail.com) for more information.

As demonstrated by three recent meetings, we're starting to have an impact. But it's **soooo** important to expand membership of the working group to ensure participation, not only geographically across 22202 but also demographically, with emphasis on renters in high rise multifamily buildings needing access to open space And not just during the COVID pandemic, but year round. An Arlington County Civic Federation White paper shows residents in multifamily units have some of the least access to open space in the County.) Not a surprise to us, is it?



This is not a roll up your sleeves and dig the ground working group. We are looking for your ideas and input. See the current status [here](#).

The meeting will be mostly informational. If afterwards, you'd like to stay engaged, great! But join us March 2 to learn what's happening and where you could join in, if you'd like to.

The agenda for our March 2 Open Space meeting includes, inter alia:

1. Briefings on recent meetings with County staff (DPR, DES, CPHD) and the Parks & Recreation Commission
2. Presentation of the Civic Federation CivFed White Paper on Equity in Arlington County Open Public Spaces
3. Concept and definition of open space: What does OpenSpace mean to us?
4. Future of the HUG and further projects with FOIA, perhaps in Crystal City
5. Furthering the Integrated Pedestrian Map
6. Roaches Run Clean Up Days in April
7. Cherry Blossom Festival activities in 22202
8. National Landing BID project ideas for open space

### The VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Feasibility Study

Good Livability22202 meeting February 22 with VDOT. Although the Livability Working Group on Route 1 provided VDOT with 19 pages of comments and requests for more data on their feasibility study, they responded only to a few comments at this meeting and promised more substantive reply on data later on. We took the opportunity to review the scope of the study, community concerns, and possible alternatives or ideas on how to deal with Route 1. [You can view the recorded meeting here](#) and see the [Livability slide show](#) and [VDOT slides here](#).

According to the [VDOT project website](#), the study on Route 1, from approximately 12th Street to 23rd Street South, will explore an at-grade urban boulevard, but also review and compare potential improvements to the current elevated condition, and the elevated urban boulevard described in the Crystal City Sector Plan. Ultimately, the study aims to provide sufficient information to make the best decision on a future project on Route 1 in Crystal City. However, from comments at the February 22 meeting, it appears that VDOT is only focusing on whether it is feasible to bring Route 1 down to grade and not on other options. This is disappointing and we will continue to advocate for a variety of alternatives and emphasize safety issues for crossing Route 1 without making it a major highway.

There was a Task Force meeting February 25 (in which several Livability representatives participated) and a public meeting **March 3**. [Register for the March 3 VDOT meeting here](#). Lots of concerns remaining.

Livability22202 has sent [a letter to our Virginia legislators](#) about our concerns.

### Crystal City Bike Network

The County Department of Environmental Services (DES) has put forward a [draft Crystal City Bike Plan](#) that they were directed by the Board to pursue because of the 1900 Crystal Dr SPRC a year ago. The CCCA and our sister civic associations asked for a broader study of transportation problem on Crystal Drive, but a study of protected bike lanes is all we got. The draft plan is not satisfactory for many reasons. Come to the [Sustainable Mobility for Arlington \(SUSMO\) meeting March 9 at 7:30](#) to learn why:

\*Get a quick intro to the concept of bicycling facilities for all-ages-and-abilities, how that benefits everyone, and how that looks different from what's on our streets now.

\*Show how the County needs to think a little more about its goals, and the scope of the study



\*Show some alternate ideas for how some streets could better meet those goals in the short term -- without dramatic or disruptive changes -- and some ideas for the long term that need to be documented (or they will never happen).

In the meantime you can [review the materials](#) here. The [comment period](#) is open until March 14.

### SPRC for 2000/2001 Clark/Bell Site Plan

The first SPRC for 2000/2001 Clark/Bell Site Plan took place February 18, focusing on architectural features, open space, and The Underground. The second SPRC meeting will take place on **March 18**. The focus of that meeting will be: Project updates, Transportation, PDSP/Community Benefits. You can learn more about the project by visiting the [project website](#).

### Amazon unveils a proposed design for the second phase of its Arlington, Virginia headquarters.

On February 2 Amazon submitted its proposed development plans for the second phase of new construction for our Arlington headquarters. According to [the blog by John Schoettler](#), Amazon's Vice President of Global Real Estate and Facilities: "For this project, we're doubling down on the importance of fostering an open and inviting community by creating a new destination for local residents. Designed by leading architecture firm NBBJ, our plans also infuse nature into the urban landscape and create a unique, sustainable environment where our employees can work and invent for our customers. Our designs create open and active spaces that aim to bring people closer to nature in an effort to further nurture innovation and creativity."



Amazon's plans for its new northern Virginia headquarters feature an outdoor theme, the latest sign that big tech companies are getting more creative with office space rather than abandoning it. Phase two of the company's development in Arlington, Va., calls for three 22-story office buildings and smaller retail buildings surrounded by woodlands, an outdoor amphitheater, a dog run and parking for around 950 bicycles. The centerpiece will be the site's fourth and tallest tower, a 350-foot structure dubbed the Helix because it will feature two spiraling outdoor walkways with trees and plants from Virginia that twist to the building's top. See also the [Wall Street Journal Article](#) and a video on the future of office space.

### Pentagon City PDSP Update

The focus group consists of designated reps from neighborhoods, developers, and staff who are looking at existing conditions in the PC area, including approved plans/density, roads and pedestrian ways, transit, etc. The goal is to update and expand the 1976 plan resulting in a master plan for the PC area probably later this year though it may slide as the scope presents quite a challenge. Periodically there will be virtual public forums which anyone can attend. Scheduled virtual meetings are also posted there. The study is currently in Phase 2 through March for Preliminary Planning and Design. Phase 3 from February to April focuses on Work Product Refinement. Phase 4 from April to June will be Review and Presentation of Final Plan. The **February 15** Pentagon City Planning Study workshop focused on public realm frameworks for the district. The presentation is now posted on the County's project website, with notes from breakout groups to follow by the end of the week.

Over the coming month, the County website will be updated with additional material, including an analysis of development economics and feasibility. The consultants will continue to refine and analyze the scenarios in advance of the next public workshop in late March, where they'll be working to identify a preferred scenario for implementation. In case you prefer a full link, [this is where all project documents and products are posted](#).

### Open Space, Water Park, and Related Issues

Three meetings of interest recently on open space and how it is related to development in 22202.

1. Presentation of Livability Open Space report and related issues to Parks & Recreation Commission February 16. You can see the presentation and discussion at 40:50 minutes into the [You Tube](#) recording for about 40 minutes.
2. Presentation of Livability22202 Integrated Pedestrian Map to County departments: DRP, DES, and CPHD February 8 and 18. The map offers a holistic approach to greenways and open space access in 22202, including a safe way to cross Route 1.
3. Pentagon City PDSP community meeting February 15: The presentation reflects a great deal of our emphasis on biophilic design, greenways, and connectivity, especially from our Livability22202 Integrated Pedestrian Map. The presentation is now posted on the [County's project website](#), with notes from breakout groups to follow soon. The monthly Focus Group meetings can also be viewed there.

**Bottom Line:** We're making an impact on County and developer thinking. Specifically, JBG has modified its site plan for the Water Park considerably in response to community feedback. JBG is continuing to make revisions to their plans, based upon public comments. Send any further comments on the JBGS plans by email to [khennigan@jbgsmith.com](mailto:khennigan@jbgsmith.com). The County Board will reconsider at their March 20th Meeting.

Come join the [Livability Open Space Working Group meeting March 2](#) to be informed and stay engaged.

### White Paper: Equity in Arlington County Open Public Spaces

The Park and Recreation Committee of the Arlington County Civic Federation prepared a [new report on equity and proximity to Arlington natural open space](#) in January 2021. The report uses publicly available data on Arlington park spaces and demographic information specifically along the lines of income, residence type, and race. One of the key findings related to residence type is that *"Residents of townhomes live in areas with significantly fewer trees than residents of single-family detached homes (SFHs). Furthermore, residents of elevator apartments live in areas with significantly fewer trees, typically have fewer number of parks in close proximity, and have less OPS within walking distance per capita compared to residents of SFHs, townhomes, or garden apartments."*

A resolution is presented for consideration by the ACCF to draw attention to opportunities to support Arlington's equity aspirations as they relate to proximity to natural open space.

### Project HUG (Highlands Urban Park)

Our Livability Open Space project with the Friends of Urban Agriculture is entering the next phase of planning for spring planting. The garden demonstrates the benefits of implementing community-driven urban agriculture features throughout National Landing. It showcases modular, low-impact design principles, sustainable water management practices, and incorporates smart technology to



collect agriculture metrics (daily solar exposure, temperature, moisture and soil health). We are working on the design of the water barrels and signage to explain the project and the plants. We're also looking for more volunteers who would like to participate in some aspect of the project: planning, planting, communications, budgeting, etc. [Sign up as a volunteer here.](#) See the project on the [County website here](#) and on the [FOUA website here.](#)

### FOUA Takes over AFAC Plot Against Hunger Program

Exciting news! Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) is transitioning ownership of its Plot Against Hunger program to the Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture. Since its inception in 2007, over 600,000 pounds of fresh produce has been donated to AFAC through the Plot Against Hunger program. We look forward to growing the program to support our local food pantries. [Read our press statement.](#)

### What's Up With those Mushrooms?



Have you seen the lighted mushrooms in the park at 101 S 12th Street. This is a temporary art/placemaking installation by the National Landing BID in their campaign to activate public spaces: "Turn up the love." Check out the BID website to see where there are other art installations in 22202.

Step outside to see them at night. They're fun, and pretty to look at. But they'll only be up there until March 14. Another installation will go up for the Cherry Blossom Festival.

### National Cherry Blossom Festival



Wow. The National Cherry Blossom Festival Council has approved the Aurora Highlands Civic Association to coordinate events March 20-April 11 at Virginia Highlands Park as an official part of the Festival. There will be activities throughout the Festival including kite flying, Zumba, origami artwork, music, games, a pet photo session, food, cherry blossom sculptures, and potentially a parade April 10-11 through the neighborhood. The National Landing BID, JBG Smith, and Amazon are sponsors. See the [AHCA website](#) for more details and come on down. This is the [NCBF website](#) with details for the DC area.

### ACPD Steps Up Its Security in 22202

You should have seen an increase in police patrols in the area recently, some visible and some not visible. There are elements from the Special Operations Section, Community Resources Section (Outreach and SRO's), Patrol and Investigations contributing to these efforts. The visible patrols consist of both mobile and stationary units. Additionally, the police are conducting an education campaign with local businesses, delivery drivers and residents about not leaving vehicles running, unattended or with keys in them. [See a press release here.](#) There have been several arrests in

22202 recently. ***Don't forget that we have invited the APCD to come to our March 17 CCCA meeting to talk about crime statistics.***

### Police Provide Overview of Carjacking Incidents

The National Capital Region, along with other major metropolitan areas across the country, is experiencing an increase in carjacking offenses. Since January 2020, the Arlington County Police Department's Homicide/Robbery Unit has investigated 18 reports of carjackings in the County. Eight of those cases have been solved with arrest or the identification of a suspect currently held in another jurisdiction. As part of our ongoing investigative efforts into these incidents, detectives are working collaboratively with regional law enforcement partners to identify trends and apprehend suspects. The Department continues to deploy increased police resources, to include both visible and non-visible assets, in Crystal City and the surrounding neighborhoods to combat this crime trend. See the map of the carjacking locations in the map on [the website](#).

### Notice from APCD on Car Jackings

The police department has received several inquiries recently about the carjackings and robberies in and around the Crystal City area. Although we have had several conversations with individuals/groups about these incidents, I wanted to take a moment to provide some information to the civic association presidents, with the hope that you all will disseminate it to your members. Over the last week or so, you should have seen an increase in patrols in the area, some visible and some not visible. There are elements from our Special Operations Section, Community Resources Section (Outreach and SRO's), Patrol and Investigations contributing to these efforts. The visible patrols consist of both mobile and stationary units.

Additionally, we are conducting an education campaign with local businesses, delivery drivers and residents about not leaving vehicles running, unattended or with keys in them. Our uniformed officers and parking aides are specifically looking for this activity and are either educating the individuals or issuing summonses. You may also have seen signs boards in the area with similar messaging. Hopefully, with this multi-pronged approach, it will help to eliminate or reduce potential opportunities for these incidents.

Our Public Information Office recently issued a press release to provide information related to our efforts (a copy is pasted below). In the release, safety tips are provided as well as a link to additional crime prevention tips. Also highlighted is an arrest from last weekend. Basically, a suspicious vehicle was observed, police were notified, the vehicle was located, and it was determined to have been recently stolen in a carjacking from another state. Surveillance was conducted and eventually several people were taken into custody.

There have been questions about the publicized carjacking taskforce out of Washington D.C. Although it was not specifically put together with Virginia jurisdictions, we are already members of the Northern Virginia FBI Violent Crimes Task Force. These groups do work together in a collaborative effort to share information in an attempt to solve and reduce violent crimes.

Another service I wanted to highlight is our free residential/commercial security survey or CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design). Upon request, our CPTED expert reviews your residence, business etc., and provides some suggestions on ways to better secure or enhance your safety. The link for requesting a security survey is on our website and I have included in this response. For those that are interested, they can fill out the [request form](#) and she will be in contact with you.



Thank you for your time. Here's the link for the [press release](#) mentioned earlier.  
Captain Scott Linder, APCD Outreach Unit

### **Pentagon City Metro is Getting a Second Elevator**

On February 20, the Arlington County Board voted to award a contract to W. M. Schlosser Company for the construction of a second station elevator on the west side of S. Hayes Street, near the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City mall. Designs for the elevator were first approved early last year and the contract for managing the construction was approved this past summer. The second elevator will eliminate the need for pedestrians to cross six lanes of traffic on S. Hayes Street, two parking lanes, and a bike lane to reach the one elevator currently in operation on the other side of S. Hayes Street, near the Pentagon Centre shopping center. The Pentagon City Metro is also getting four new escalators as part of a \$179-million, seven-year system-wide project to replace and install new heavy-duty escalators. That project will begin in May. [Read more here.](#)

### **The Freshman Helping Workers Via Hook Hall**

Hook Hall Helps, a D.C.-based relief program aimed at helping hospitality industry workers, is coming to Crystal City. First started in March 2020 in response to the pandemic, the program provides meal kits to those in the local hospitality industry impacted by layoffs, hours reductions, mandatory shutdowns, and capacity restrictions. In addition to its original D.C. location, the program will also now distribute kits from The Freshman, the yet-to-open cafe at 2011 Crystal Drive. To volunteer at The Freshman Hook Hall on Thursdays, see the [website to sign up.](#)

### **MARC trains Stopping in Crystal City?**



A new Maryland law greases the wheels for Maryland Rail Commuter (MARC) train service to come to the new Crystal City station set to open in 2024. HB 1236 — First Step for MARC Commuters Act — calls for the Maryland Transit Authority to “engage in good-faith negotiations” for a pilot program that would extend MARC service into Arlington and Alexandria. It could one day allow workers at Amazon’s HQ2 to commute in via rail from Baltimore or the Maryland exurbs.

The new Virginia Railway Express station in Crystal City is planning to open in 2024 and is being specifically designed with MARC and Amtrak trains in mind, in hopes that these negotiations bear fruit. Amtrak, too, is “exploring” adding regional service to the station. [Read more here.](#)

### **Goodbye Maserati, Hello Tesla?**

After nearly seven years in South Arlington, the Maserati dealership at 2710 S. Glebe Road has closed its doors. The dealership — located on a property that had earlier been home to seafood seller M. Slavin & Sons — is currently completely empty, with only Maserati and Alfa Romeo branding and an ironic “Now Open” sign. The property, adjacent to I-395, may retain an automotive-related use, however. [ARLnow](#) hears that Tesla is considering leasing the building.

## Marriott Hotel Demolition

According to Whiting Hunter construction, there will be no dramatic implosion of the hotel being demolished, as was done to the Holiday Inn in Rosslyn. Instead, they have erected a huge crane to take the building down level by level, starting with the front on Army Navy Drive. The process will take about 14 weeks and is scheduled to be completed mid-June. In the meantime, the parking lanes on both Army Navy Drive and S. Fern Street are closed off.

## Restaurant and Store Changes

**The Freshman** 2011 Crystal Drive may finally open in April or May after a two-year wait. [Read more here.](#) CVS is now open on Crystal Drive at 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

A new boutique coffee shop and roaster is now open at Westport, formerly known as Pentagon Row. **Origin Coffee Lab and Kitchen** served up its first morning cup of joe in January after initially announcing their arrival early last year. It's located at 1101 S. Joyce Street, in the former Starbucks space between Basic Burger and Lebanese Taverna. The popular D.C.-based Chinese-American restaurant **Lucky Danger** is opening an Arlington outpost at 1101 S. Joyce Street. It takes the place of Aabee Express Mediterranean, which closed in August and was next to the F45 training studio. **Elements Massage Studio** will open a new studio in Westport, projected for early summer 2021.

## ARLINGTON COUNTY ISSUES

### Designing a new Arlington County Logo

Arlington County is developing a brand-new logo and needs your help! Learn more about the process and submit your idea by March 14. From now until Friday, March 14, submit what you think is a good logo concept for Arlington. Visit the [logo submission page](#) to read submission guidelines, next steps, and some ideas to get your creativity flowing. This logo would replace the current seal and logo that currently depict Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial. The new logo aims to more accurately represent the values and aspirations that are held by the residents of Arlington.

### Proposed County Budget

The Board [considered the 2022 draft budget February 20](#) and advertised no increase in the Calendar Year 2021 base real estate property tax rate, citing the toll the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is taking on residents. The Board also voted to advertise a proposed Stormwater tax rate of 1.7 cents per \$100 of assessed real property value to fund the full cost of operations and planned capital improvements to the County's stormwater infrastructure and flood mitigation. The base real estate tax rate for CY 2021 will remain \$1.013 per \$100 of assessed value. After public hearings in March and April, the budget will be considered for approval on April 17. [See the proposed budget here.](#)

### Vision Zero

Vision Zero, an idea that reimagined traffic safety and has been implemented world-wide, was started in Sweden in the 1990s. Currently, more than 40 American communities are participating in the Vision Zero Network, including several in the DC-metropolitan area. All Vision Zero programs share a common goal – of eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries, because no one should die on our streets and highways and trails. The traditional approach to transportation safety assumes that traffic deaths are inevitable and relies on perfect human behavior for safe outcomes. The traditional

[www.crystalcitycivic.org](http://www.crystalcitycivic.org)  
[www.facebook.com/crystalcitycivic](https://www.facebook.com/crystalcitycivic)

approach assumes that it is expensive to save lives, which requires large-scale projects or efforts. Traditional approaches to transportation safety typically focus on reducing or preventing collisions, regardless of severity. On the other hand, Vision Zero focuses on preventing fatalities and injuries – not collisions in general. A Vision Zero safety approach considers transportation-related serious injuries or deaths as preventable and integrates human failings into the approach to traffic management (i.e., assume that people make mistakes when driving, walking, and cycling). Traffic crashes are not “accidents.”

The Arlington County Board approved a Vision Zero resolution on July 19, 2019, and County staff began working on the [County's Vision Zero program](#). Staff put together cross-departmental internal stakeholder groups and an external stakeholder group with representatives from key County constituents. These groups met regularly to draft the Action Plan, with public engagement at critical points in the process. The draft plan details the County's commitment to achieving the objectives defined in the County's Vision Zero resolution and articulates the goals, objectives, action items, and performance measures to guide Vision Zero actions and evaluate the County's progress toward eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

[The Community Forum](#) was held virtually on Thursday, February 11. The project team shared an overview of the action plan, highlighted how community input helped shape the document, and answered any questions asked about the action plan. View a recording of the virtual community forum on [YouTube](#). Slides from the short Q&A presentation summarizing [the draft Action Plan](#) are available [here](#).

### **Back to School—Sort of**

APS is excited about the updated return-to-school timeline for families that have selected the hybrid/in-person instruction model, encouraged by recent improvements in the health metrics, with case positivity rates and other indicators currently decreasing in Arlington and neighboring communities. More students will begin hybrid/in-person instruction from March 2 and all grade levels by the week of March 16.

### **Arlington Parents for Education (APE)**

Arlington Parents for Education (APE) is a volunteer-led, non-partisan coalition of parents, teachers, students, and community members dedicated to supporting a science-driven, safe, and responsible return to in-person education for the 2020-21 school year. We see that safe, in-person learning is happening at public and private schools throughout the region and we want Arlington's children to have the same opportunities. APE has been advocating since the summer for a safe reopening of Arlington Public Schools. Recently, APS announced return to school dates, but our advocacy is still not done:

Almost all students who have returned to the buildings already (called "Level One" students, generally those students with disabilities) are not actually being taught in person. Instead, they continue to watch an iPad while supervised by in-person staff. This is still distance learning, just sitting in a different place. ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/classroom-monitors-in-person-learning/2021/02/06/cbdb6e8e-66f8-11eb-8c64-9595888caa15\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/classroom-monitors-in-person-learning/2021/02/06/cbdb6e8e-66f8-11eb-8c64-9595888caa15_story.html))

APS plans to use this same model, with teachers still teaching through a screen, for students as young as 3rd grade. None of this is consistent with Virginia Department of Health (VDH) guidance, which says to prioritize students with disabilities, early learners, and English learners for in-person instruction, meaning teaching, even if community spread is high.

Arlington was the last district in Virginia to announce reopening dates, and we are concerned these dates are still contingent on subjective factors that are not required by VDH. ([Washington Post article](#)). Our community made the decision to prioritize teachers for the vaccine. Yet, even with the vaccine, we are concerned that APS will not open for full in-person instruction, five days a week, anytime soon -- even by next Fall.

If this is concerning to you as well please check out our [website](#) and sign up for our newsletter!

## OTHER ISSUES

### Metro's Blue Line Shut Down For Three Months

The next phase of Metro's Platform Improvement Project began on February 13 at Addison Rd and Arlington Cemetery Stations. As a reminder, these stations will be closed and Blue Line service will not operate through May 23. Yellow Line trains replace Blue Line trains between Franconia-Springfield and Mt Vernon Sq for the duration of the project.

### Project Journey Updates

So much is going on there that it's hard to keep up. **Join us at the CCCA meeting March 17 for a full update.** Details and link coming later.

### Watch Signature in the Schools on Marquee TV

Tickets are now on sale for Signature in the Schools: Here's the Deal, a world premiere play by Caleen Sinnette Jennings and performed over Zoom by local high school students with professional actor Felicia Curry (The Scottsboro Boys). In *Here's the Deal*, people are in economic ruin and there is a hot debate over the government's role to solve the problems of an increasingly anxious American people. Is it 1929 or 2020? Watch our trailer above to see talented students explore the legacy of the New Deal. Tickets \$5. [Streaming on Marquee TV](#) until June 30.

### New Synetic Streaming Service

Synetic Theater, National Landing's edgy physical theater company, has launched a new streaming service allowing viewers to stream theatrical stage productions and original films right to their home devices. Synetic Streaming has monthly and yearly subscriptions and offers a la carte rentals. More content is scheduled for release in multiple bundles throughout the year. The content library currently includes archived theatrical productions, like Synetic's 2020 adaptation of Phantom of the Opera starring Synetic co-Founder Irina Tsikurishvili as a female Phantom, and 2017's family-friendly hit The Adventures of Peter Pan. The first volume of Synetic Streaming also includes Synetic Motion Pictures' inaugural film All the World's A Stage from long-time Synetic Company Member Scott Brown, as well as the premiere presentation of Orpheia from Company Member Ben Cunis starring Company Members Dan Istrate and Francesca Jandasek. [See details here.](#)

### Registration is now open for Synetic Spring Break Camp

Long ago the Confederation of Elements lived together in harmony. Then everything changed when the Fire Empire attacked... Explore the wonders of the elements through the lens of physical theater. Discover if you can master all the elements to become the next ElementBender and save the world at



Synetic's Spring Break Camp: The Physical Wonders of Nature! March 29 – April 2! [Sign up](#) for all five days, or days that work with your schedule. Flexible pricing available!

### **Metro Asking Public To Weigh In On Cuts, Including Closing Several Arlington Stations**

Metro is asking the public to weigh in on possible options for drastic service cuts, including potentially closing several Arlington stations in January 2022. On February 23 Metro announced that the [public comment period](#) for its [2022 fiscal year budget](#) had officially opened. With it, they are asking riders to [fill out a survey](#) about what options they'd be willing to deal with beginning on Jan. 1, 2022 if more federal money is not received. The options on the survey include closing Metrorail every day at 9 p.m, trains arriving only every 30 mins at most stations, and shuttering up to 22 stations that have low ridership or are near others. That list includes four stations in Arlington: Clarendon, Virginia Square, Arlington Cemetery, and East Falls Church.

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