

CIVIC ASSOCIATION AND LIVABILITY 22202 ISSUES

NOTE: Only paid subscribers for 2022 are receiving this Newsletter by email. Annual dues are paid for the calendar year, so payment of \$10 was due **no later than February 28** for members to remain on the mailing list as voting members to receive the monthly Newsletter and Updates. A confirmation email was sent to all paid 2022 members February 28. Anyone else must either a) [submit an application](#) or b) renew [online by PayPal](#) or send a check to our new Treasurer Steve Miller, 1300 Crystal Drive #408S, Arlington VA 22202.

Seeking a New Newsletter Editor

Your CCCA Newsletter Editor is trying hard to retire. Time for new blood, ideas, and innovative format. If you're interested in writing the monthly Newsletter, let us know at board@crystalcitycivic.org. Glad to provide training and all the necessary contacts.

Next CCCA Meeting March 16, 7-9pm

As stated by President Cassel, at the March meeting we will have JBGS presenting on several different topics:

- 1) The Underground
- 2) River House
- 3) The proposed residential building for where the Americana Motel used to be.

You can join us in person at 251 18th St S or please register in advance for online at: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwsdO-vrzsvEtBwmdZ_OGDlqN1dAStJ-6sO

CRYSTAL CITY (AND NEARBY)

Development/Construction Timelines

The following timelines are very tentative but will give residents an idea of what to expect and when from a variety of projects. We go over these timelines at our CCCA meetings as well. The County has changed its [website](#). Go here to see the [MyArlington](#) map of projects. You can also check the [National Landing BID Development Map](#).

Upcoming Meetings and Deadlines:

- **February 28 - March 14** 223 23rd Street/2250 Crystal Drive (LRPC Online Engagement Opportunity – Block Plan) (see article below)
- **March 2, 7-9 pm:** Crystal City Citizen's Review Council (CCCRC) (see article below)
- **March 14 7-9 pm:** SPRC meeting regarding an Update to the Standard Site Plan Conditions
- **March 16, 7-9 pm:** CCCA Meeting with JBG Smith (including River House listening session per article below)
- **March 29:** County Board budget hearing (see article below)
- **March 31:** County Board tax rate hearing (see article below)
- **TBD:** VDOT Public Information Meeting on Route 1 Feasibility Study (see article below)

New Information:

- Water Park redesign: **construction underway; approved number of trees removed which will be replaced;** completion winter/spring 2023

- Dining in the Park (2121 Crystal Drive): **construction started in February; Anticipated summer 2023 opening for the restaurant.**
- Crystal Square Central District Construction/Opening: **Grocery will be an Amazon Fresh as we've long suspected; opening may be delayed to second quarter 2022; Alamo Draft House opening delayed to fall 2022** (see article below)
- Metro Entrance Plaza Upgrade by BID started in November; **completion anticipated for late April**
- 223 23rd Street/2250 Crystal Drive site plan; southern end of Block M; **online engagement feedback period February 28-March 14; Demolition activities on site are now estimated to start late March.**
- 241-251 18th Street renovation of plazas on both sides of 241; construction of green areas on 18th Street as well as the plazas is expected through **April 2022**
- Second Crystal City Metro Entrance, **possible County update in March**

No Change In Information:

- 2000/2001 S Bell: construction began in January
- 18th Street Complete Street Project, started January 31
- Americana Hotel: preliminary plans filed; formal 4.1 site plan by the end of 1Q 2022 for a residential building to replace the hotel; request for construction parking for MetPark approved December by County Board
- MetPark Amazon HQ2 and Park: Construction October 2021 to mid-2023 (see article below)
- South Eads Street Complete Street – 12th St. S. to Army Navy Drive, 90% design, Final Engineering & Design – Winter 2021
- South Eads Street Complete Street – 12th Street S to 15th Street S: Final concept design – Spring-Summer 2022
- Transitway Extension to 12th Street and 12th Street Complete Project: construction Spring 2022 for 12 months (simultaneous with Transitway Extension Segment 1); Construction on the first segment is expected to start in the winter of 2022 with completion in late 2023.
- 15th Street/Clark Bell Realignment, 90% design
- VRE Design for New Station: final design 2021-2022; award and construction 2022-2024
- Boundary Channel (VDOT): award contract summer 2021; construction 2022; target construction completion fall 2023
- 101 S 12th Street: approved by County Board December in 2020; no construction until tenant signed; Gateway Park design when construction finished in 2-3 years
- New Park at South Eads Street and Army Navy Drive: Project approved by CB June 2021; Design Process Begins 4th Quarter 2021; Construction Begins 1st Quarter 2023 and ends 1st Quarter 2024

In Memoriam

Many of you may not be aware that the widow of Robert H Smith, who built Crystal City, lived here in the north part of Crystal City until her death December 9, 2021. Clarice Smith was an artist and DC philanthropist who donated to many causes. Her husband died in 2009.

Robert and his brother-in-law, Robert P. Kogod, built Crystal House in 1963 (the first step in creating Crystal City), the first residential building in what was then an unattractive brick factory wasteland. They took control of Charles E. Smith Companies in 1967. Smith oversaw construction and

development, and Kogod led leasing and management. In 2001, the residential division of the company was merged into Archstone, which was sold to Equity Residential and Avalon Bay in 2013. The commercial division of the company was merged into Vornado Realty Trust, which merged the division into JBG Smith in 2017. [The Wikipedia article](#) on Robert H Smith includes many details of his life and work. The obituary for Clarice Smith shows she was a major figure in her own right.

An era has passed. We include a [History of Crystal City](#) on our website. You can read the two obituaries here:

[Robert H. Smith](#)

[Clarice Smith](#)

Crystal Plaza 5 (2250 Crystal Drive/223 23rd Street South)

JBGS proposes to redevelop Crystal Plaza 5, the site on the southern portion of Block M in Crystal City. JBGS plans to construct two new 30-story residential towers with retail on the first floor. The East Tower would have 827 units; the West Tower 613. Rezoning from C-O to C-O-Crystal City Mixed Use will require changes to Block Plan M, the PDSP, a site plan amendment, and a new site plan. New park space/open space for CCSP #10 and #11 parks will be incorporated. Some of the existing Crystal City Underground at the south end will be removed and reconfigured. 4.1 Site plans are posted – check out the architectural perspective views for the West Tower and East Tower! This project will also start the County’s realignment of 23rd East of Route 1, with construction coordinated with the New Century Center residential property across 23rd Street. Public engagement and County planning meetings are anticipated to begin shortly.

Share Feedback by **March 14, 2022**. All community members are invited to participate in this online feedback opportunity. Please visit the project webpage. First, review the study materials: [Online Engagement Session Presentation](#) | [Slides](#) | [Revised Block Plan](#). Next, provide comments by Monday, **March 14, 2022**: [Online Feedback Form](#). Your input will help the study team and Long Range Planning Committee evaluate how this area could change in the future.

Pentagon City PDSP Study

At its February 12 meeting, the County Board approved the Pentagon City Sector Plan (PCSP) after an 18 month planning process. The PCSP is a long-term visioning document that balances certainty of investment in livability and sustainability with flexibility for property owners in growing the future of the neighborhood. The Sector Plan aims to diversify housing options, prioritize multi-modal transportation, and embrace biophilic design. [To learn more read the Board’s media release.](#)

PDSP Study and River House

What are people’s concerns? It seems that the primary concern is overall density – how to support a new community of 5500 more units and how it would be built out – either too high or too big footprints. People fear it is just too much no matter how it’s built, that it will end up looking like a public housing project, that the community will not get the benefits it needs once the River House plan and its overwhelming density is approved.

JBG plans to submit a PDSP and 4.1 site plan by early fall, and will be sure to involve the community throughout. They understand that some River House tenants and condo owners on the Ridge are very concerned and want to work with them. JBG does not agree with all of the PCSP plans.

Realignment of S. Joyce Street: The jury is out whether this is a good idea or not. In some ways it's good in that it expands the Virginia Highlands park area and provides a much safer intersection, but it also removes critically needed parking (as well as Grace Hopper park). This will be an ongoing discussion with the community. Also an issue is timing and the County's priorities vs. JBGS plans, which could determine cost and timing and who is ultimately responsible for the realignment.

River House listening sessions: JBG plans to have listening sessions at 3 upcoming civic association meetings: **CCCA (March 16)**, **ARCA (March 17)**, **AHCA (April 13)**. The CCCA presentation may include more background information because CCCA members may be less aware of River House and Pentagon City plans than ARCA and AHCA members.

SPRC #4 for PenPlace (Amazon HQ2)

The last SPRC for Amazon's HQ2 at PenPlace took place February 17. Throughout the SPRC process, county planners asked Amazon and its design team to work through four major issues, all of which have been resolved in staff's view: the architecture of the three office buildings, which were originally deemed "boxy and undistinguished;" the connection of pedestrian and bike pathways throughout the block; improved frontage on Army Navy Drive; and bringing the Helix closer to the ground with the addition of a mid-block staircase. PenPlace now moves onto the next review step — a date with the Arlington Planning Commission — but not without some outstanding concerns. Some members of the SPRC, for example, questioned using the community space allotment for the high school without providing additional space for the neighborhood. The lack of protected bike lanes on the 12th Street side of the block also sparked some concern. PenPlace heads to the planning commission on April 4 and to the county board for approval on April 23. Pending county approval, PenPlace is scheduled to open by 2026. Meanwhile, Amazon is on track to deliver Metropolitan Park, HQ2's first phase, in 2023.

JBG Plans for the Americana Hotel

JBG is still waiting for County approval, but working on the final design internally. They will share details at the **March 16 CCCA meeting**. The residential building will be 200' tall with retail along Eads.

Water Park

Deconstruction of the park infrastructure that needs to be removed has started. Many trees that needed to be removed have been cut down in the Water Park; ones that will be saved have tree protection fencing around them. The Mt. Vernon Trail is to remain open. Construction in that section of the park has not yet started – may happen by late March. JBG is looking for potential retail tenants for the kiosks – with focus on locally owned, small women and minority business owners.

Dining in the Park

Dining in the Park site construction has started. The construction of the building "shell" should be complete by the end of this year, at which point the tenant will begin its fit-out. Anticipated summer 2023 opening for the restaurant.

Crystal City Metro Plaza

Work continues on the Crystal City Metro Plaza enhancements - a collaboration with JBG SMITH and the National Landing BID to improve the plaza. The Harmony Mural was installed last fall with work continuing on the upgrades to the plaza including new seating, lighting, and other upgrades. Completion is anticipated for late April 2022.

South Eads Street Complete Street Engagement Update

In fall 2021, the project team for the South Eads Street (12th Street S. – Army Navy Drive) Complete Street project asked for your feedback on a concept design for this segment of the street. After reviewing the feedback we received at a virtual public meeting and from the online feedback form, the team has shared an summary for this public engagement opportunity. This document consolidates the key themes of the feedback we received and outlines the next steps for this project. You can find the summary and a copy of the comments provided on the interactive map on the [project page](#), under Public Process. The next milestone for this project will be an updated final concept design, expected in Spring 2022.

18th Street South Complete Streets Project Update

Demolition of the median between South Eads Street and South Fern Street lasted through February 15. This is the first phase of the [18th Street South Complete Streets Project](#) to expand protected bike lane connectivity between Crystal City and Pentagon City. The next phase of the project will be curb and gutter construction on the north side of 18th Street South.

February 2022 Project Update and Phase 2 60% Design Engagement

In Winter/Spring 2022, the project team held a public engagement meeting to update the community on the status of each phase of the TETPC, share 60% design plans for Phase 2 (Segment 2A) of the project, and collect public feedback on these designs. A virtual meeting was held on February 8, 2021, and an online feedback form was open until February 27, 2022. [Review the 60% Design Plans.](#)

Crystal City Underground

We are all still concerned about the future of the Underground. JBG has long promised a community meeting with its plans and to respond to the many creative ideas proposed by the Livability22202 working group on the Underground. JBG says it is still working on details, still discovering what's behind and underneath The Underground, including what utilities are available (or problematic for future construction). Retail in the Underground is struggling, especially since COVID.

CCCRC Meeting March 2, 7-9 pm

The Crystal City Citizen Review Council (CCCRC) was established by the Arlington County Board to monitor, identify issues and ensure the success of the Crystal City Sector Plan. The Crystal City Sector Plan presents the future vision to transform the area and make it a more complete, inviting, lively and walkable community. The 19 members are drawn from both the community within Crystal City as well as from the broader Arlington community by way of civic association and citizen advisory group representatives and other key stakeholders. We have 4 CCCA members on the committee: Judy Freshman, Carol Fuller, Emily Norton, and Barbara Selfridge. Michael Dowell, our

Livability22202 lead from Aurora Highlands, has replaced long-serving Christer Ahl as President, after Christer moved out of Arlington last December.

The public is invited to watch meetings, which have been virtual under COVID. The agenda for March 2 is: 1) Crystal City Development Update by staff; 2) CCCRC Recommendations to County Manager for Capital Improvement Plan; 3) Discussion: member thoughts on pros/cons of expansion of CCCRC to cover the Pentagon City planning area; and 4) Input on topics for 2022 meetings. You can view the meeting on [Microsoft Teams](#).

SPRC Updates to Standard Site Plan Conditions

Arlington County is piloting a new site plan review process that will enable the review and exchange of ideas while expanding participation to broader audiences in an online environment. As part of the pilot, Planning staff will continue to work with the Planning Commission, applicants, and the community to improve upon the process and ensure it reaches timely and effective engagement that is essential to Arlington's site plan review process. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, at this time, all meetings will convene virtually. A virtual SPRC meeting regarding an Update to the Standard Site Plan Conditions will be held on **March 14 at 7 pm**. The SPRC will host a virtual meeting to discuss the latest update to the Standard Site Plan Conditions, which govern how site plan projects are permitted, constructed, and operated post-construction. Materials for the meeting will be hosted on the SPRC web page and will be posted a minimum of 72 hours in advance of the meeting. SPRC Members will receive a direct invitation to the Microsoft Teams Meeting. A public link will be posted to the [SPRC web page](#).

Amazon Fresh grocery store opening in Crystal City

The mystery on Crystal Drive is now solved. A new grocery store that's been under construction in Crystal City is set to be an Amazon Fresh. First announced in 2020 as a "specialty grocery store," the large retail space at 1550 Crystal Drive has been somewhat-secretly transforming for more than a year into an Amazon-owned store. But the company has kept mum about its Amazon Fresh plans in Arlington until now. In addition to traditional checkouts, this store will also have Just Walk Out technology, which gives customers the option to skip the checkout line. The new store will also have anti-graffiti window film, according to building permits. [Read more here.](#)

Alamo Drafthouse Cinema now aiming for fall opening in Crystal City

The new Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in Crystal City is now aiming for a fall opening, delayed from the spring. The Texas-based theater chain first announced that it was going to open a nine-screen, 50,000-square-foot complex at 1660 Crystal Drive in the summer. The theater will be operated by franchisee Cojeaux Cinemas, which operates other Alamo Drafthouses in Virginia and D.C. The original intent was to open the Arlington theaters in May or June, but that's been pushed back by at least a few months, as Variety first reported and the franchisee owner confirmed to ARLnow. [Read more here.](#)

VDOT Feasibility Study on Route 1

The VDOT team studying ways to "improve safety, accessibility, and the pedestrian experience crossing Route 1" presented to the CCCA on January 19 ([see website](#)). Phase 2 will cover a number of new studies and probably continue until February 2023. The next Public Information Meeting is

www.crystalcitycivic.org
www.facebook.com/crystalcitycivic

planned for late March or early April, but we were told that VDOT will not restart the Task Force meetings in Phase 2. As follow up, on February 27, the Livability22202 Working Group on Route 1 forwarded [a letter to VDOT](#) with comments and requests for the Phase 2 process. We have specifically asked VDOT to 1) restart the Task Force in which the Working Group participated during Phase 1; 2) reconsider the Livability 22202 hybrid proposal for Route 1 – with Route 1 at grade at 15th and remaining elevated from 18th; and 3) collaborate with Livability22202 on Exploring a bike-ped passageway under an at-grade Route 1 at 18th Street: .

Over 210,000 Retail Square Feet, Representing Over 50 New Retailers, Well Underway in National Landing *(per JBG quarterly report to investors)*

In its [quarterly report to investors](#), JBG Smith announced that JBG SMITH's and Amazon's planned retail deliveries over the next few years will almost triple the number of street-level retailers in National Landing. Over 50% of JBG holdings are in the National Landing. In 2021, JBG made significant progress on several of these projects:

- 100% leased or committed to 10 retailers at Central District Retail, the first phase of our retail repositioning in National Landing, opening in 2022.
- In March 2021, commenced construction on 20 street-level retail spaces at 1900 Crystal Drive, with expected delivery in 2023.
- Expect to break ground on two noteworthy retail placemaking projects encompassing 11 retail spaces in National Landing in the first quarter of 2022: Dining in the Park and Water Park, opening in 2023.
- Partnered with Amazon to identify and execute leases with 14 new retailers at the under-construction Metropolitan Park, expected to open by the end of 2023.
- New anchor retailers in the submarket will include Alamo Theater and an Amazon Fresh grocer, with openings planned this year.

Projected Growth Due to Amazon *(per JBG quarterly report to investors)*

The Commonwealth of Virginia has incentivized Amazon to bring up to 38,000 new jobs to National Landing, which, based on data from the National Landing Business Improvement District, would increase the daytime population in the submarket from approximately 50,000 people to nearly 90,000 people in the future, representing dramatic growth of nearly 80%. Amazon announced its hybrid return-to-the-office policy in late 2021, requiring employees to live locally and within commuting distance of the office for at least 11 months of the year. This policy aligns well with Amazon's aggressive hiring in the current competitive job market.

At its Seattle headquarters, approximately 20% of Amazon's employees live within walking or biking distance to work, and Amazon provides \$350 monthly stipends to employees who bike to HQ2. Using Amazon's Seattle employee patterns and preferences as proxies for behaviors that might be expected at HQ2, 20% of employees, or up to 7,600 Amazon employees, could be expected to live within the National Landing submarket. This potential influx of demand for additional multifamily units aligns well with our plans to deliver new multifamily supply to the submarket. In addition to the 1,583 units currently under construction in National Landing (1900 Crystal Drive and 2000 and 2001 South Bell Street), our Near-Term Development Pipeline has the potential to add as many as 1,760 more new multifamily units to National Landing.

Office Trends *(per JBG investor report)*

Our office portfolio had a strong finish to the year, with 467,000 square feet leased in the fourth quarter and a weighted average lease term of eight years, bringing our 2021 total leasing volume to 1.7 million square feet – double the leasing volume in 2020 and 77% of the leasing volume in 2019. Over 50% of the leasing success in the fourth quarter can be attributed to our leasing team securing several early renewals with our mission critical GSA tenants, highlighting the resiliency of this tenant base and their commitment to office space. Despite this robust leasing activity, occupancy only increased 30 basis points quarter-over-quarter, primarily as a result of prepandemic decision making. As we mentioned in our prior letter, we believe the pandemic has delayed our ability to backfill some known 2021 and 2022 office vacancies related to tenants' pre-pandemic leasing decisions. Looking ahead to 2022, we feel confident that we will renew at or above our historical retention rates on the 912,000 square feet of leases rolling. While this is positive news, new leasing has been slow to recover over the past 18 months and will likely continue to lag due to delayed return-to-the-office plans and decision-making related to future office utilization. We expect this lag to continue to impact our occupancy levels through 2022.

Retail Trends *(per JBG quarterly report to investors)*

Despite the surge in COVID-19 cases in the latter half of the quarter, our retail leasing plans remained unaltered, and interest in our assets persisted. Ahead of an anticipated return of consumer demand, our team diligently pursued tenant leads yielding strong results – we executed 11 leases in the fourth quarter totaling just over 26,000 square feet. In National Landing specifically, we executed eight leases over the course of 2021. Interest in this submarket remains incredibly high, which we attribute almost entirely to our successful anchor leasing, planned multifamily deliveries, and overall successful placemaking track record. We are advancing the most critical milestones of our overall Crystal Drive retail repositioning, including the upcoming groundbreaking on two notable placemaking projects – Dining in the Park and Water Park; and, as the retail leasing partner for Amazon's under-construction Metropolitan Park, leasing progress is coming to fruition well in advance of the anticipated 2023 completion date. In addition to the new multifamily supply under construction, these projects are crucial to our submarket repositioning, serving as the all-important main street in our overall placemaking strategy. JBG SMITH's and Amazon's other planned retail deliveries in the next few years will almost triple the number of street-level retailers in National Landing.

Establishing National Landing as the First 5G-Enabled Connected City at Scale in the Country

(per JBG quarterly report to investors)

JBG Smith entered into an innovative public-private partnership with Arlington County to activate existing dark fiber and conduit assets across National Landing, accelerating the rollout of 5G networks. JBG signed a definitive agreement with AT&T to deploy 5G ubiquitously across National Landing. AT&T is leveraging a combination of our controlled fiber, power, and real estate assets to deploy their 5G public network.

University of Maryland Global Campus takes lead at Crystal City space UMD leased in 2019

The University of Maryland Global Campus has taken center stage at the Crystal City office initially leased by the University of Maryland, College Park for a so-called "discovery center" and is gearing up for a May launch of in-person classes. As higher education's remote learning peaked in the summer of 2020, the University of Maryland entered into a business agreement with UMGC — which

primarily offers online courses to 55,323 students across the U.S. and in military bases abroad — to operate the space at 241 18th St. S. UMGC is using the site — which neither institution refers to as a “campus” — to host six online courses, which will move from virtual-only to hybrid in May. UMGC plans to grow its on-site staff in Crystal City along with enrollment. The university is currently offering six courses — in business management, information technology, criminal justice, human resource management, and cybersecurity management and policy — but it plans to increase those offerings to 15 to 20 classes per term. UMGC also wants to add an MBA program and a graduate cybersecurity program once in-person classes are rolling in Crystal City, with a future goal of adding a graduate-level certificates in logistics, supply chain management and health management. The UMGC courses, which are chosen on a rolling three-year schedule, are taught in the evenings.

Calling all Volunteer Gardeners

Following on the very productive 2021 year gardening at the Highlands Urban Garden (HUG) next to the tennis courts at Virginia Highlands Park, we’re preparing for spring planting. Come join us **March 13** from 1-3 pm to assess what wintered over, fix fencing, discuss what plants to grow this year, get peat pots to start seeds for the garden, and sow peas in the existing plots. We have kale and chard that wintered over in covered plots and we want to say “hello” to them. Bring some seeds to share or suggest for planting.

2022 Spring Garden Kickoff

Registration is now live for the Plot Against Hunger Spring Garden Kickoff, organized by the Friends of Urban Agriculture (FOUA). Join us at Central Library on **March 12th** from 10 am until 2 pm for our annual Spring Garden Kickoff event, "Growing Together: Let's Dig In!"

Highlights:

- * "Growing with Climate Change," an expert panel discussion
- * Garden tours and demonstrations
- * Seed and seedling giveaways
- * Tool clinic and tool swap
- * Opportunities to engage with garden experts on a host of topics

Library staff will distribute garden-themed "take and make" craft projects for visitors of all ages. All workshops are subject to change. Outdoor activities will be weather-dependent. Register today at arlingtonurbanag.org and click on the event image or banner.

Note: Our Livability22202 Highlands Urban Garden (HUG) is one of the garden plots.

Interested in local history?

See a great video on YouTube about the Long Bridge [here](#).

New private school set to open this fall in Aurora Highlands church

On February 12 the County Board approved a use permit letting Vienna-based Veritas Collegiate Academy open a satellite campus at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in the Aurora Highlands neighborhood at 935 23rd Street S. The facility, dubbed Veritas Crystal City, would have up to 25 students in grades K-12 and 10 staff members, according to a county report. The move into Arlington represents an expansion for the Christian liberal arts school, which recently relocated its main campus from Fairfax to a larger site in Vienna. Per its website, Veritas says has been in negotiations with the church for the past year. [Read more here.](#)

Potomac Yard Metro station construction is 70% complete



City staff reported that most of the station buildings will be finished in late July. The station is now planned to open for service this fall, and the entire project is planned to wrap up in summer 2023. The project broke ground in Dec. 2019, with the plan to open in spring 2022. However, last summer Metro engineers found that the Automatic Train Control systems were not safe and needed to be redesigned.

AHDC gets help from Amazon to secure Arlandria apartment building for affordable housing

The Alexandria Housing Development Corporation (AHDC) recently announced that it bought the Park Vue of Alexandria apartments in Arlandria from Florida-based ZRS Management with support of \$51.4 million from the \$2 billion Amazon Housing Equity Fund, and conditionally will remain affordable for at least 99 years. The announcement of the sale comes as developments progress on Amazon's HQ2, Virginia Tech's Innovation Campus and the Potomac Yard Metro station — all projects that have raised concerns of gentrification. [Read more here.](#)

Crystal City Restaurants

Beauty by Society Fair, a “champagne boutique,” is hoping to start serving bubbly in Crystal City within the next month. The store at 576 23rd Street S, the former home of Agents of Style, a consignment boutique, is set to be a combination of retail store, bistro and wine shop.

New Stores and Restaurants in Pentagon Row (Westpost)

Specialty athletic shoe store **Road Runner Sports** opened February 25. It will be the first Arlington location for the running shoe retailer, with its next closest store being in Falls Church. It's filling the 4,500 square-foot space at 1101 S. Joyce Street once occupied by Unleashed. The Petco off-shoot closed more than a year ago.

Target is installing shelving and planning to open April 3 a 34,000 square-foot store in the former Bed, Bath, & Beyond space.

Kusshi, known for its sushi and sake, is aiming for an early April opening at Westpost in the former Nepalese eatery Namaste Everest space.

ARLINGTON COUNTY ISSUES

Proposed FY 2023 Budget Looks Toward Post-Pandemic Future

County Manager Mark Schwartz's proposed FY 2023 budget begins to look beyond the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on the County workforce, affordable housing, schools and the environment. In all, the proposal details \$1.47 billion in General Fund spending, a 5.5-percent increase over FY 2022. The budget is based on 3.4 percent growth in real estate assessments and 7 percent growth in overall tax revenue. The proposed budget includes no change to current property tax rates. Although revenues are recovering, there is still uncertainty with some revenue sources, such as hotel taxes and non-tax revenue like parking meters, which Schwartz says the County will continue to monitor.

The County Board will hold a budget hearing on March 29th and a tax rate hearing on March 31st. You can participate in person or virtually. To sign up to speak, visit the County Board webpage. The final vote on the FY 2023 operating budget is scheduled for Saturday, April 23. The fiscal year begins July 1. [Read more here.](#)

How Should Arlington Invest in Major Infrastructure for the Future?

The Capital Improvement Plan or CIP is the County's plan for building, upgrading, and replacing facilities and infrastructure. It captures Arlington planned investments in major infrastructure over a 10-year period and is updated every two years. We need to hear from you to develop an informed plan for our community. Tell us which projects are your priorities. [Your input](#) will help inform the County Manager's proposed CIP, which he will present to the County Board in May.

APS proposes new budget with sunnier outlook than years past

For the first time in four years, Arlington Public Schools presented a balanced budget for its upcoming fiscal year. On February 24 Superintendent Francisco Durán told the School Board his proposed \$746.1 million operating budget for July 2022 to June 2023 invests heavily in students with disabilities, English-language learners and other students who are struggling, while ensuring base salaries and raises for staff that are competitive and sustainable. His proposed budget, with a 6.4% bump in spending compared to the current fiscal year, includes \$51 million in new investments and about 82 new positions. These range from assistants, behavioral specialists and therapists for students with disabilities to reading and math coaches at Title 1 schools and buildings with more than 650 students. School Board members received his budget proposal — and the big, black “zero shortfall” noted — with a great deal of optimism. [Read more here.](#)

Free Tax Preparation

Arlington County offers free tax assistance and resources to County residents and library patrons. Please call ahead or go online to schedule an appointment. Due to the pandemic, the organizations that usually help residents prepare their taxes are making a number of changes. We will provide updated information as it becomes available. [Read more here.](#)

Arlington Measuring Community Satisfaction in County Services

Arlington County is conducting its sixth County-wide, statistically valid community survey to measure satisfaction with major County services and gather input about issues facing the community. The results enable County officials to assess performance across many County agencies and services. They also will be used to inform budget development, guide management decisions, identify areas for improvement, and ensure the best possible customer experience. The County conducted its last resident satisfaction survey in 2018. “This statistically valid survey provides the County lens as to how we’re doing in the delivery of services and programs and where we may need to improve and plan for the future,” said County Manager Mark Schwartz. “We encourage everyone who receives an invitation to participate to do so.” Randomly selected residents in all parts of the County will receive a phone call, postcard, social media, email or text message encouraging their participation in the survey. Survey questions cover a wide variety of topics, including budget, public safety, parks and recreation, public works, transportation and human services. Survey results will be available on the County’s website in fall of 2022. [Take the survey here.](#)

County staff want your opinion on Report a Problem Tool

Arlington County is collecting feedback on the Request a Service/Report-a-Problem tool and results provided through its use. Please take a few moments to complete this very short [questionnaire](#).

County officials are not optimistic feds will get on board with aircraft noise recommendations

As a new aircraft noise study comes in for a landing, Arlington officials admit there remains little the county can actually do about the noise above. They're not hopeful they can get the Federal Aviation Administration on board with changes, such as shifting National Airport's flight patterns to less populated areas. A work group plans to ask the agency to shift incoming planes away from more developed areas and is expected to recommend doing the same for departures.

For years, residents have complained about aircraft noise, resulting from the flight patterns in and out of National Airport as well as Pentagon-bound helicopters. It's gotten marginally worse in recent years after the FAA adjusted flight patterns to push flight paths further west, away from D.C., due to the Secret Service's concerns about commercial flights encroaching into federal no-fly zones (Prohibited Area 56). The new patterns resulted in complaints among Arlington residents who live close to the Potomac River, including those in Rosslyn. Now, after nearly three years, the "Aircraft Noise Mitigation Study" is reaching its conclusion. [Read more here.](#)

2022 Arlington Reads

Arlington Public Library will present seven thought-provoking writers to talk about their own interactions with classic novels beginning March 2. Throughout this year, Arlington Public Library will present seven thought-provoking writers to talk about their own interactions with classic novels — how we as a society define classics, make them accessible to everyone and how classic novels influence other authors. [Read more here.](#)

Public Education about Deer in Arlington

For nearly three years, the Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) has been conducting an extensive public education program concerning the impact of deer on our local forest ecosystems.

1) We have briefed 65 groups with more than 1200 attendees. After the presentation, most people recognize that deer are a problem for our local flora and fauna, and that the deer population is much larger than it was a decade or two ago. Many attendees also gasp when we tell them that the only state-approved method for managing the deer population is culling. They are assuaged when we cite perfect safety records in nearby Fairfax County and Rock Creek park. And they are particularly pleased when they learn that the venison is used to feed the hungry. [Aside: I want to thank all of you who took the time to write to the County Board after our presentation about this issue. It is making a difference.]

2) In April 2021, the county hired a contractor to count the deer. The contractor concluded that Arlington has too many deer, particularly in its most sensitive natural areas. The contractor recommended aggressive deer management.

3) Currently, the county is preparing to issue a second contract for a variety of reasons. See two documents ([the contractor study](#) and the [county plan based on the study](#)) and a [video of a panel discussion at a recent Committee of 100 meeting](#). The panel discussion includes county representatives, a representative from ARMN, and a representative from the Animal Welfare League.

We (ARMN) are committed to advocating for the health of our ecosystem. We want to speak with anyone who has the time and the willingness to learn about these issues. Please contact us and invite us to lead a discussion of the issues. *[FYI: Nor surprisingly, the study found no deer in Crystal City; Glen Carlyn had the highest count of 40 deer per square mile.]*

OTHER ISSUES

Black Heritage Museum of Arlington

Have you visited The Black Heritage Museum of Arlington yet? BHMA shines a spotlight on the Black history of Arlington County and the capital region where you can learn about the history of Freedman's Village, desegregation of Virginia public schools, Arlington House, Johnson's Hill (now Arlington View), Green Valley, High View Park-Hall's Hill, Queen City and more.

[Learn more and plan your next visit.](#) 2611 Columbia Pike, Arlington, VA 22204. Open Thursdays (3-6 PM) and Saturdays (2-5 PM)

Reclaiming the Lost Identity of Arlington County Through the Lens of Green Valley

The National Landing BID organized a virtual discussion February 24 livestreamed from the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington on the development of African American communities in Arlington County. Dr. Lindsey Bestebreurtje, a historian of African American History and Culture, began the discussion sharing details of Arlington County's first predominantly Black communities, specifically the communities within East Arlington, as well as the history of the Green Valley neighborhood, shedding a light on suburbanization, social systems of inequality, and segregation in the mid-20th Century. Following Dr. Bestebreurtje's presentation, Mrs. Portia Clark and Dr. Alfred Taylor, two well-known community activists and researchers, joined the discussion to share a historical and first-hand narrative on the evolution of the Green Valley community, one of the area's first predominantly Black neighborhoods. The discussion highlighted stories of the original creators and innovators who helped build, shape and influence not only the Green Valley community, but also the greater Arlington community, despite the laws of Virginia that often denied them access to the educational, financial and land purchasing opportunities to enable them to compete on level playing ground. [Watch the video here.](#)

Gallery Underground March Exhibit: Earth Speaks

Solo exhibition by Kinda Barazi at Gallery Underground March 2022, 2100 Crystal Drive March 1-25, Monday - Friday 10am-6pm. First Friday Opening Reception: Friday, March 4, 2022 5-7pm. In Earth Speaks Barazi uses mixed media on canvas to explore the questions: "Are humanoids advancing or retrogressing? Were we once a high-tech civilization, and are we now living in a virtual simulation? As humans tamper with the process of evolution, speeding extinctions, and creating organizational powers and loyalty of thousands to go to wars, when few animals do, are we truly the superior species?" In our Main Gallery, are new works by our members, in media including oil, acrylic, pastel, watermedia, sculpture, glass, and ceramics. Gallery Underground welcomes five new members in March each with a unique and intriguing art style.

Gallery Underground, the juried gallery of the Arlington Artists Alliance, has been named our region's "Best Art Gallery" in Northern Virginia Magazine's 2021 reader survey and has received a 2021 "Arlie" as one of Arlington's "Best Shops" from the readers of ARLNow. Located in the Crystal City Shops at

2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington, Virginia, this visual arts venue showcases the work of established and emerging regional artists.

SmarTrip Card Phase Out Deadline March 1

Beginning on March 1, 2022, all SmarTrip cards purchased before 2012 will no longer be accepted or reloaded at fare vending machines in Metrorail stations, on buses, parking facilities or retail locations. This is part of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) transition to new and improved faregates and fareboxes at Metrorail stations and on buses. Cards purchased before 2012 have an outdated chip technology that is not compatible with the new faregates and boxes. To learn more about the transition and to see if you need to replace your card, read this [press release from WMATA](#).

President Eric Cassel

Vice President Tarsi Dunlop

Meeting Secretary Alistair Watson (by appointment)

Communications Director Idris Clay

Membership Liaison Emily Norton

Treasurer Steve Miller

Join on our website:

<http://www.crystalcitycivic.org/>

Or [Renew Your Membership](#)

Pay through PayPal

Or send a check for \$10 to:

Steve Miller

Treasurer, CCCA

1300 Crystal Drive #408S

Arlington, VA 22202