

Meeting called to order by GCA President Julie Lee at 7:30 pm.

Julie Lee welcomed the speaker, Samia Byrd, Chief Race and Equity Officer for Arlington County. She is leading the work in the county government and the community at large to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion. Samia has a BA (Georgia Tech) and MA (UVA) in city planning. Her career in community and economic development, affordable housing and land use planning has involved, in her words, “bridging gaps for people of color by empowering them to contribute and shape the places where they live.” Samia has worked in Arlington County government for 13 years as a Principal Planner and Deputy County Manager (3 years). In 2018, she became an Arlington County representative to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, where a focus on race and equity started her down the path to her current position. Samia worked with former Arlington County Board Chair Christian Dorsey on an equity resolution and from September 2019 to July 2020 developed an interdepartmental team to discuss what we are talking about when we discuss race and equity in government. A major part of her current role is to shape the position. What it is: leading, organizing, collaborating. What it is not: being the expert, fixing or solving the problems, or being a compliance officer.

To summarize using Samia Byrd’s words, “The purpose is for race to no longer be a predictor of success in any area of life in Arlington County. There are systems in place that reinforce racial disparities. Areas of inequity include wealth, education, housing, criminal justice, where we live, and social status. Race is always the elephant in the room, and historically we have not wanted to talk about it. There is intersectionality with gender, disability, and LGBTQ people. We can provide a model for other areas of marginalization.” How are systemic race inequity issues perpetuated and how can they be disrupted? Diversity = representation, inclusion = participation and equity = justice. “Equity is not equality. If the system is not fair, equality is not the starting point.”

At the county level, there are **four goals**. **Normalize** (shared understanding), **organize** (sustainable structure, staff and resources), **operationalize** (who benefits? who is missing? what do we do? Learn how to check our bias, privilege, motives, intent and purpose), and **assess** (analyze data to determine the extent to which racial equity becomes a shared value and standard practice). Some of the actions being undertaken to reach the goals:

Staff education: equity course, terms, definitions and content.

Neighborhood Tool Kit: neighbor to neighbor conversations.

Race and Ethnicity Dashboard: key measurable indicators.

History: build a timeline for history of race in Arlington, including transportation, parks and rec and cultural amenities; also celebrating some of our history.

Racial equity core team: with all departments represented.

Racial equity action plan: standards and guidelines in six key areas.

Regional work: sharing across jurisdictions, forming a race and equity officers group.

What can individuals do? explore, listen, learn, talk, and act. Ask, what are my privileges and biases?

The focus for the next two years: connect, resonate, understand. Reach as many people as possible.

Bring people of color and foreign language speakers to the conversation.

“Racism has been a matter of urgency for 400 years. There are no shortcuts, no steps to skip.”

Samia Byrd

At the end of her presentation, Samia Bird was given a round of applause, and Julie Lee thanked her on behalf of everyone for her explanation and her work.

Old Business

A motion to approve the February GCA meeting minutes was made and seconded, with no corrections.

Treasurer's report by Tim Aiken. There are 168 dues-paying members (up three), and a balance of \$19,630.00.

Civic Federation report by Tim Aiken. At the February meeting, there was an update by Dr. Reuben Varghese, Arlington County Public Health Director, on availability of Covid 19 vaccines. They are moving through the priority list recommended by the CDC. A resolution prepared for the Civic Federation on issues of storm water management (in response to the county's planning for increased flooding) was presented for consideration for adoption at a future meeting. The county has done an update of its master plan on parks and recreation. An analysis by the Civic Federation through an equity lens brought to light serious shortcomings in accessibility as you go down the economic ladder. A resolution to address these shortcomings was adopted.

Neighborhood Conservation Committee report by Kathy Reeder. There have been no changes on the Street Improvement Project for 4th St. S. 5500 and 5600 blocks. Summer 2021 continues to be the estimated timing for the start of construction. As more information becomes available on contractor selection and construction timing, it will be updated in the *Village View* and on Glencarlyn.org under the NC Activities tab.

Last year, GCA selected the wooded grove at the west end of Kenmore Middle School for its next NC project. This area has non-native and overgrown vegetation, insect infestation, a "social path" for students, dumping of trash and soil, drug related items, and questionable activity due to limited visibility. This is a proposed project only and is at an early stage in the NC process. As more information is available about next steps, it will be communicated in the *Village View* and on glencarlyn.org under the NC Activities tab.

Non-NC projects update: no new information on the fenced opening at 6th St. S. or the dead end at 1st St. S.

Steering Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion, report by Pippy Sickbert. There was a Dialogues on Race and Equity (DRE) partner check-in las Thursday (February 4) with 30 partners online. In Glencarlyn, the Steering Committee is focused on **normalization**, Goal 1 for race equity in Arlington County. It involves conversations on race, defining terms, and developing shared understandings of the issues. The committee is working on a team action plan, with a prioritization of actions. We are planning a speaking engagement with Wilma Jones, the author of *My Halls Hill Family: More than a Neighborhood*.

Village View, report by Brandon Hemel. The April newsletter deadline is the 10th of March.

Neighborhood Directory. The Citizen's Association produces a new one every 5 years, and it is due. Data collection will begin using a secure google link or a QR code with a phone number in the Glencarlyn Updates. The Directory is for the neighborhood only and is given to all 540 households. It is not posted online or shared outside the neighborhood. For more information on the directory, check update@glencarlyn.org. It should only be accessed through the update link. Julie Lee will be in touch with Brandon Hemel and Doug LeRoy to make sure it is not on the website. Julie Lee thanked Sarah Williams and Pippy Sickbert for their work on the new system for updating the directory.

Glencarlyn Day. Julie Lee has reserved the Glencarlyn pavilion for June 5 and September 11. The executive committee will consider the governor's guidelines for gatherings and the vaccination updates by the county, discuss the timing at their meeting in late March and announce a decision at the beginning of April. If Glencarlyn Day is postponed, we may plan some other, safe activities for June 5.

GCA Nominating Committee report by Kathy Reeder. The Nominating Committee will present the candidates for GCA officers for the 2021-2022 year at the May 3rd GCA meeting. The positions include officers and delegates. Delegates represent GCA on countywide committees and report back. The list of candidates will be in the March Village View. There is a description of the roles in the GCA Bylaws, under the ABOUT tab. Any individual who resides in Glencarlyn is eligible. If interested, contact Kathy Reeder for more information. Her contact information is in the directory. Express interest soon, and the committee contact you.

New Business

Plant sale. Judy Funderburk announced a Plant Sale on Sunday, May 16 of native plants from the library garden and many plants from our usual vendor. All Covid protocols will be observed.

Lane closures. Starting March 8th and continuing for six months, there will be a temporary lane closure on northbound Carlin Springs Road from 8th Place S. to 5th Road S to protect pedestrians, including those who walk to and from Campbell Elementary, Carlin Springs Elementary and Kenmore Middle School. The closing is part of Arlington County's *Zero Vision* goal to eliminate vehicular fatalities. A comment was made that there had been no public input on the decision, and Julie Lee affirmed that. Reach out to the Department of Environmental Services (ask Julie Lee for the contact info) with questions or concerns.

Vandalism at Carlin Hall. Obscene writing on the outside walls were reported. Julie Lee described Glencarlyn's vandalism issues to Ben Aiken, County Ombudsman, and reported that he is looking into getting security cameras for the library/Carlin Hall area.

GCA meeting speakers and programs. At the April 5 meeting, there will be a sharing of information and a discussion of the Missing Middle Housing project. At the May meeting, we will have the election of officers and delegates, we will discuss upcoming community activities and Police Officer Montoya will talk with us about outreach from the police department to Glencarlyn and other communities.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.