

DRAFT

The meeting was called to order by President Julie Lee at 7:35 pm.

Julie Lee led a presentation and discussion on the Missing Middle Housing Study.

A recently updated slide presentation prepared by the County was shown.

The term “missing middle” in this study refers to the size - not the price - of dwellings. It includes those housing types between single family and mid-to high-rise apartment buildings; i.e., duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and multiplexes. While Arlington County cannot dictate the price of new homes, there is a belief that changing zoning laws to allow these options would ultimately provide more affordable housing choices for those earning 60- 80% of the average median income for the County, with the objective that these higher density homes would blend in on existing streets and neighborhoods.

The initiative, begun in 2019, is now in Phase 1: Building a common understanding. County staff have held listening tours and zip code listening meetings. In 2022, the study is expected to recommend locations for zoning amendments for chosen housing types.

What are the community priorities and concerns? What, more specifically, are the new building types? Where can they fit in? and how will they be regulated? How can we preserve smaller, less expensive homes that already exist? Environmental concerns: tree canopy loss, increasing area of impervious pavement, storm water management.

Virginia is a property rights state. The County cannot take away from landowners what they are already allowed to do with their property. The County cannot say that home footprints must be smaller. These new housing types can be the same size as McMansions, but with multiple families.

Impact on schools: The County says they cannot address the issue of schools until they determine where this new housing will go. The County and School Board are considering park land for school sites.

The County has said that a larger supply of missing middle housing will drive prices down. Some studies indicate that it causes a dramatic rise in the cost of property. Can the County show us how Missing Middle can provide more affordable housing? The median household income in Arlington County is \$117,374. For black residents it is \$58,878, for Hispanics it is \$77,743, and for Asians it is \$93,660. Missing middle housing is intended to provide housing options for those earning 60- 80% of the area's median income. To create lower prices, developers must put new housing in places where land is lower in cost. This would include some south Arlington and historically black neighborhoods. What impact would this have on these neighborhoods? The County removed the slides addressing affordability and racial equity from the original slide deck. Are affordability and racial equity no longer part of the study? We need answers to our questions before the zoning is changed. Depending on how you look at the data, there are more missing middle type units (28.7%) than single family homes (23.2%).

Ms. Lee is concerned about increasing density. She posed these questions: Why are they in such a hurry to change the zoning? What promises were made to Amazon? Have they explored commercial properties? How and when can we get answers before zoning changes are made? If these zoning changes are made, there is no changing back. They must get it right the first time.

Questions were asked by meeting attendees.

Q. What about storm water management and flooding?

Q. Can they zone just for duplexes, not tri- or quadraplexes?

A. Matt Weinstein: Up-zoning can be specific as to the kind of units.

Q. Jeff Liteman: How does increasing density help disadvantaged groups?

Q. Sue Campbell: Can the GCA write a resolution on the M.M. issue?

A. Julie Lee: We are hoping to get some more answers before we prepare a resolution.

Tim Aiken thanked Julie Lee for the presentation and offered these comments: The County cannot address affordability issues. They say it (M.M. housing) will create a middle range alternative to the current trend. 70% of Arlington County land is controlled by single family housing. The schools will probably build up (higher) on existing facilities, rather than on park land.

Julie Lee reported Board Vice-Chair Katie Cristol said that an \$800,000 duplex is better than a \$million+ house. Ms. Lee's response is, "to whom?" And what is the tipping point when a greater supply of housing types causes prices to come down? IS there that point in Arlington?

Q. Deborah Elkinton: Can the County change height restrictions for homes?

A. Matt Weinstein: The County can make the height or the foot print greater. It would make the property use legal but non-conforming.

Citizens can find information at [housing.arlingtonva.us/missing middle](https://housing.arlingtonva.us/missing-middle). Sign up to be a Community Partner and or subscribe to study updates in your inbox. With questions, contact housingarlington@arlingtonva.us.

Old Business

There was a motion to approve the minutes of the April 2021 GCA meeting, which was seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report by Tim Aiken. There are 174 dues-paying members, and a balance of \$19,264.00. Ninety-one have paid dues through PayPal. Twenty-three have paid twice this year.

Civic Federation report by Tim Aiken. Senator Mark Warner spoke on the American Rescue Plan Act. There was a presentation on the pilot program testing the efficacy of mental health specialists accompanying law enforcement officers on calls involving persons suspected of having mental health issues. The new budget allocates a modest increase in funding for this program. A resolution was adopted to preserve Arlington's tree canopy. The Federation voted to include two new members, one of which is Our Revolution Arlington, a local chapter of the national Our Revolution organization.

Neighborhood Conservation Committee report by Kathy Reeder. On the project for the 5500 and 5600 blocks of 4th St. S. (between Kensington and Illinois), the contract for the construction work has been awarded and summer 2021 is the projected start time. Water main upgrade work has been underway and gas line work is expected to start soon. New information will be reported 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 still a proposed project only. The NC staff has had some preliminary discussions with Arlington Public Schools, which owns the property. Further information will be communicated in the *Village View* and on Glencarlyn.org under the NC Activities tab.

Village View report by Brandon Hemel. The deadline for the next issue is April 10.

Nominating Committee report by Kathy Reeder. We still need nominees for alternate representatives to the Arlington County Civic Federation. The full slate of nominees will be in the May *Village View*, and will be elected at the May 3GCA meeting.

Arlington County Vaccine Committee report by Rachel Porter. Governor Northam announced that those 16 and older will be eligible for vaccines on April 18. The committee sends Rachel Porter periodic updates to pass along in the Glencarlyn Updates.

Steering Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion report by Pippy Sickbert. On April 22, Arlington County Dialogues on Race and Equity will interview Ms. Sickbert to highlight the things that the Glencarlyn community has done and has planned. We are holding a fireside chat with Wilma Jones, author of My Hall’s Hill Family, on May 13 at 7:30. Jeff Liteman added that we have one, possibly two other neighborhoods as partners on this program, Lyon Park and possibly Ashton Heights. There will be other programming later this summer.

Directory: Please submit data online. An opportunity for residents to submit their data on paper will be in the May or June Village Voice.

Glencarlyn Days: The Executive Committee made a decision to hold GC Days on September 10 and 11. Courtney Holmes has some exciting plans.

Library Campaign continues: Tomorrow there is a meeting on the county budget. You can watch the meeting and sign up to speak that night. We have not received a response to the letter GCA sent to the Board concerning the library.

Proposed by-laws amendment changing Association name to “Glencarlyn Civic Association”: At the May meeting we will discuss and vote on changing our name from Glencarlyn Citizens’ Association to Glencarlyn Civic Association. This brings us in line with the terminology used by Arlington County Government when referring to neighborhood associations, most of which have “Civic Association” as part of their name. Jeff Liteman explained that use of the word “citizens” can be misconstrued to mean U. S citizens only or homeowners only. Historically, in the South, the word was used in ways that were discriminatory.

Glencarlyn celebrates Spring on May 8 with a spring-themed door decorating contest. Courtney Holmes reported that winners in two categories – kids and adults – will receive gift cards to Seven-Eleven. There will be an announcement and signup info in GC Updates and the May Village View.

Plant sale: Judy Funderburk announced that there will be a flyer in the next Village View about the annual native and non-native plant sale on May 16. There will not be as many vendors as in the past, but the honey guy and the master gardeners' advice booth will be there.

Upcoming GCA meetings: At the May GCA meeting, we will have an update from Officer Montoya, our neighborhood outreach officer, the election of GCA officers and a vote on amending the bylaws for the GCA name change.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.