



# Glencarlyn Civic Association October 3, 2022

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## *DRAFT*

Meeting called to order by Julie Lee at 7:35 pm.

President Julie Lee introduced the speaker, Arlington County Board Vice-Chair Christian Dorsey, who prefaced his remarks with a tribute to Julie for her engagement in the community. Mr. Dorsey began by saying that Arlington is healthy, but there are areas of concern.

Due to federal agency offices leaving Arlington and the pandemic's effects on office use, Arlington has experienced a crisis of commercial real estate vacancies. Companies have reduced their office needs and gone from signing long-term leases of 10 to 20 years to leases in the 2 to 5-year range. If commercial values are down, the share of costs is shifted to the residential sector. Not wanting the only response to be raising taxes for residents, the Board is looking into allowing new uses for office space, such as robotic or bio-genetic labs and micro fulfillment centers, i.e., small footprint warehouses. These are classified as industrial but are not traditional industry and might qualify as exceptions to existing zoning laws.

Mr. Dorsey addressed attention to climate change. Arlington participates in a regional coordinated plan involving 24 districts of the National Capital Region, including suburban Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia.

Q. What is the government's role in creating infrastructure for electric vehicles (EV's)?

A. Broadly speaking, the evolution from gas to electric is in the hands of private industry investing, except on equity goals. Lower income areas are not to be excluded.

On the former VHC property, Mr. Dorsey stated that the Board has acknowledged that Carlin Springs Road can't support additional traffic, and he does not know of any specific plan for use of the property.

### **Questions from attendees about the Missing Middle proposal and Mr. Dorsey's responses.**

Q. Why is the Board not doing a study of mass transit and water and sewer infrastructure impacts? This was shot down at the July Board meeting.

A. In theory, MM would not transform the residential market, but result in a modest number of units and a modest number of people, therefore not creating greater infrastructure or transit needs. Broken water mains in Arlington are not due to capacity, but to aging. In theory, based on the retail market results in Minneapolis and Portland (OR), there will be approximately 20 MM properties developed per year, an addition of 100 occupants.

Q. What is the Board doing on affordability?

A. In Arlington, affordable housing is incentivized by loans on any new development. \$40 million per year goes to affordable housing projects. Arlington County has provided \$150 million in loans for affordable housing.

Q. 40,000 additional residents are expected to be coming to Arlington in the next few years. Will neighborhoods like ours be protected from over-development?

A. Mr. Dorsey stated that he is intensely interested in having equitable, well-designed caps on MM development.

Comment: In DC, there are high costs for tree removal on lots under development. Under the current MM proposal only 10 % of the land has to be left outside the footprint of the dwelling(s).

Response: Staff are designing a plan that would not change zoning for all lots from 20% to 10%. It's an option that we can impose. I would like to keep it at 20%. We want to create an incentive for even more, but at least keep it to 20%.

Comment: Increased setbacks would be more effective than the percentage model.

Response: Yes.

Q. Can you lay out for us what the process will be going forward?

A. The Planning Commission Zoning Committee will hold two public meetings. It should take one month to work on getting feedback and another month to present any changes, such as caps on units, distributions and trees. The Long-Range Planning Committee will meet on October 17<sup>th</sup>, and the Zoning Committee plans to meet in early November. We are at least 3 months from the point at which a final proposal is presented to the public. Don't expect it to happen before February.

Q. What is the current thinking on parking requirements?

A. The Board is all over the place. Mr. Dorsey's opinion is that there should be minimum one off-street parking space per unit, over-riding that only if there is a very good reason. One size fits all doesn't work.

Q. How about land ownership? Could multiplexes be owned separately?

A. It should be possible for all to be owned, at any size. The Board is looking at that for a requirement.

Q. Can we provide more incentives for keeping trees, or disincentives for cutting them down?

A. I agree that we don't have enough incentives.

Q. Why can't we do (MM) in a more limited fashion, and look at the impact? The fear factor is huge. We can reduce the fear factor if the plan is kept small.

A. I think we'll have a good plan. Why only put it in certain places? If it's a good program, shouldn't it be everywhere? Some have suggested a pilot, but the results may not transfer to other communities.

There was a question about the number of scooters left in ridiculous places. What can the county do to make the companies pick them up? Mr. Dorsey answered that the County should revisit its permitting program. It's not working. Children under age 18 are using them. The safeguards are too lax.

Julie Lee mentioned that Christian Dorsey has been the most receptive of all the Board members to our concerns, and that we need to keep reminding all of the members of them.

## **Old Business**

There was a motion to approve the minutes of the September, 2022 GCA meeting, which was seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report by Tim Aiken. We have 143 dues-paying members and a balance of \$25,107.42.

Civic Federation report by Tim Aiken. There is no new Civic Federation report. There will be a panel discussion on the Missing Middle project on Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 on zoom. The link will be on the Civic Federation website.

Arlington Neighborhoods Advisory Committee (ArNAC) report by Kathy Reeder. Street trees and shrubs will be planted on 4<sup>th</sup> Street this fall. No dates are set. The Manchester Road/2<sup>nd</sup> Street project area will get another treatment for invasives. No engineer has yet been assigned. There will be a Bond referendum for ArNAC on the ballot in November.

Village View report by Brandon Hemel. The deadline for the next issue is October 10<sup>th</sup>. We need advertisers. Call Pete Olivere or Julie Lee with contacts or suggestions.

Julie Lee reported on the results of the Glencarlyn community Missing Middle Survey. There were 128 responses. Respondents said that the following items have not been studied enough: school population growth, traffic, tree canopy, infrastructure, traffic on neighborhood streets, and parking on neighborhood streets. Over 90% said MM will increase the number of on-street parked vehicles. 72.5% are concerned about the parking ratio, 81% said it would increase traffic, and 78% said it would decrease the tree canopy. In response to why people like living in Glencarlyn, many cited the park, the trails, the woods, the library and community garden, and the sense of living in a village. The results will be posted on the website in the Glencarlyn Updates.

### **New Business**

Julie Lee and others are interested in a resumption of Glencarlyn's small group activities, or clubs, that began organizing before Covid. The Book Club survived by meeting on zoom. Hopefully other activities will begin early 2023.

Upcoming events include a neighborhood clothes swap on October 8<sup>th</sup>, a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Long Branch Nature Center on November 5<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 4 pm, the luminaria, a holiday party with Santa and, perhaps, a caroling party.

A Block Captain is still needed for Manchester Square.

Upcoming GCA meetings: Nov 7th School Board Chairman Reid Goldstein. Dec 5<sup>th</sup> ACPD Corporal Amanda Brown on Vehicle, Home and Personal Security. Luminaria Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, rain date Dec 17<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.