

**Frequently Asked Questions  
Plans for 601 S. Carlin Springs Road Property  
May 1, 2023**

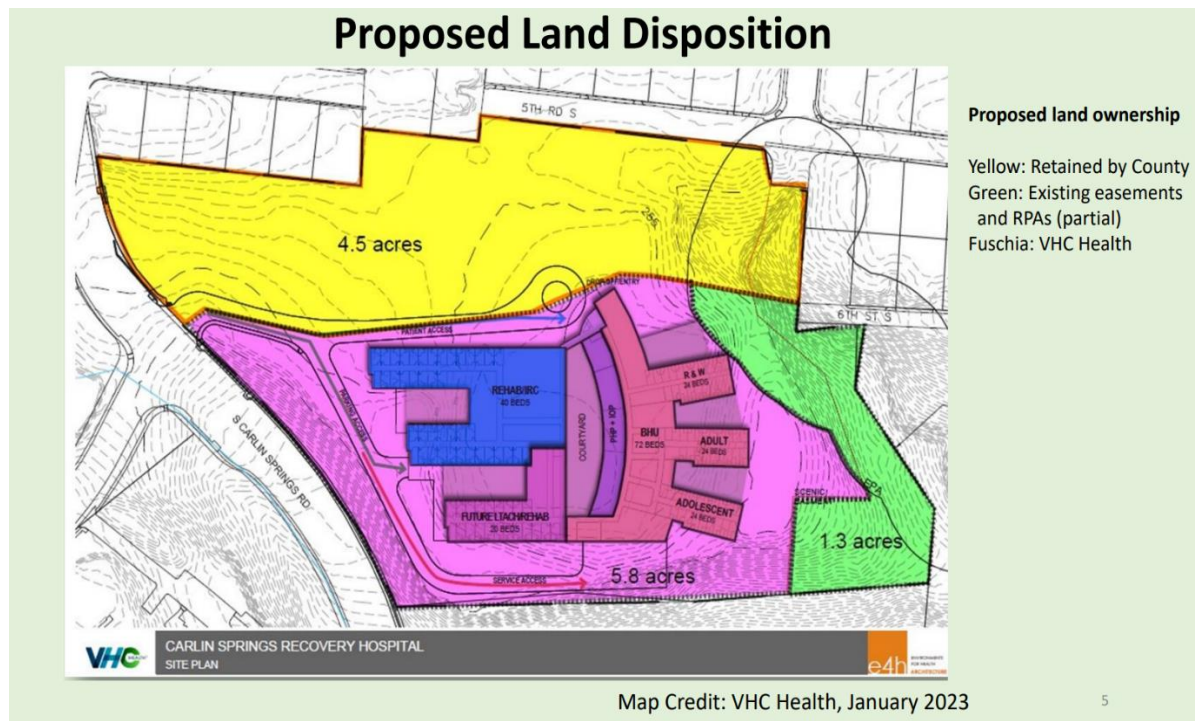
**Key FAQ's from Arlington County project website:** [VHC Health Behavioral Wellness Facility – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/Health-Wellness-Facility)

**1. What part of the 601 S. Carlin Springs Rd. property will VHC Health be purchasing? And is the County maintaining any portion of the property?**

VHC Health will purchase approximately 5.8 acres of property at 601 S. Carlin Springs Rd. with the remaining 5.8 acres owned by the County.

[A letter of intent was signed on January 17, 2023: [vhc-arlington-county-loi-january-17-2023.pdf \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/Health-Wellness-Facility)]

- The County will retain half of the property - acquired in 2019 - including retaining the scenic easement and the area inclusive of the Resource Protection Area (RPA).
- The County portion of the space will be reserved for future public uses compatible with the VHC Health environment.
- The County anticipates that concepts for future uses will be presented within the next three to six months [April – July 2023].



- [Details and current status of the VHC plan are on the project website: [VHC Health Behavioral Wellness Facility – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/vhc-behavioral-wellness-facility)]

## 2. What types of services will VHC Health provide at this site?

VHC Health will transform the 5.8 acres into an advanced rehabilitation and behavioral health wellness facility with a total of 112 beds.

In addition to greater inpatient rehabilitation services with 40 beds for people with spinal cord and brain injury, stroke, neurological and other conditions, the new facility will include behavioral health in-patient beds – a 24-bed adult unit, a 24-bed adolescent unit, a 24-bed substance abuse recovery & wellness unit.

This new site also offers expanded opportunities for out-patient programs that will strengthen the amount of behavioral health services available for patients from Arlington and the region.

- VHC Health will offer five outpatient programs including an Adult Intensive Outpatient Program, Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Program, Recovery & Wellness Intensive Outpatient Program, Adult Partial Hospitalization Program, and an Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic.
- These additional services will significantly improve access to health care in the community.
- [A more detailed explanation of the planned services is available at these links: February 28, 2023 Community Information session: recording of live meeting: [Community Information Session VHC Rehabilitation and Behavioral Wellness Center @ Carlin - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...); slide deck: [PowerPoint Presentation \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/powerpoint-presentation)]

## 3. What opportunities will the community have to review and comment on the plans at the S. Carlin Springs Road site?

This project, like others, will include a Site Plan Review ([Site Plan Review Process – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/site-plan-review-process)), led by the Planning Commission. The SPRC process provides a forum for community review of a development project in which property owners, staff, other commissions, and community groups collaboratively examine and comment on a project filed under Arlington’s special exception site plan regulation. VHC will also be reaching out to nearby neighbors and interested stakeholders in advance of the SPRC process.

[In the letter of intent between the county and VHC Health (item 12.), interested stakeholders are listed as: Community Services Board, VHC Behavioral Stakeholder Group, Arlington Mental Health and Disability Alliance, NAMI of Northern Virginia, Commission on Aging, Partnership for Youth and Families, Mental Wellness Group (Youth), Glencarlyn Civic Association, Forest Glen Civic Association, Park and Recreation Commission, Joint Facilities Advisory Commission,

Forestry and Natural Resources Commission, Transportation Commission, the Arlington County School Board, and the Animal Welfare League of Arlington.]

#### **4. What are the next steps?**

Any final purchase and sale agreement is contingent upon VHC Health having received all necessary special exception site plan and use permit approvals, for the construction of a new behavioral health care and rehabilitation hospital on the Property.

- VHC Health anticipates being prepared to submit their site plan applications in the late spring of 2023.
- The County will take all steps necessary to expeditiously process the applications for the site plan and use permit and proceed through public review.
- The Planning Commission and the County Board will also hold public hearings to consider those applications, and in the best possible scenario, within 120 days of the County's acceptance of the completed applications.
- Given the importance of expanded behavioral health services in our community, the County is committed to expediting the engineering plan, stormwater, and building permit reviews and the issuance of building permits and appropriate LDAs, following the approval of any requisite land use applications the County.

VHC Health will also have to submit a Certificate of Public Need (COPN) application to the Virginia Department of Health requesting approval for the additional inpatient beds. That request would be made in the next available batch cycle which is August 1, 2023. It's important to note that the State review process could take anywhere from 7-9 months.

#### **5. What is the timeline for construction and opening of the new VHC Health services at this site?**

VHC Health plans on breaking ground on its new facility in late 2023 or early 2024 and expects construction to be complete in late 2025.

#### **6. What is currently happening at the S. Carlin Springs Road site?**

The County has developed a plan to remove the former Virginia Hospital Center (VHC) building at its 601 S. Carlin Springs property in two phases. Demolition of the property began on January 5, 2023, and is expected to be completed by summer 2023.

- Phase 1 included decoupling the former hospital building from the doctor's office building at 611 S. Carlin Springs Road, which was completed in late summer 2022.
- Phase 2 includes demolition of the former hospital building, which began on January 5, 2023, and is expected to be completed by summer 2023. Arlington County and VHC Health anticipate beginning preconstruction activities in November 2023.
- [Details and current status of the demolition plan are on the project website: [South Carlin Springs Property – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/south-carlin-springs-property)]

## FAQs from Civic Associations' Working Group

### 7. What steps are nearby civic associations taking to review and comment on the plans?

The three civic associations nearest the site (Glencarlyn, Forest Glen and Arlington Mill) have formed a Working Group to closely monitor VHC Health and County plans for the site and keep their residents informed. The Working Group will communicate the neighborhoods' priorities and concerns. Members of the Working Group are Brandon Hemel (Chair), Julie Lee, Sue Campbell, Andy Gillette, Suzanne Petroni, Steve Young, Kathy Reeder (all Glencarlyn); Connie Ericson (Forest Glen); and Linda LeDuc (Arlington Mill).

On April 24, the Working Group sent a "Virtual Tour" presentation to the Arlington County Board and VHC Health, providing initial site recommendations and identifying key features that should be considered in the planning process. In the letter accompanying the presentation, they requested 1) an interactive session as soon as possible for questions and discussion of the presentation and 2) a timely site visit to optimally inform the site planning process and reduce the risk of avoidable delays and challenges during the site plan review process.

The letter can be viewed at: [Letter-to-CB-and-VHC-re-Mental-Health-Facility-Site-Planning-2.pdf \(glencarlyn.org\)](#) and the slide presentation at: [PowerPoint Presentation \(glencarlyn.org\)](#)

On February 2, the Glencarlyn and Forest Glen civic associations sent a letter to the Arlington County Board and County Manager, and to VHC Health, when the plans were first announced: [Letter-to-CB-and-VHC-re-Mental-Health-Facility-Site-Planning-2.pdf \(glencarlyn.org\)](#)

### What are the Working Group's initial site recommendations?

#### Recommendations to Arlington County

- Expand the "Green Zone" to include all of the currently County-owned RPA area and existing tree canopy in addition to the scenic easement (see "Virtual Tour" slides 7 and 8).
- Add the east-pointing triangular plot (see slide 8) to the Green Zone – negotiate this with VHC Health.
- Annex the expanded Green Zone to the existing park ASAP.
- Conduct ongoing invasive plant management and general natural resources stewardship on County land/Green Zone
- Steward the Moses Ball Spring, including restoring, enhancing, and maintaining site.
- Initiate natural resources management of the scenic easement area to southeast of Fuchsia Zone that is still owned by Northern Virginia Doctors Medical Center.
- Supervise "Phase 1" plantings to ensure appropriateness from a natural resources' perspective.

### Recommendations to VHC Health

- In site planning, add a buffer to the existing RPA limits to minimize potential disturbance – place structures further to the west.
- Add the east-facing triangle of land (see slide 8) to the Green Zone – negotiate with Arlington County
- Plan for no negative impact on existing mature native trees; add to Green Zone (see slide 7)
- In site planning, explore creative ways to enhance the Nature Center and park.
- Incorporate biophilic design and other elements suggested by the community.
- Preserve and enhance Fuchsia Zone portions of the “sledding hill.”

## **8. What is a Resource Protection Area (RPA)?**

The Resource Protection Area (RPA) includes streams, rivers, and other water bodies and the environmentally sensitive lands within 100 feet of these water resources. These areas are known as stream or wetland buffers, and help protect water quality by:

- filtering out pollutants from stormwater runoff,
- reducing the volume of stormwater runoff,
- minimizing erosion, and
- providing wildlife habitat.

A fully vegetated stream buffer can help protect private property by preventing erosion along a water body. Steep slopes (25 percent or greater) that are adjacent to buffers are also part of the RPA because of the potential for erosion in these areas.

In RPAs, existing trees and other vegetation are protected and building projects are regulated to protect water quality.

## **9. What is the significance of the Moses Ball Spring?**

The Moses Ball Grant historical marker near S. Carlin Springs Rd. states:

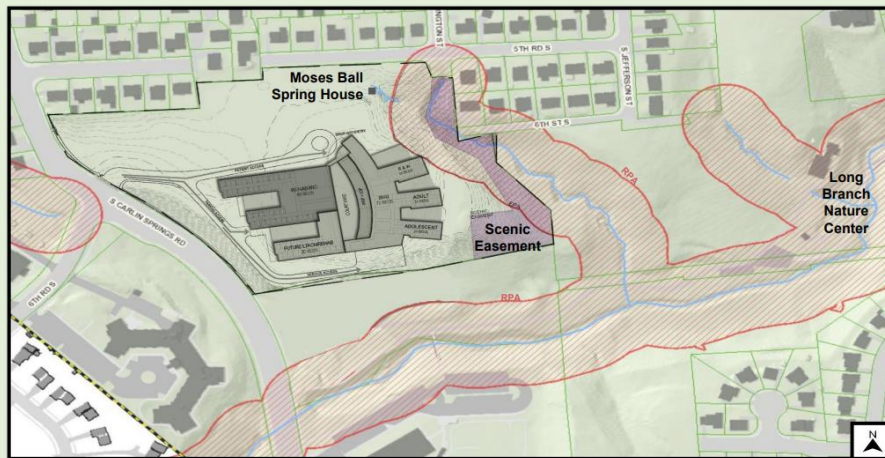
“Moses Ball (1717 – 1792), the ancestor of generations of prominent Arlingtonians, received a 91-acre grant on this land from Lord Fairfax in 1748. The property remained in the Ball family until 1818. It is thought that Ball built his home on a rise north of the existing spring about 200 yards east of this marker. George Washington, who owned an adjacent tract of land south of Four Mile Run surveyed his tract on April 22, 1785, in company with Moses Ball.”

The Glencarlyn community built the little spring house structure (date unknown) and later placed a small plaque on it. The spring was the water source for Moses Ball's cabin nearby, possibly in the vicinity of today's 5700 block of 5th Road S, circa 1745. Moses Ball Spring is a water source for "Salamander Creek" which flows into Long Branch Creek at the bottom of the hill.

The Moses Ball Spring is located on the property that will be retained by Arlington County (see slide below). The Working Group strongly recommends restoring, enhancing and maintaining this site for its historical and environmental significance. Steps taken so far include:

- Confirming with Arlington County that Moses Ball Spring is officially within the RPA, even though it appears outside of it on the current RPA map. When the map is next updated, the spring will be included in the RPA.
- Exploring a Local Historic District designation of the 5.8 acres to be retained by Arlington County, as recommended by the Arlington Historical Society (AHS).
- Exploring proposing an archeological review of the parking lot area and the entire site, also recommended by AHS.

## “Contextual Overview” of the Site



Map highlights existing built infrastructure and Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) in red crosshatching  
Map credit: VHC Health and Arlington County, January 2023

### **10. How will the VHC Health facility affect traffic on S. Carlin Springs Road?**

Traffic on S. Carlin Springs Rd. is already a concern for nearby neighborhoods and schools. The most recent Arlington County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) authorized a traffic safety study to be completed in fiscal year 2025. The Working Group recommends that the County complete this study as soon as possible to accurately evaluate the impact of VHC Health and Arlington County plans for this property.

### **11. What impact will the new facility have on the safety of students walking along S. Carlin Springs Rd.?**

Traffic and narrow sidewalks on S. Carlin Springs Rd. are already safety concerns. As more information is available on plans for VHC Health and Arlington County uses of the property, student safety will remain a high priority for the Working Group.

**12. Do the services that will be provided at the VHC Health facility introduce safety and security concerns for nearby residents and school communities?**

In the February 28 Community Information session, VHC Health responded to this question as follows:

They have been able to provide these services in the middle of a residential community for years. There will be 24/7 security on-site. The design and construction will lend itself to safe and secure placement of the patients and the enclosure for the outdoor space they will be able to enjoy. For the outpatient side, this population is in every walk of life (with us in the grocery store, etc.). They will have an intake and assessment area for people to get checked out if they don't have an appointment anywhere and would like to be seen; this facility would be a place for that.

There were out-patient behavioral health and recovery programs previously operating at this site before the buildings were closed to prepare for demolition.

**13. How many parking spaces will be built at the new facility?**

The letter of intent states:

“VHC and the County will share 50/50 in the costs of construction of an underground garage below the building; the County will have access to at least 50 percent of all parking spaces within the garage. This garage will have the capacity to meet the needs of the behavioral health care and rehabilitation hospital and provide sufficient spaces to meet future parking needs of other functions to be located on the site or nearby County-owned facilities. The total number of spaces shall not exceed 500 and will be commensurate with the site use needs of VHC and County at the time the Property is developed. The garage shall be shared and maintained and operated by VHC and shall be subject to such reasonable rules and regulations promulgated from time to time by VHC. In addition the County shall be obligated to reimburse VHC on an ongoing basis for 50% of all actual and reasonable costs of operating, maintaining, repairing and replacement of the garage.”

VHC Health acknowledged in the February 28 community information session that their planned programs don't generate a lot of traffic, so from a parking and traffic perspective there will be equivalent traffic to what is seen at a hospital. Because of this, VHC Health doesn't need a lot of parking spaces. The 500 number is “not to exceed” and more reflective of what zoning would call for based on building size. VHC Health would like to get it down to something that is more reflective of what they would need.

In the February 28 community information session, Arlington County confirmed that 500 spaces are a cap and added that, from a County perspective, they have an opportunity to share in the parking garage. This allows for creativity for parking for the Nature Center or other uses, for example.

**14. Will there be emergency vehicles arriving at the facility?**

No, emergency vehicles will not be bringing patients to this facility.

In the February 28 community information session, VHC Health explained that those patients who are acute, that might show up at the airport or some other place, are going to continue to come to VHC's emergency department. They will be medically screened through the emergency department then there will be safe transport to take them to the S. Carlin Springs Rd. facility.

### **15. What is known about Arlington County's plans for their portion of the site (yellow and green areas on the map)?**

The January 17 Letter of Intent, item 3., includes the following wording:

"In return, the County shall restrict the use of the County Property to parks/open space and animal welfare." See FAQ 3. above for "interested stakeholders" listed in the Letter of Intent.

The Working Group will continue to closely monitor the County's plans for the site and keep their residents informed.

## **Information Sources**

### **Ongoing updates will be made to these Arlington County websites:**

- Demolition work project website: [South Carlin Springs Property – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/south-carlin-springs-property)
- VHC Plans for property project website: [VHC Health Behavioral Wellness Facility – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/vhc-health-behavioral-wellness-facility)

### **Other information sources:**

- January 17, 2023 Letter of Intent between Arlington County and VHC: [vhc-arlington-county-loi-january-17-2023.pdf \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/vhc-arlington-county-loi-january-17-2023.pdf)
- January 24, 2023 News Article announcing plan for property: [VHC Health, Arlington Announce Plans for Behavioral Wellness Facility – Official Website of Arlington County Virginia Government \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/vhc-health-arlington-announce-plans-for-behavioral-wellness-facility)
- January 2023 County Manager's presentation: [County Manager Presentation to the County Board](https://www.arlingtonva.us/county-manager-presentation-to-the-county-board)
- February 2, 2023 Letter to County Board and VHC Health: [Letter-to-CB-and-VHC-re-Mental-Health-Facility-Site-Planning-2.pdf \(glencarlyn.org\)](https://www.glencarlyn.org/letter-to-cb-and-vhc-re-mental-health-facility-site-planning-2.pdf)
- February 16, 2023, Commission Briefing: [Commission Briefing VHC Rehabilitation & Behavioral Wellness @ Carlin Springs | February 16, 2023 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)
- February 28, 2023 Community Information session: recording of live meeting: [Community Information Session VHC Rehabilitation and Behavioral Wellness Center @ Carlin - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...); slide deck: [PowerPoint Presentation \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/powerpoint-presentation)
- April 24, 2023: Link to "Virtual Tour" email: [Email-regarding-601-Carlin-Springs-Rd-Site-Review-and-Site-Visit.pdf \(glencarlyn.org\)](https://www.glencarlyn.org/email-regarding-601-carlin-springs-rd-site-review-and-site-visit.pdf) and presentation: [PowerPoint Presentation \(glencarlyn.org\)](https://www.glencarlyn.org/powerpoint-presentation)



**2016 Survey and 2019 Resolution:**

- Glencarlyn and Forest Glen July 2016 Report and Survey: [Final-Report-July-2016-GCFG-Survey.pdf \(glencarlyn.org\)](#)
- Glencarlyn and Forest Glen November 2019 Resolution: [VHC Resolution Approved by GCA Nov04 2019 \(glencarlyn.org\)](#)