

**LHA BOARD MEETING MINUTES – September 24, 2020 (virtual meeting via Zoom)
(Sandi Chesrown, Acting Secretary)**

Directors Present (15)

Peter Bota, Mike Cantwell, Sandi Chesrown, Michele H. Cornwell, Elaine Furlow, Pamela Gillen, Edith Gravely, Ralph Johnson, Tom Korn, Jim Lantelme, Laura London, Scott Matties, Richard Price, Michelle Winters, Matt Weinstein

Director Absent (1)

Tom Wolfe

LHA Staff Present (2)

Ginger Brown, Executive Director

Maia Potok-Holmes, Communications Manager

Guests Present (4)

Katie Cristol, Arlington County Board, Liaison to LHA

Telly Tucker, Executive Director, Arlington Economic Development (AED)

Susan Soroko, Director, Creative Economy, AED, Liaison to LHA

Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Scott Matties, President, at 8:30 am. Scott welcomed Board members and introduced Telly Tucker as the guest speaker. Scott noted that he is stepping down as President due to work commitments. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. The Board expressed appreciation to Scott for being a great President and for his continued service on the Planning Committee.

Election

Representing the Nominations Committee, Laura London formally nominated Lauren Harris, Little Ambassador's Day Care, to fill Chris Sundlof's seat on the Board (business vacancy). Mike Cantwell fully supported and seconded the nomination. Mike recommended that the Board re-think the nominations process and cast a wider net to find qualified and diverse applicants who represent Arlington County. He recommended creating a web page to encourage new participants for future vacancies. The Board voted unanimously in support of Lauren's nomination. Sandi Chesrown then nominated Pamela Gillen to replace Scott as President. This was seconded and also unanimously approved by the Board.

County Board Update & Missing Middle

Pamela welcomed Katie Cristol, who thanked Scott for his service during an eventful period in LHA's history including Plan Lee Highway. She noted that the model of collegiality and stakeholder engagement is a success story. After many years the Missing Middle study is officially under way. She thanked LHA for being on the front lines and signing up as a Community Partner. She noted the late Erik Gutshall's contribution and the importance of going slow to go far. Michelle Winters reported that the Missing Middle Virginia Housing grant was awarded to AHS and LHA. Focus groups to test the messaging via videos will commence soon.

Arlington Economic Development

Telly Tucker thanked the Board and staff and noted that Susan Soroko provides him with critical feedback on how best to benefit the corridor. His economic development priorities include continuing to reduce the office vacancy rate (15 to 10%), help existing industries to grow and attract new industries, help small businesses hit hardest by Covid-19 including implementation

of the \$2.7 mm Small Business Grant and continuing use of outdoor spaces during the winter months, and improve how the County looks at ground floor uses including retail flexibility.

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Pamela asked how AED is tracking small business loss, and Telly responded they are tracking in house and looking at similarities between types of businesses. He agreed that although AED has to focus on the impacts of Covid, the County also has to look 25-30 years in the future under Plan Lee Highway. He noted AED's Business Investment Group's focus on business attraction, retention, intelligence, and a local industrial base driven by tech to maintain a competitive County and region. Telly mentioned that CBRE has indicated that this area is the second largest tech talent source in the US, and AED is working with GMU, VT, Marymount and others to build upon the NOVA Economic Development Alliance's branding that "innovation lives here" through cybersecurity, big data management, etc.

Ginger Brown noted that GMU is just down Kirkwood a few blocks from Lee Highway, and that proper planning under Plan Lee Highway should reflect that proximity including transportation to ensure that innovation reaches the Lee corridor. Tom Korns discussed spreading the enthusiasm for tech throughout the state and the importance of linking to a broader diverse economy, robotics, etc. Pamela thanked Telly and invited him back in the future.

Plan Lee Highway

Sandi Chesrown (reporting for Natasha Alfonso-Ahmed) that Phase 1 has ended and that Phase 2 has begun with the Land Use Analysis. October and November will focus on interviews with property owners. Community outreach to the CAs and neighborhoods will begin in late November and run through into the Spring of 2021. During January/February, County staff will conduct community meetings for each of the activity nodes, including virtual walking tours as are being done currently under the Site Plan Review process. Sandi and Paul – hopefully with assistance from LHA - will conduct Spring physical masked and distanced walking tours of the activity nodes to help stakeholders understand the types of buildings including heights and land uses that are recommended by the consultants.

President's Report

Without any changes, the Board voted unanimously to approve the July 23 Board minutes.

Finance Committee

Michele Horwitz Cornwell presented the Treasurer's Report. The County sent half of LHA's grant (\$42,750) and will send the next half in early 2021 (total of \$85,500). The Missing Middle grant (\$10,000) from the State will be received partially by the end of the year (payment sent as work is completed). Although it is unlikely that C-19 will allow for any major events in early 2021, LHA's move from the Russell Building office to Cube Smart storage saved a lot of money and freed up funds for personnel and other activities. (The Statement of Accounts indicated that as of September 21, 2020, LHA had \$40,861.99 in the ACFCU and PayPal accounts.)

Transportation Committee

Richard Price and Ginger Brown discussed current activities under the County's Vision Zero program. The program focuses on safety, crash data, alcohol related incidents, right turns, speeding, etc. The information does not present a complete picture with regard to some of Lee Highway's issues including near misses at intersections and at Spout Run. More engagement is needed to provide a holistic picture. Ginger said that data is collected through police reports, which means that many issues are not reflected if they did not get to that stage. Mike Cantwell

said it is important for LHA to pressure the County to report every collision, perhaps allowing a way to self-report. Ginger said that Vision Zero needs to proactively indicate what feels dangerous and identify those danger spots. LHA will work on a letter reflecting these concerns.

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Events Committee

Sandi Chesrown noted that the Committee will meet tomorrow to discuss future activities, and deferred to Ginger's report at the end of the agenda.

Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) and Public Facilities Committee (PFC)

Jim Lantelme, Chair of the PFC on Fire Station 8, noted that FS8 is still on the one year CIP, but that the last PFRC has not been scheduled to discuss the final plans. He said the SPRC is focused on creating effective virtual meetings and has not yet given LHA a seat at the table.

Planning Committee (PC)

Pamela Gillen, PC Chair, noted that the McDonald's application has been withdrawn, but they are funding \$10,000 to the JMLCA for restoration of the Roderick Turner mural on the backside of their wall facing the Langston Brown Community Center. Sandra Green is the project manager. Pamela noted that later this fall or in early 2021 she will resign as Chair of the PC, and the search is on for a new Chair or Co-Chairs.

Stormwater Management Update

Sandi Chesrown updated the Board on last night's virtual WHCA meeting with County DES staff – Liz Thurber and Demetra McBride – who discussed recommended stormwater improvements that impact the Lee corridor neighborhoods. 32 people participated in the meeting. If the \$51 mm bond issue is passed in November, it will include \$27 mm for improvements in the Spout Run watershed. This includes \$4.8 mm in land acquisition, and a 288,000 cu ft vault planned for the low, flat area of Woodstock Park. The 200' long vault would be invisible and completely underground, but there would be a small pump station and roadway down the hill to allow vehicles to clean out the vault. WHCA will continue to monitor the designs. Pamela recommended that the County use the gray water for landscaping in case of drought.

Chamber of Commerce Update

In Tom Wolfe's absence, Ginger Brown noted that the Chamber is doing a small business membership drive, and Pamela said that her firm is joining. The Chamber is represented on the LH Renaming process by Grace Shea, Lebanese Taverna.

Renaming Lee Highway Update

At the last Board meeting, LHA approved the development of a Communications Strategy (developed by LHA's Communications Committee, chaired by Elaine Furlow) and Steering Committee to lead the Renaming of Lee Highway. Matt Weinstein, the Committee Chair, noted that the Steering Committee (SC-Matt, Elaine, Sandi, Paul, Ginger and Maia) and the Working Group (WG-25 diverse members appointed by the SC) have been meeting and diligently pursuing an inclusive strategy with a lot of discussion of local history and placemaking. The Branding Advisory Group (BAG) and the Institutional AG were appointed and will meet to make recommendations to the Working Group. In November, the Businesses & Property Owners AG, the Transportation AG, and the Non-CA Residents AG will meet. There are close to 100 people involved in this renaming effort. LHA staff is efficiently using our resources and have created a

dedicated web site and worked with a local videographer to create a video on the rationale for the renaming process. It features LHA CAC members, Saundra Green and Wilma Jones from Highview Park/Halls Hill. Matt thanked Maia and Ginger for their hard work.

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Matt noted that the public is very interested in the process and have already submitted 96 names and the list is growing. Next week the Working Group will review the draft criteria and formalize them. On October 21, the list will be narrowed and go out for public polling, which will end in November. A **Shop Local** Event might be planned related to the renaming. At the December 2 WG meeting, members will arrive at their top choices through a ranking process. The names will be sent to a special December 9 LHA Board meeting for discussion and forwarding to the County Board, which has requested one preferred name and two or more alternatives. Perhaps more than three names will be sent. The County Board will discuss and forward to either the Commonwealth Transportation Board or the General Assembly.

Other LHA Activities

Arlington Artists Request for LHA Board Letter

At the last LHA Board meeting, it was discussed that Sandi Chesrown and Paul Holland under Plan Lee Highway met with the Lee Arts Center artists to discuss both short term and long term use of the community center, now closed. The artists hoped for a letter of support from the LHA Board to continue usage of the center under their management. However, the artists' response did not include solutions that address management, budgeting, staffing, etc. Thus, it was recommended and agreed that the LHA Board await that information before considering a letter of support. Katie Cristol noted that the County believes the building might have exceeded its useful life and would require significant short term investment to remain viable, and that the future should be determined by the Plan Lee Highway process. She had not heard as to whether or not the Arlington Arts Center had agreed to perform as a management entity. Tom Korn noted that LHA should want to keep the building, and he supports looking closely at how it could be maintained under Plan LH as an arts facility.

AED Arts & Poetry Projection at Lyon Village Shopping Center

Ginger reported that LHA has been working closely with AED to develop the Arlington Arts Poetry Projection on the CVS wall at the Lyon Village Shopping Center. Due to Covid-19, the County does not want to encourage crowds, so LHA is not developing a big event around it. However, with Michele's help, the property owners are involving their local businesses at the event on the evening of Wednesday, December 16, and Board members are invited.

(Award-winning poet and Marymount University professor Holly Karapetkova has been selected as the second Poet Laureate of Arlington County. During her two-year appointment, which begins July 1, 2020, she will serve as an advocate for poetry and the literary arts, working to raise Arlingtonians' consciousness and appreciation of poetry in its written and spoken forms.)

Cowboy Café Placemaking

Ginger reported that the Mas Paz mural is now completed on the masonry wall and is being expanded to cover the fencing surrounding the site. Dominion Electric's lighting is being implemented, and the former parking lot features sports tvs and a gas fire pit. The ribbon cutting with Katie Cristol will occur soon. Jim Barnes, the owner, has been an excellent partner.

Recycling Project

Ginger reported that LHA was approached by the Glass Packaging Trade Association, which wants to improve glass recycling as a new plant might be coming on line in Manasses. They are considering a pilot project. LHA could participate through focus groups.

Meeting Adjourned – 10:06 am. Pamela thanked everyone for their participation.

Next Board Meeting – 5:30 pm, Thursday, November 19, 2020