

Park and Recreation Commission Meeting

Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

Chairman's Introduction and Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes (7:00-7:05)

- Commission consideration of June 22, 2021 minutes

Public Comment (7:05-7:15)

** Park and Recreation Commission public comment is open to all with a 3-minute limit per person.*

Proposed Memorial Plaque Application for Mr. Larry Finch [Diane Probus, DPR] (7:15-7:30)

Staff Report (7:30-7:35)

Commission Member Reports (7:35-7:45)

- 55+ (Dean Foster)
 - *As you know, the new Lubber Run Community Center had its grand opening on Friday, July 9th with a block party, entertainment, demonstration fitness classes and other activities for persons of all ages. Registration for new pop-up classes began the following Monday, July 12th via on-line and by phone for Arlington residents and for non-residents the following Tuesday, July 13th. Pop-up classes will run through August and include fitness, yoga, line dancing, volleyball, art and others. The classes are being held at Lubber Run, Aurora Hills and Walter Reed. The plan is to return to full in-person fitness classes in the Fall at the centers on September 13th with registration being on August 18th. Details will be in the 55+ Guide which will be mailed and be available on-line in August in advance of Fall registration. It is anticipated that the new Long Bridge Park Aquatic and Fineness Center will open on September 24th. The Annual Fitness Day will be held on September 10th at Lubber Run. It should also be noted that Arlington has again been named the Fittest City in the USA.*
- Alcova Heights (Colt Gregory)
- Arlington Public Schools (APS) (Gerald Brandt)
- Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award (Placeholder)
- Clarendon Sector Plan Update (Steve Finn)

- *The LRPC for the Clarendon Sector Plan Update met June 30. The meeting focused on non-open space issues to include land use mix, historic preservation, building heights, and updates to the fire station 4 plans. Most of the discussion focused on building heights and set offs. There's concern that changes could begin to create a canyon feel to Clarendon. Additionally, although some comments continue to suggest the County should find alternative sites for the fire station, that does not appear to be an option. The next meeting of the LRPC is July 27.*
- **Community Energy Plan (Jill Barker)**
 - *CEP implementation Roadmap and All of Government Approach Update: County Board FY22 Budget guidance directed the County Manager to develop a strategy for an All-of-Government" approach to addressing climate change and meeting county CEP and other sustainability goals to be completed prior to the County Board's guidance for the FY 23 Budget in November.*
 - *The County staff has hired a contractor to develop a CEP implementation roadmap, which is expected to be completed in January 2022.*
- **Courthouse West Special GLUP Study (Sarah Baryluk)**
- **Crystal City Citizen Review Council (Shruti Kuppa)**
- **Field Fund Working Group (Steve Finn)**
 - *The Field Fund Working Group (FFWG) completed drafting their final report which will be discussed by the Sports Commission at its July meeting. The FFWG met over the past 18 months to consider changes to the field fee paid by sports user groups or partners using rectangular or diamond fields. The report itself is available on the FFWG website that can be linked through the Sports Commission web site. Or, you can link directly to the report here: <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/07/Field-Fund-Working-Group-Final-Report-July-13-2021.pdf>. The FFWG recommendations are:*
 - *Recommendation #1 - Approve the new fee structure below. Resident Recreational Youth 8U \$10, Non-resident Recreational Youth 8U \$25; Resident Recreational Youth 9+ \$15, Non-resident Recreational Youth 9+ \$30; Resident Travel Player \$40, Non-Resident Travel Player \$65; Adult Team Fee \$200*
 - *Recommendation #2 - Eliminate the existing Diamond Field Fund, and Diamond Field Fund Committee as approved by the County Board in FY 2014 and establish one account to hold all field funds contributed by youth and adult sports leagues.*
 - *Recommendation #3 - Use the new funds collected through the Field Fund in two ways:*
 - *Fund two (2) permanent full-time Athletic Field Maintenance employees; and*

- *Fund synthetic field conversions with the funds collected in excess of the cost of the two additional employees.*
 - *Recommendation #4 - Use the Public Spaces Master Plan to identify the athletic fields to be converted to synthetic fields using the Field Fund with an eye towards creating multi-use athletic facilities.*
 - *Recommendation #5 – DPR should annually brief the Sports Commission about Field Fund revenues and implementation.*
- **Forestry and Natural Resources Commission (David Howell)**
 - *A presentation by Matt Mattauszek, CPHD, on the Pen Place development project. This was a general overview of the development site, location, 4 structures, and public space. The presentation and meeting recording will be posted soon.*
 - *Tree Equity Map. Vincent Verweij, DPR, presented an overview of a new tool available to Arlington to help assess distribution of our tree canopy. The program can accommodate several kinds of data--geographic, economic, and natural resources—to create tree equity profiles for individual neighborhoods. This tool is believed to be useful in comparing conditions and needs for tree canopy in various areas across the county.*
 - *The meeting also included an informal discussion on urban threats to birds.*
- **Forestry and Natural Resources Plan Update (Colt Gregory)**
- **Four Mile Run Joint Task Force (David Howell)**
- **Gulf Branch Stream Restoration (Colt Gregory)**
- **Jennie Dean Park, Phase 1 Update (Colt Gregory)**
- **Long Bridge Park Advisory Committee (Bill Ross)**
- **Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (NRJAG) (Gregory/Barker)**
 - *No meeting in July.*
- **Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) (Vacant)**
- **Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) (Neal Hunter)**
 - *The PAC received a number of presentations regarding Vision Zero and VDOT planned changes to Route 1. Concerns persist with the plan to bring Rt 1 down to scale and how it will cause significant traffic diversions to the surrounding roads during peak hours.*
 - *The County is looking for a number of part time crossing guards to support the effective pursuit of vision zero.*
- **Plan Lee Highway (Julie Mullen)**
- **Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) (Bill Ross/Sergio Enriquez)**
 - *Bill attended the Long Run Planning Committee’s hearing on the planning staff’s ongoing work plan to ask for a higher priority for a study of zoning regulations with respect to S3A and PS land categories. These are the zoning designations*

under which county parks are developed and regulated in terms of use. Park planning processes have been inhibited or slowed down several times in recent years because modern design needs such as for fencing, setback for park amenities, storm water, dog parks, and lighting considerations have been confronted by decades-old public space category zoning requirements

- *I reminded the LRPC that among scores of action items from the April 2019 approved PSMP, this zoning study was one of the top 5 priorities directed by the County Board. Such a study is listed by the current work plan as an interdepartmental process and thus seems to be shunted to a low level of priority. As we understand it, DPR staff has been ready to proceed in terms of staff resources in order to implement this study. But it needs the obvious expertise and leadership of planning staff to do the analysis.*
- *It appears that not only park and recreation projects, but priorities of DES in terms of coordinated storm management, parking, and even bicycle lane priorities are inhibited by the failure to clean up the S3A regulations. I expressed my concern that if we don't pay attention to interdepartmental priorities and needs, then by definition, we are not doing comprehensive planning.*

- Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) (Sergio Enriquez)
- Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) and Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)
 - Crystal City Building Heights Study (Shruti Kuppa)
 - Fort Henry Gardens (David Howell/Bill Ross)
 - Park Shirlington (Dean Foster)
 - *The County Board on July 17th approved new financing for the Park Shirlington housing project. This project was to be a new development to include demolishing 189 of the 294-garden apartment housing units and replacing them with townhouse and in-fill development, many at market rate. The project will now be a rehabilitation/renovation of the existing 294 housing units. As the project will not involve any rezoning or new construction and development, there will not be a SPRC review.*
 - PenPlace (Shruti Kuppa)

- Sparrow Pond Restoration Project (David Howell)
- Sports Commission (Steve Finn/Mark Lincoln)
 - *June 24, 2021 Meeting:*
 - *Presentations – DPR Specialty Programs*
 - *Gymnastic programs, fitness programs*
 - *Commission Member Reports*
 - *Aquatics Committee Update – DPR and APS are in ongoing discussions about time allocation for the pools between APS programs and DPR programs. There is some concern that the time allocation should reviewed and possibly adjusted.*

- *PSMP Comments – Discussions continue on the open space versus programmed space qualification for the park space in the county.*
 - *Discussions*
 - *The “Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group” has been formed and the current representation was discussed as well as the tentative meeting schedule. It will have its kickoff meeting in August and will meet monthly starting in September.*
- *July 22, 2021 Meeting:*
 - *Presentations*
 - *Arlington Aquatics Club & DPR Aquatics – We had an Aquatics and Arlington Aquatics Club (AAC) presentation that discussed the programs and the opportunities that they offer. There were questions about the membership of AAC and how they determine who is selected to join. Apparently, there is an evaluation process for membership, however, they emphasized that this is not a “cut” sport even though they do limit membership based on the number of swimmers they can accommodate. They typically perform the “evaluations” during the summer. They also emphasized that they do not teach swimming. Prospective members need to already be able to swim to be considered for membership.*
 - *Marymount Fall Sports – Apparently, Marymount has decided to start playing NCAA softball and have been in discussions with DPR on field space for practices and games. As it stands now, Barcroft #4 is to be used as the primary field for Marymount softball for Fall and Spring seasons. There are specifics on how and when they will be able to use it. Since this is the adult slow pitch softball field, Marymount will need to install a temporary outfield fence to be compliant with NCAA softball rules for field dimensions. Marymount will be required to install and remove the fence periodically so that it does not affect the adult show pitch softball league usage. They will also be allowed to purchase, at their own expense, a field tarp for use on the field, however, they will only be allowed to deploy it on the field on rainy days if previously approved by DPR.*
 - *Field Fund Working Group – The Sports Commission reviewed the final report from the Field Fund Working Group. It included the new fee structure and fee amounts largely structured based on time using the fields. This means that higher use teams and players like travel sports would pay a higher fee than those playing recreational sports. After a short discussion. the Sports Commission voted to approve the recommendations for the new field fund.*
 - *Commission Member Reports*

- *Virginia Highlands Controversy (again)* – It appears that there is no peace yet between the Aurora Highlands neighborhood and the sporting community with regard to Virginia Highlands Park and specifically the full-size softball field #3. Specifically, there was an Aurora Highlands meeting where a vote was held (5 votes for, 3 against) to send a letter to the County Board requesting that Field #3 be changed from its current shared use model of casual use and programmed use for softball to a 100% casual use designation. When word got out to the larger Aurora Highlands community, a subsequent meeting was held where a vote (38 votes for, 5 against) was held to send a contrary letter to the County Board emphasizing the preference to stay with the current shared use model. A detailed description of all of this was published in ArlNow (<https://www.arlnow.com/2021/07/22/shared-use-of-softball-fields-divides-neighbors-in-aurora-highlands/>) just prior to the Sports Commission meeting.

Other Business (7:45-8:00)

- Discussion on Bird-Friendly Policies
- Letters to the County Board

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 27, 2021, 6:00 p.m. (Site Tour of Long Bridge Aquatics and Fitness Center at 333 Long Bridge Dr., Arlington, Virginia 22202)