



# neighborhood news

The Latest News and Information from Your Bluemont Civic Association

April 2020

[bluemontcivic.org](http://bluemontcivic.org)

## In This Issue

What Inspires You? Volunteer to Get BCA More Engaged on Your Issues!	2
For information on the CoronaVirus	2
When and Where Do We Meet?	3
Mark Your Calendar	3
Community Composting Program	3
Your Help Needed in Mary Carlin Woods	4
Come Ring Our Bell!	5
Arlington's Birthday	5
Bon Air Park Walk-Through	6
Should BCA Push to Include Bon Air Park in the CIP?	7
Lubber Run Community Center Construction Progress	7
Connect with Bluemont	7
Motions and votes since our October 2019 Newsletter	8
BCA Executive Board	8
Forum on Missing Middle Housing	9
Join or Renew Today!	11

## The Bluemont Civic Association and COVID-19

Dear Neighbors,

Like all of us here in Bluemont, the Executive Board is thinking of our neighbors during this difficult time. We wanted to update you on how the Bluemont Civic Association will continue to promote the interests of our neighborhood during this public health crisis. We invite your comments and suggestions.

We had an army of volunteers to hand-deliver this newsletter to homes in Bluemont when Virginia's Governor needed to issue a Stay-At-Home Order. Once that order is lifted, we plan to update the newsletter and hand-deliver it to Bluemont residents.

County Board Member Katie Cristol planned to join our March meeting that we had to cancel. Her office tentatively agreed she would come on April 29 "should circumstances permit." As we cannot meet in person on that day, we are exploring whether an online discussion is possible. We will update via Facebook, our website and e-mail.

The Executive Board will decide whether public health considerations require us to cancel our meetings scheduled on May 27 and June 17 closer to those dates. If we can have those meetings, we will not be able to use the Arlington Traditional School library, as we usually do. We will seek an alternative place to have the meetings and provide updates on Facebook, our website and e-mail.

If the General Membership cannot meet in person, the Executive Board will determine how to contact members for essential votes. Essential votes include votes on zoning issues that the Association cannot get the County to delay.

In order to follow the transparent nomination process in our bylaws, the Executive Board has decided to delay that process until we resume General Membership meetings. Our bylaws state that, "the term of office for each elected office or post, shall be from July 1 through June 30, or until a successor is elected." Once we can resume meetings, we

**Next Meeting:**

**TBD when health  
conditions allow**

**7/7:30 pm, location: TBD  
until ATS re-opens**

(cont'd on p. 2)

## BCA and COVID-19 (cont'd)

will ask our membership to approve a Nominating Committee. We will advertise the point-of-contact for that Committee, and ask the Committee to report nominations at the following meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that meeting. We will then advertise the nominees via our website, Facebook and e-mail, and ask the General Membership to vote for Executive Board members at the following meeting. Anyone interested in possible serving on the Nominating Committee and/or Executive Board are encouraged to contact Executive Board or BCA President.

We were planning a neighborhood party for May 2 to celebrate Arlington's 100th birthday. Those plans have been postponed indefinitely. If you would like to help plan a community event at a later date, please contact the Executive Board.

The Bluemont Civic Association serves all Bluemont residents, but it is member-supported and member-driven. Only members in good standing may vote. Members in good standing are those who are current on their dues (\$15 annual dues per household). A form for paying dues is at the end of this newsletter. Please mail the form to BCA Executive Board PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA. 22205. Be sure to include your name, address and e-mail. If you would like to verify whether you are current on your annual dues, please contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org).

To ensure they can vote, members who haven't already done so should provide their e-mail address to [president@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:president@bluemontcivic.org). If you cannot easily access e-mail, you are welcome to provide a phone number instead. Please mail the phone number to BCA Executive Board PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA. 22205. Be sure to include your name and address.

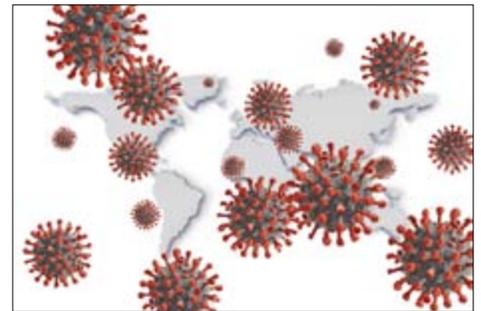
We are regularly posting COVID-19 information on the Facebook page for "Bluemont Civic Association," including ways to help, information for small businesses, stay-at-home activities, and public health information from the County. We are also posting on issues of interest to Bluemont residents. We encourage all neighbors, members or not, to follow us on Facebook, and contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org) with your advice, concerns, and suggestions.

We are a community. Let's keep in touch.



## What Inspires You? Volunteer to Get BCA More Engaged on Your Issues!

We are seeking volunteer liaisons to help BCA get more engaged on issues of particular interest to members. Would you like to help the association be more engaged on parks, planning, school issues, budget, or something else? Please contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org) or [president@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:president@bluemontcivic.org) if you would like more information.



## For information on the Corona Virus

For the latest information about how the County is managing the response to COVID19, and how you can protect yourself and others, visit <https://health.arlingtonva.us/covid-19-coronavirus-updates/>

## When and Where Do We Meet?

Generally, BCA meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month (Executive Board at 7:00 pm and General Membership at 7:30 pm) in Arlington Traditional School's library. All members are welcome to attend the Executive Board meeting. We may move meetings to other dates and locations to avoid holidays and other conflicts, and will need to move the location of any meeting held while Arlington Traditional School is closed. Meeting date changes/cancellations are posted to [www.bluemontcivic.org](http://www.bluemontcivic.org), <https://bluemont.nextdoor.com> and the "Bluemont Civic Association" Facebook page.



### Mark Your Calendar

Wed., Apr. 29 (cancelled)

Wed., May 27: TBD

Wed., Jun. 17: TBD

Please note that meeting dates are subject to change based on meeting space availability. Please check [http://www.bluemontcivic.org/](http://www.bluemontcivic.org) and <https://bluemont.nextdoor.com> for updates.



## Community Composting Program

Bluemont neighbors can join a community composting program. Composting keeps food waste out of landfills and incinerators. Food waste in landfills decays and produces methane. Methane absorbs more energy than carbon dioxide and thus contributes more to global warming. While most of Arlington's household trash is burnt in a waste to energy plant, food waste generally is moist and burns badly. Thus, it can increase the costs and the pollution associated with those plants. Composting also results in a valuable soil enhancer for your garden or for potted plants.

The program is run by a private firm, The Compost Crew ([compostcrew.com](http://compostcrew.com)), and is not associated with the County government, nor the Bluemont Civic Association. Because a significant number of neighbors have signed up for this program in the Dominion Hills and Bluemont neighborhoods, composting service is available in those neighborhoods at a substantial discount. The cost of the service is \$20 a month.

Participants receive an outdoor bin with a liner in which they can place food waste and other compostable trash. The bin is secure against animals, such as racoons, and is sealed to hold in any odors. The Compost Crew services the bin and replaces its liner once a week. There is also the option of receiving an indoor container. The customer is responsible for replacing the liner for any indoor container. Participating households may receive two deliveries of compost a year, one in Spring and one in Fall.

If you are interested in participating in the program, you can receive a discount code from Andrea, a neighbor and program participant who lives in Dominion Hills, [DHcomposting@gmail.com](mailto:DHcomposting@gmail.com). You can use that code to register with The Compost Crew through its website.

## Your Help Needed to Stop Unauthorized Construction and Bike Riding in Mary Carlin Woods

Concerned neighbors in Bluemont and other neighborhoods, officers from the Bluemont and neighboring civic associations, members of Arlington Master Naturalists, and the Mary Carlin Woods Park Steward have been engaging with the County's Parks and Natural Resources Division (PNR) on unauthorized construction of jumps and ramps on the natural dirt path through Mary Carlin Woods, and illegal construction of an off-road bike loop trail with jumps, ramps, a bridge, and other structures leading from the natural trail and doing a loop near the creek. Concerns include the environmental impact, unauthorized construction on public land, and safety because of obstacles on the natural pedestrian path, and riders who start at street level, speeding and taking jumps on the pedestrian path.



After PNR and its safety manager toured the site, Park Rangers stopped boys who were constructing the trail, explained the damage resulting from what they had done, and encouraged them to disassemble a bridge they built over a storm water channel, and some of the jumps. Unfortunately, increasing numbers of riders continue to use the unauthorized trail. Some travel at high speeds and perform jumps on the natural pedestrian trail.

PNR continues to engage with concerned citizens to resolve this problem. Efforts are currently hindered by the pandemic and the Governor's Stay At Home Executive Order.

Social distancing requirements limit PNR staffing and capabilities. Neighbors volunteered to help any way they can to preserve this beautiful stretch of woods and Mary Carlin's legacy. Two volunteers installed temporary plastic fencing along trail heads to the illegally constructed trail, but the fencing was removed. A volunteer offered to help organize a small team to undo the ramps, holes, jumps, and access to the side trail, or at least immediately block off the access to the side trail along the creek, and remove logs that had been placed. PNR explained that to comply with the Governor's Stay-At-Home Order, they have postponed all volunteer projects until further notice, and encourage people to follow the Order and stay at home. PNR said it would contact neighbor volunteers when PNR is ready to move forward.

Prior to issuance of the Stay At Home Order, PNR said that they would continue to monitor the site and signage, especially on the loop built by the stream. Bicycle riders or park users constructing trail jumps, turns or action elements will be stopped and given a verbal warning by Park Rangers. PNR recommends private citizens let Park Rangers be the ones giving such warnings. People can call the police non-emergency number, 703-558-2222, to report construction or dangerous riding by cyclists.

PNR noted that while it may feel liberating to walk alone in the woods on a natural trail, the combined impact of hundreds of people walking, compacting, and widening the trail alters and harms the natural environment. Adding mountain bikes to the natural trails worsens the harm. PNR hopes to follow the model of its successful efforts against invasive plants to educate and create awareness about natural trails and bike use. The PNR

(cont'd on p. 5)

## Mary Carlin Woods (cont'd)

effort against invasive plants succeeded for many reasons, including educating the public, and enlisting public support through volunteers from Arlington Master Naturalists, Tree Stewards, and EcoAction Arlington. A member from Arlington Master Naturalists immediately volunteered to support such an effort.

PNR advises that past experience has shown that PNR alone posting signs, blocking trails and patrolling for violators will not be successful. PNR needs community support. PNR has the technical resources and subject matter experts to craft the message. It will need us in the community to support the efforts by sharing the message on our listservs, newsletters, bulletin boards and community outreach. PNR is currently working on that message.

Bluemont residents interested in supporting this effort, and/or in helping restore Mary Carlin Woods once circumstances permit, are encouraged to contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org).



## Come Ring Our Bell!

Every federal holiday at noon, BCA hosts the ringing of the bell at Constitution Gardens (corner of George Mason and Wilson by the Fire Station.) Everyone is welcome. You and your children can ring the bell! So, mark your calendars for (if public health conditions permit): **Memorial Day, May 25; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, September 7; Columbus Day, October 12, and all the federal holidays!**



## Arlington's Birthday

2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the naming of Arlington County. When our county was founded in 1801, it was named Alexandria County. In 1919, Alexandria County organized a large parade to celebrate the return of soldiers from WWI. The main event included music performances, sack races, speeches from politicians, and even an aircraft flyover. It took place at the Alexandria County Courthouse. Unfortunately, many people became confused and instead went to the courthouse of the City of Alexandria, which legally separated from the county in 1870. Pilots in the fly over also went to the wrong courthouse. Frustrated after missing the fun and excitement, community members petitioned for a name change. The Alexandria County Civic Federation received several suggestions for names, including George Washington, Pocahontas, and Alcova (ALexandria COunty VA). Arlington was ultimately accepted. The Virginia General Assembly approved the change in 1920.

Why Arlington? The residents at the time, counting roughly 16,000 strong, were inspired by the Robert E. Lee Memorial "Arlington House" located in Arlington National Cemetery. George Washington Park Custis, father-in-law of Robert E. Lee, inherited the land where Arlington House sits today from his father John Parke Custis. Originally named "Mount Washington", John renamed the site the "Arlington Estate" after the Custis family's homestead on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The Arlington homestead was the first English settlement on the Eastern Shore in 1619 and ancestral home of the Custis Family of Virginia. The Arlington Homestead got its name from John Custis II who emigrated from the English town of Arlington in Gloucestershire, UK. Arlington is a name of ancient Norman origin. The Norman Conquest of 1066 brought the name to England.

## Bon Air Park Walk-Through

On March 4, neighbors and civic association officials from Bluemont, Dominion Hills and Boulevard Manor did a walk-through of Bon Air Park with Lyndell Core, Park Services Area Manager, Parks and Natural Resources Division (PNR), to discuss ongoing County work in response to damage from the July 9 flooding.

Repair costs convinced the County not to rebuild the bathroom that was in the floodplain of Bon Air Park. Several people asked about rebuilding a bathroom outside the flood plain. Shortly after the walk-through, Mr. Core had an ADA-accessible port-a-potty installed in Bon Air Park at least until the end of the 12 to 18-month VDOT I-66 project currently blocking access from Bon Air to Westover Park. County staff believe Bon Air Park users can walk to the bathroom in Westover on the other side of the I-66 underpass or to the bathroom in Bluemont Park. Mr. Core said the port-a-potty would be cleaned every couple of days.

Mr. Core said a permanent bathroom could be "reassessed" when renovation of Bon Air Park is addressed under the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), a 10-year plan for funding that is done every two years. The CIP funding cycle is starting now, but Bon Air Park is not currently included in this funding cycle.

Mr. Core explained the County plans to return part of the floodplain in Bon Air Park to a more natural state. His team has planted many baby trees (whips). He said their roots are already combating erosion, and will continue to over the years as some trees out compete the others and grow larger. Mr. Core said he would like to plant native plants and grasses but would have to get planning approval and funding. Part of return to a natural state is to let the stream go where it wants to go at some points. Mr. Core indicated points where the stream has gouged a path out of its



banks. The County is moving picnic tables out of the floodplain, and building a new family picnic area.

Residents raised several concerns. Mr. Core quickly reported back on actions by his office.

- They notified the Department of Environmental Services (DES) about storm water concerns and asked the storm sewer team to evaluate the street inlets neighbors reported as clogged. His office requested an arborist survey the area bordered by the Caboose in Bluemont Park and Wilson Blvd, and submitted a work request to collect the remaining storm debris.
- They notified the Northern Virginia Parks Authority (NOVA) of neighbors' concerns regarding the W&OD trail sign at Wilson Boulevard.
- They located the two plaques missing from the Rose Garden. One is having concrete repair. The other is repaired and due for installation.
- They reached out to the approved contractors' list to get an estimate for removing large concrete chunks and repairing a collapsed culvert in Bon Air Park by I-66.
- They passed the request for lining a tennis court at Bon Air for pickle ball to the Parks Athletic Field Services Division for their review and comment.
- Mr. Core provided the following advice regarding neighbors' concerns about questionable after-hours activity in Bon Air Park: The appropriate contact for homeless

(cont'd on p. 7)

## Bon Air Park Walk-Through (cont'd)

issues is the Arlington Street People's Assistance Network (ASPAN) Crisis Hotline (703) 228-1010, which is a 24-hour number. People with questions or who notice questionable activities may also call (703) 558-2222, the Arlington Police Dispatch number, for a non-emergency concern. If an emergency exists, call 911.

- PNR filled its invasive coordinator position and will review existing and new concerns in all areas. Mr. Core noted that the success of the program depends heavily on volunteers from Master Naturalists, Tree Stewards, and residents. His office will send notices of opportunities for volunteer events, updates on methods, and opportunities for civic association partnerships.
- PNR is aware of community concerns about the lost bridge, but a number of larger bridges remain out-of-service and available resources for bridge replacement are limited.

Mr. Core is interested in hearing feedback from the community as this goes forward. We would encourage neighbors to keep the civic association informed ([exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org)), and to discuss their views at our meetings.

### Should BCA Push to Include Bon Air Park in the Capital Improvement Plan?

Although Bon Air Park and Glencarlyn Park share the unfortunate distinction for having suffered the most severe park damage from the July 8 flooding, Bon Air is not currently on the County's radar screen for funding through the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). We lost our only bathroom, basketball court, volleyball court, and our bridge. Our playground and popular picnic shelter regularly flood.

Once public meetings can resume, the County will invite civic associations to a rescheduled kick-off meeting for the current CIP funding round. BCA members who have views on whether BCA should push for Bon Air Park, or other needs, to be included in the upcoming CIP funding round, are encouraged to contact [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org), and come to our monthly meetings (once they can resume) where we will be seeking member input on Bluemont's CIP priorities.

## Lubber Run Community Center Construction Progress

Construction of the new Lubber Run Community Center (LRCC) continues apace. The project broke ground in December 2018 and all of the LRCC's structural concrete pours were completed by August 2019. Currently, the LRCC's interior spaces are being built out, including a pre-school, senior center, gymnasium, and a fitness center for community use. Construction of the \$48 million facility is currently scheduled to finish by Fall 2020. The County Manager's proposed budget in light of COVID-19 delays the opening of the Lubber Run Community Center and the Long Bridge Park Fitness & Aquatics Center until FY 2022. For more information, search "Lubber Run Community Center Project" on the County website.

### Connect with Bluemont

Check our BCA website [www.bluemontcivic.org](http://www.bluemontcivic.org) for BCA meetings, official information, and how you can get involved with BCA. Join today!

**BCA E-mails:** BCA members who provide their e-mail address to the Executive Board receive regular e-mail updates on issues affecting Bluemont residents.

**Contact the Executive Board:** BCA welcomes comments, suggestions and questions from members. Please contact us at [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org)

**Facebook:** Like our Bluemont Civic Association page on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/bluemontcivic](http://www.facebook.com/bluemontcivic)

**Nextdoor.com** is a free, private social network where you can connect with people who live nearby. BCA posts official announcements on Nextdoor.com. Sign up at <https://nextdoor.com> by providing your name, address and email address.

## Motions and votes since our October 2019 Newsletter

At the December General Membership meeting, members voted to approve the Executive Board's decision to revive the BCA Pedestrian Safety Committee. Chris George and Nick Pastore volunteered to co-chair the Committee.

Members voted to advertise a vote at the January General Membership meeting to prioritize one Neighborhood Conservation project that the civic association will submit to the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee, and one that will be the civic association's back-up Neighborhood Conservation project.

At the January General Membership meeting, members voted to select the "Crosswalk and pedestrian safety improvements and beautification at the intersection of 6th St N, N Emerson, and N Edison the first priority Neighborhood Conservation project." The project will also address pedestrian safety concerns at this intersection. Members selected "Crosswalk and pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of N Lexington and Wilson Blvd in cooperation with the County's planned 8th Rd N and N Lexington sidewalk work" as the backup NC priority project.

Finally, members voted to advertise a vote to amend the civic association bylaws to reduce the requirement for a quorum for General Membership meetings. In January, members approved the proposed amendment. Details on these and all votes and motions are in meeting minutes at [www.bluemontcivic.org](http://www.bluemontcivic.org). Questions may be addressed to [exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org).



### BCA Executive Board

#### Executive Board

[exec@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:exec@bluemontcivic.org)

#### President

Laura Kirkconnell  
[President@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:President@bluemontcivic.org)

#### First Vice President

Henry McFarland

#### Second Vice President

Bruce Leighton

#### Treasurer

David Van Wagner

#### Secretary

Nick Pastore

#### Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee

#### Representative

Angelo Collins

#### Alternate

Rich Gibson

#### Civic Federation

#### Delegates

Allen Norton, David Hughes,  
Christopher George, Flint Lewis  
[CivicFed-Del@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:CivicFed-Del@bluemontcivic.org)

#### Alternates

Mark Haynes, Bruce Leighton,  
Henry McFarland, Nick Pastore  
[CivicFed-Alt@bluemontcivic.org](mailto:CivicFed-Alt@bluemontcivic.org)

## Forum on Missing Middle Housing

Because of the strong interest in the County's ongoing-Missing Middle Study, we have asked volunteers with differing perspectives on the issue to contribute articles to our newsletter.

### Missing Middle Housing Debate

By Chitra Kumar

As Bluemonters are spending nearly all of our time in our homes during the Governor's COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order, where and how we live has never been more important. Perhaps, like me, you have reflected on what you cherish about our community. For example, how has being in close proximity to trails, sidewalks and bike lanes made it easier to get daily exercise? Has seeing neighbors out your window or from the yard given you a sense of social connectedness and security (even if you can't get close to them)? Are you able to call on your neighbors for help, in one form or another, because closeness has facilitated our being a tight-knit community? Changing demographics, such as seniors looking to age-in-place, Gen Z'ers entering the workforce, and families with school-going children, mean more people want options to stay in Arlington to enjoy these precious amenities. What if there's a way more people could? We need more housing at a range of price points to uphold our tradition of being a diverse, inclusive, and thriving County.

As the Washington D.C. metropolitan area grapples with the economic toll of COVID-19, Arlington leaders warn that the economically vulnerable people will be hardest hit by the shortage of affordable housing stock. Some people will unfortunately face homelessness. Others will lose their down-payment savings. Still others will be locked out of an already tight housing market because — despite a seismic economic downturn — the simple fact remains that demand for housing is growing, and Arlington has a shortage of developable land. Talking about affordable housing is vital, but it's not enough. We also need the courage to act to increase housing supply.

"Missing middle housing" is an important component to help meet this need. It is a range of housing types that fit between single-family detached homes and mid-to-high-rise apartment buildings. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes, and they tend to fit in seamlessly with the scale and design character of existing single-family neighborhoods like Bluemont. Duplexes are already in our neighborhood along parts of Wilson Boulevard,

Carlin Springs Road, and George Mason Drive, and you may not have even noticed.

In early 2020 the County requested input on the Missing Middle Housing Study design. The study is expected to last for up to 18 months. Although original timelines may be pushed because of the response to COVID-19, the County intends to continue the study, which will consider possible changes to zoning in some yet-to-be-determined parts of the county.

As the County seeks community input, BCA has encouraged neighbors to educate themselves by:

Featuring detailed information in the [October 2019 BCA newsletter](#);

Inviting Arlingtonians for our Sustainable Future (AFS) Founder Peter Rousselot to speak at the January 2020 BCA meeting; and

Inviting County Board Member Katie Cristol to speak at the March BCA meeting, which was cancelled. Her office had tentatively agreed that she would come on April 29 before we learned that we cannot meet in person on that day. BCA's Executive Committee is exploring the possibility of setting up an online discussion instead. Updates will be posted on [www.bluemontcivic.org](http://www.bluemontcivic.org), sent through e-mail, and posted on the BCA Facebook page.

(con't on p. 11)

## The Missing Middle Housing Issue

by Anne Bodine, member Arlingtonians for Our Sustainable Future

Arlington County has been pursuing "Missing Middle" (MM) housing solutions for the past few years. Most recently, in May 2019, it approved by-right construction of accessory dwelling units (ADU's) on 44% of single-family lots. In December 2019, the county board announced it was exploring a new "Missing Middle" tool — one likely to introduce by-right zoning (also called up-zoning) for duplexes, triples, and quadplexes on lots zoned solely for single-family houses (SFH's). [Arlingtonians for Our Sustainable Future](#) (ASF) believes the MM theory is unproven and wants the county to produce credible data showing the need and utility of this drastic new land-use tool.

**The Growth Argument.** The county's argument that Arlington must "do its bit" to absorb [regional population growth predicted by the Metropolitan Council of Governments](#) (MCOG) is misleading. This study projects that from 2015 to 2045, Arlington's population will surge by 41% as it absorbs 5.2% of the region's population growth.<sup>1</sup> MCOG ignores the fact that Arlington has grown faster in the period leading up to 2015 than almost any other jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup>

We need a pause in such unquestioned growth. A recent projection shows that with each additional resident, costs increase by a net \$850.<sup>3</sup> How will the county pay for such a major new influx? And if the county can sign on to 2045 growth models, why can't it conduct planning and likely costs over that same timeline? As a start, our board should share its 3-5-year internal operating budget, to help show where we are headed.

**The Affordability Argument.** County officials initially indicated that MM up-zoning would produce mid-range "affordable" housing, hinting new units would accommodate those earning Arlington's average median income of \$115,000. By mid-February 2020, however, they modified that approach, with board members telling civic associations that MM up-zoning would likely promote affordability as each UNIT of a duplex or triplex would be cheaper than a new SFH. ASF believes the more likely outcome will be higher land prices which may drive out homeowners as taxes rise accordingly.

A lot with a "teardown" in some areas that sells now for \$800,000-900,000 could easily appreciate to over \$1.2 million, as developers will have to sell new homes at high prices to cover the inflated land

costs. As one example, new duplexes at N. Dinwiddie St. sold for \$1.1 million each. Arlington has a job/economic growth model similar to Northern California's, where [Dr. Michael Storper at UCLA](#) demonstrates that in-migration due to high salaries drives ever-higher land values. Up-zoning will exacerbate this trend.

The county's initial stated need for a new "market" solution to affordability was ironic. It has long promoted land-use plans that harmed the very diversity and affordability it touted as key goals of MM. From 2000 to 2018, [Arlington lost a net 14,000 market-rate affordable units \(MARKs\)](#). Most of us have seen developers steadily replace older residential stock with luxury condos/apartments/McMansions. In fact, Arlington has built 2,900 housing units on average each year from 2000-2019,<sup>4</sup> yet we have seen prices rise, not fall.

**Types.** The county also argues for new "types" of housing to provide homes that are walkable to transit/shopping for young families and empty nesters. Yet the county has increased the stock of transit-walkable housing with infill in Rosslyn and Ballston; more units are on tap for Crystal City/Clarendon/Courthouse. Trading our single-family neighborhoods for "multi-plex" clusters packed with more people will remove tree canopy, increase stormwater runoff, deplete biodiversity, add to school and transportation congestion, and pose a net drain on the county's budget, now further strained by Covid-19. Now is not the time, and Arlington is not the place, for Missing Middle.

(cont'd on p. 11)

## Anne Bodine (cont'd)

Notes:

MCOG, "Round 9.1 Growth Trends To 2045," October 2018, Table 6, p. 13.

Between 2000 and 2018, Arlington, at 28%, has built more housing units as a percentage of existing stock than Alexandria (18.7%), the District (16.3%) and Fairfax County (15.6%). Arlington Statistics from U.S. Census 2000 <https://www.infoplease.com/us/comprehensive-census-data-state/housing-statistics-133> (2000 figure) and U.S. Census 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/arlingtoncountyvirginia/PST045219>. Other cities' data also from U.S. Census.

Stephen S. Fuller and Jeannette Chapman "The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Locating Amazon's HQ2 in Arlington County, Virginia," November 8, 2018, p. 11, [https://sfullerinstitute.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SFI\\_-\\_Economic\\_-\\_Fiscal\\_Impacts\\_of\\_Amazon-HQ2\\_110818.pdf](https://sfullerinstitute.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SFI_-_Economic_-_Fiscal_Impacts_of_Amazon-HQ2_110818.pdf).

2000 Census Data: <https://www.infoplease.com/us/comprehensive-census-data-state/housing-statistics-133>; 2019 Census Data: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/arlingtoncountyvirginia/PST045219>; Average Rent Data: <https://www.deptofnumbers.com/rent/virginia/arlington-county/>

## Chitra Kumar (cont'd)

The conversation about missing middle housing inspired a group of Bluemont residents to join with others from neighborhoods across Arlington to organize a new grassroots forum, Arlington Neighborhoods Forward (ANF), which you can follow on Twitter: @ArlingtonFWD. ANF supports housing for a more vibrant, economically, and socially diverse Arlington. ANF believes that change can bring a better quality of life for people of all ages and stages.

While groups are organizing on various sides of the housing debate, the County will continue to rely on civic associations to weigh in. To get involved on this and other related issues, join BCA's upcoming meetings.

# Join or Renew Today!

Keep your membership current! Please use this form to join or renew.

## BCA Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

- Bring this form and cash or a check for \$15 to renew your membership to any general membership meeting at Arlington Traditional School, or
- Mail this form with your check made out to "Bluemont Civic Association" to BCA Treasurer, PO Box 5134, Arlington VA 22205.

 **Go paperless & save trees!**

- Check this box to receive *BCA Neighborhood News* by email.

All information is for BCA use only.