



neighborhood news

The Latest News and Information from Your Bluemont Civic Association

October 2025

bluemontcivic.org

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When, Where & How to Vote in the 2025 Elections

Virginia has an important election coming up; we will choose a new governor and a member of the County Board and the School Board among others. Election Day this year is Tuesday, November 4. The polls will be open that day from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm. Arlington voters aren't limited to voting on Election Day. They can vote by mail-in ballot or by visiting one of the County's in-person early voting locations.

You can obtain a mail-in ballot application from the [Arlington County Office of Voter Registration \(OVR\)](#). Applications can be obtained online, by email, via mail or in person. OVR must receive your application no later than 5:00 pm, Oct. 24. For your absentee ballot to be counted, it must be postmarked on or before Nov. 4 and received by OVR by 12 pm, Nov. 7.

Perhaps the easiest way to vote is by dropping by one of Arlington County's early in-person voting sites. This year, voters can vote at Courthouse Plaza (2200 Clarendon Blvd.) from Sep. 19 through Nov. 1, and at the Madison Community Center (3829 N. Stafford St.) and Walter Reed Community Center (2909 16th St. S.) from Oct. 21 through Nov. 1. You should note that the exact early voting days and hours vary throughout this period, so please consult [OVR's early voting website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Want to vote on Election Day but unsure about where to vote? The Bluemont Civic Association encompasses four different voting precincts: Ballston, Arlington Forest, Ashlawn and Westover, and each has a different polling place. To find your Election Day polling location (and to check on your voter registration status), visit the [Virginia Department of Elections website](#).



**Please join the
Civic Association.
A form for joining
or renewing your
membership
is on p. 7.**



Arlington Neighborhoods Program Update

The Arlington Neighborhood Program funds neighborhood improvement projects proposed by local civic associations. The County Board recently approved funding for the Bluemont Civic Association's first priority project: Intersection Improvements—N. Carlin Springs Road–N. Galveston Street to second Street N. and N. Jefferson Street. Approval was granted at the Board's September 13 meeting. More information about the project, and the task force looking into traffic safety issues on N. Carlin Springs Road, can be found on the [Bluemont Civic Association website](#). Use the tab BCA Groups and go to N. Carlin Springs Road Task Force.

Our Association can nominate two projects, first priority and second priority. The previous second priority project, N. Illinois Street light improvements between the 600 and 800 blocks, has moved to the first priority position. which leaves the second priority project open. If you have suggestions for Arlington Neighborhoods Program projects, please send them to exec@bluemontcivic.org. If you are interested in learning about the types of projects the program supports, please visit the [county website](#).

Come Ring Our Bell!

Come ring the bell in Constitution Gardens, the corner of Wilson Boulevard and George Mason Drive, at noon on Columbus Day Monday October 13 and Veteran's Day Monday November 11. The bell ringings will include CUPCAKES and books for the kids. Neighbors join the Bluemont Civic Association in ringing the bell at noon on every national holiday. Everyone, kid or adult, gets to ring the bell. It's fun for the entire family!

Also mark your calendars for bell ringings on Thanksgiving (Thursday November 28), Christmas Day (Wednesday, December 25) and all federal holidays!

Come See Us at the Bluemont Halloween Parade!

The Bluemont Halloween costume parade for children again is being sponsored by Matt and Maria Cochrane of Dovetail Properties & Design. The parade will begin on Friday October 31 at 5:15 PM at the intersection of the Bluemont Junction Trail and N. Emerson Street, and finish at the rocks near Illinois (down the street from the Arlington Forest Club). There will be treats at the rocks. Drop by the Bluemont Civic Association table for candy, chat about neighborhood issues, sign up as a member, or pay the annual dues of \$15 per household.

Site Plans: They Matter to Our Neighborhood



When a large project in Arlington needs a special exception to the County's land use and zoning policies, it can apply for a site plan. Site plans are reviewed by an interdepartmental staff team of County staff and a [Site Plan Review Committee](#) (SPRC), which includes public representatives. If the project is within or very close to the boundaries of our neighborhood, the BCA will be asked to provide a representative to the SPRC.

Naming representatives to these committees enables the BCA to ensure that neighborhood concerns are represented in the planning process. For example, we have pushed to reduce the share of land covered by impervious surfaces in projects to reduce stormwater runoff. Often developers will include community benefits in their projects in exchange for the special treatment under the zoning policies. Our representatives work to ensure that these benefits truly do help the community and are sufficient to justify the zoning exceptions. Our association had been involved in three site plan reviews recently: the Macy's site, the Holiday Inn site, and the Ballston One site.

The project being built at the former site of the Macy's on Glebe Road involves a 16-story building with 555 apartments and a grocery store on the ground floor. The project is across Glebe Road from Bluemont, not actually in our boundaries. The site plan was approved, and construction has started. We are conferring with the builders and developers to limit the effect of construction on our neighborhood. For example, we asked, and they agreed, to change the route taken by most construction trucks entering and leaving the site.

The Holiday Inn site plan involves replacing the Holiday Inn at 4600 Fairfax Dr. and the office building behind it with a seven-

story apartment building consisting of 420 units and three four story triplex buildings each with 15 units. This site plan has been approved, but work on the project has not begun.

The Ballston One project involves replacing the office building across from the Holiday Inn with a 7-story apartment building with 328 units. The parking garage from the old building would be kept. The Site Plan Review Committee for this project has concluded. The applicant now will pursue permitting (Land Disturbing Activity Plans, Maintenance of Transportation Plans, Civil Engineering Plans, Final Landscape Plans, and Tree Conservation Plans) for construction. The applicant will need to convene a community meeting, including with BCA, prior to the start of construction to discuss construction site maintenance, construction worker parking, hauling routes, and other issues that may affect the community.

The Office of County Auditor (OCA) is examining the policies and procedures that support approval and implementation of site plans with community benefits, particularly those that are provided in exchange for the right to develop sites with greater density than prevailing ordinances and plans would allow (bonus density). This audit's goal is to better understand whether Arlington is getting the community benefits that it has been promised. As appropriate, BCA participates in reviews that focus on completed projects that promised community benefits in exchange for bonus density. One of these is the site plan for Marymount at Ballston. BCA participated in the review of that site plan several years ago and recently discussed the after-effects of that project with the auditors.

Arlington Residents Push for Additional Considerations in County Study of Impervious Surfaces on House Lots

The share of Arlington County land covered by impervious surfaces has been increasing, and the majority of this increase is happening in low density residential neighborhoods. According to County staff, our county had lost the equivalent of "10 Pentagons" of surface area to impervious cover between 2009 and 2021.

One-family detached homes comprised 55% of that impervious cover increase. That impervious cover count did not include the driveways, walkways, patios, etc. associated with the recently built homes.

Arlington's County Board has established a goal of adopting a maximum impervious area requirement in residentially zoned areas of Arlington. This would help support Arlington's goals to better manage stormwater and increase tree canopy. County staffers are currently studying the possibility of changing the zoning regulations that restrict the share of a homeowner's lot that may be covered by impervious surfaces. BCA and many other civic associations have been pushing for such a study for several years.

Many civic associations are concerned that the County approach so far avoids studying the impact of the lot coverage of large homes on adjacent neighbors, ranging from dwarfing neighboring homes, cutting roots of a neighbor's trees, and obstructing sunlight for solar energy.

The current study seems likely to recommend a maximum limit on the total impervious surface allowed on a property. Developers and homeowners would be free to distribute the impervious square footage among the main building, sheds, walkways, driveway, patio, pool, etc.

The study will not recommend specific limitations on the main residential building footprint or height limits or set absolute total residential square footage limits for lot coverage.

Information about the study can be found [here](#).

BCA representatives have indicated that study should address the issue of underground water flows. Focusing on impervious surfaces without concern of whether they are a surface cap or involve a foundation that may disrupt those flows does not address this concern. Thus, we have suggested building footprint should be a concern.

County staffers have described their schedule for the study. They hope to establish a shared understanding of the study during Fall–Winter 2025. They will evaluate options during Spring–Summer 2026. They will present their recommendations to the board during Fall–Winter 2026.

AFAC Helps Those in Need



Each week, more than 3,800 Arlington families rely on the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) for free groceries to help make ends meet. Rising housing costs, medical bills, and the high cost of living leave many neighbors struggling to put food on the table. AFAC provides fresh milk, eggs, produce, meat, and pantry staples so families do not have to sacrifice nutrition to cover other essentials.

Meeting this need requires strong community support. Financial contributions are vital because AFAC must purchase more than 60% of the fresh food it distributes. Donations of non-perishable items from food drives and individual supporters are also vital as they keep shelves stocked with staples that families count on. Both forms of support ensure that no Arlington family goes hungry.

To learn how to help AFAC with a contribution or to volunteer to help with AFAC's work, go to their [website](#).

BCA Actions and Resolutions Since the April 2025 Newsletter

More information on civic association meetings, including the full text of resolutions, are in the minutes posted at www.bluemontcivic.org.

April 2025

Nick Giacobbe, Vice President Aurora Highlands Civic Assoc. gave a talk about the possibility of amending Arlington's Comprehensive Plan.

A motion was accepted for final vote in May asking that the Arlington County Police Department increase monitoring and enforcement of parking rules, including use of towing, near Total Wine on 800 N. Glebe Rd. The resolution also asked that JBG Smith, building manager, post signage near the Total Wine entrance indicating that double parking is not allowed, poses a safety hazard, and that free underground parking is available. It requested that JBG consider making its signage that shows the map to this underground parking more prominent for drivers and people entering the Total Wine store and that the building owner provide status and tracking of double-parking issues at a BCA meeting.

Members voted to send a letter to Metro transit authorities urging that one of the two bus stops about to be eliminated on Wilson Boulevard be retained.

May 2025

The Board adopted a program to enable online dues payment through PayPal. PayPal will provide a button for the website that could be used for paying dues and a link that could be included in our Bluemont Enews and on our website.

County Board Vice-Chair Matt de Ferranti gave a presentation that included a great deal of information on budget issues. He also answered member questions on a wide variety of subjects.

The resolution on double parking in front of Total Wine that was published in April passed.

There was a request BCA address the problem of people driving on to the Bluemont Junction trail in their cars from N. Jefferson St. The President said he would contact the parks department. Later a flex post was put in that entrance to deter cars from driving onto the bike path.

June 2025

There was a presentation on the proposed Ballston One project, which includes a 7-story building with 328 rental properties, including ADA accessible units.

There was a discussion of the Bluemont Junction Trail project, which involves some trail realignment and resurfacing.

July and August 2025

The General Membership does not meet in these months, but the Executive Board does.

As a lead up to the 250th anniversary of Independence, the Declaration of Independence and other historically important documents will be quoted in the Enews.

Consistent with prior BCA positions, our association will join in a letter, to be sent from a number of Civic Associations, discussing the County study on lot coverage ratios. The County has not responded to the letter.

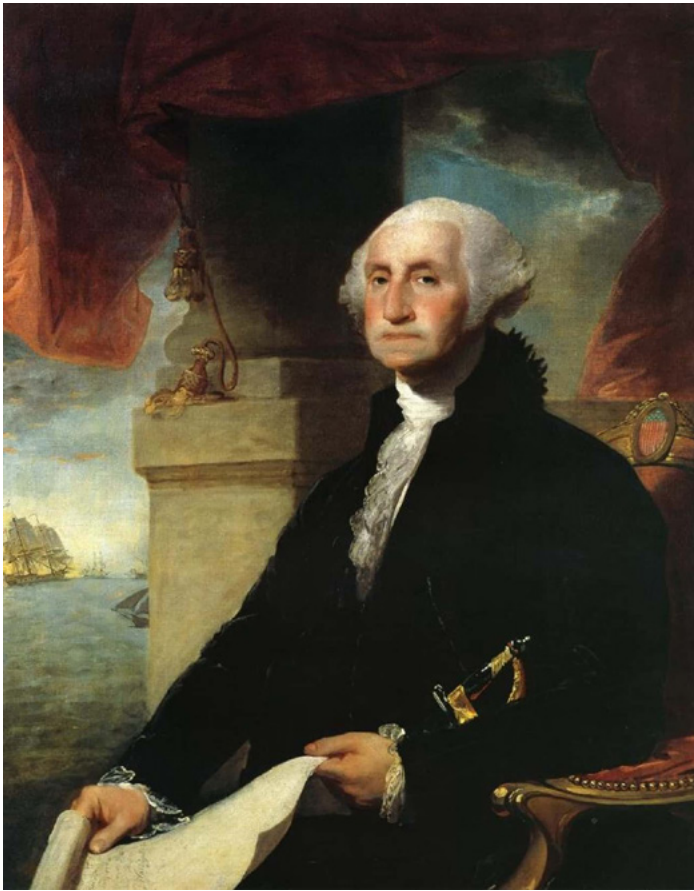
We will support the Halloween Party with publicity and again have a table at the event to sign up members and distribute candy.

September 2025

Gretchen Reinemeyer Director of Elections, and Tania Griffin, Communications & Outreach Coordinator, of the Office of Voter Registration & Elections, Arlington discussed ranked choice voting, how and when you could vote, and how to make sure you are registered to vote.

Tim Aiken of the Arlington Historical Society described the project to use "stumbling stones" to memorialize the people who were enslaved in Arlington.

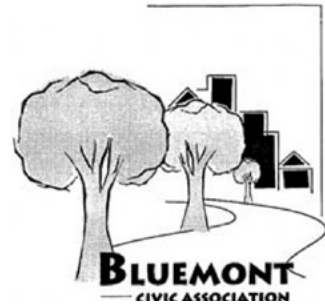
Our first priority ArNAC project was approved for funding by the County Board. We will look for a new project to nominate for this program. (cont'd on p. 6)



The 250th Birthday of the USA

July 4, 2026, will be the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. To celebrate this anniversary, the [Arlington Historical Society](#) (AHS) has launched AHS VA250, a project to expand and deepen its knowledge of Arlington County history. Part of this effort is a writing initiative called 250 by 2026. AHS is looking for new or forgotten stories about the people, places, and events that have had the most impact on Arlington. If you are passionate about preserving and sharing history, [contact AHS](#). Also, a calendar of upcoming events is available [here](#).

BCA will honor the birthday with a special bell ringing on July 4. That will be at noon on the corner of Wilson Boulevard and George Mason Drive across from McDonald's. Also throughout the year our Bluemont Enews will periodically include quotes from important documents in US history.



Executive Board

BCA Officers & Reps

President	Kate Mattos president@bluemontcivic.org
First Vice President	Laura Kirkconnell
Second Vice President	Jeremiah Howard
Treasurer	David Smith
Secretary	Henry McFarland

Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF)

Delegates	Bobby Herman, Jennifer Odum, David Smith, Barbara Wein
Alternates	David Hughes, Kate Mattos, Allen Norton, Nick Pastore

Arlington Neighborhoods Advisory Committee (ArNAC)

Representative	Christopher George
Alternate	Nick Pastore

BCA Actions (cont')

A resolution in support of memorializing the enslaved in Arlington was accepted for publication and final vote at the October meeting.

A resolution supporting reducing the speed limit on North Carlin Springs Road between North George Mason and Route 50 from 30 to 25 mph was accepted for publication and final vote at the October meeting.

Connect with Bluemont



Facebook: Like our [Bluemont Civic Association page on Facebook](#) for regular updates on news of interest to Bluemont, and civic association activities.

BCA website for BCA meetings and official information. www.bluemontcivic.org

BCA e-Mails: Neighbors who provide their e-mail address to bluemontnews@bluemontcivic.org receive e-mail reports roughly weekly on issues affecting Bluemont residents, and civic association activities.

Contact the Executive Board: BCA welcomes comments, suggestions and questions from members. Contact us at exec@Bluemontcivic.org.

Nextdoor.com is a free, private social network where you can connect with people who live nearby. BCA posts announcements on Nextdoor.com.

Join or Renew Today!

Keep your membership current!
Please use this form or visit [our website](#) to join or renew.

BCA Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____

Bring this form and cash or a check for \$15 to join or renew your membership at any General Membership meeting, visit [our website](#), or mail this form with your check made out to "Bluemont Civic Association" to
BCA Treasurer, PO Box 5134, Arlington, VA 22205.

All information is for BCA use only.