

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee  
May 27, 2021

**Meeting Notes - Draft**

Meeting location: Virtual through MS Teams

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1. Kathy Reeder, Vice-Chair, welcomed the Committee to the meeting and provided guidelines and instructions for the members of the NCAC, covering how the meeting will be run and instructions on how to communicate in the virtual setting.
2. Roll Call and Neighborhood Updates
3. Approval of Notes from the February and April, 2021 NCAC Meetings:  
The Meeting Notes were approved for both February and April.
4. Officers and Staff Report  
Kathy informed the group about the Points Committee meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup>. There was unanimous support and approval to bring 3 projects to the full NCAC at the June NCAC meeting.  
Tim McIntosh informed the group that the County Manager released a 3-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which will go before the County Board for approval.
5. Discussion / Action Items:  
Guest Speaker - Takis Karantonis, Member, Arlington County Board and the 2021 Board Liaison to the NCAC  
  
Questions:
  - i. Eileen Janas – Wants NC to focus on projects that are best for individual neighborhoods. The NC Program is by the people, getting together deciding what they need. What is most important to us in our small segment of the county. Many easy projects have already been built. Now we are trying to tackle the more complicated and expensive ones.
  - ii. Howard Solodky – Can you speak more broadly on the budgetary & financial position of the County? What was the logic behind the recommendation for \$2 million to the NC Program in the upcoming CIP?  
Takis – noted that County finances are stable, residential is good, but commercial revenue is low. Many units were lost in the hotel industry due to the pandemic, and this may impact the long term health of the County. The budget is cautious partly as a result of the pandemic. Funding of the program is low, which shows a non-commitment to the program at the present time. CIP funding is cautious, but these will be revisited with an expected recovery in the future.

Howard – asked What is the CM’s formula for bond funding amount? Will we lose our AAA rating in recent recommendations?

Takis– replied No, but the County needs to factor in what should be spent on stormwater management and other infrastructure needs.

- iii. Jacki Wilson – NC to her is about identity of neighborhoods and quality of life in a neighborhood. She noted that many NC projects overlap with other County programs. She asked if other county programs and budgets can be leveraged, which could allow NC to focus more on quality of life and what is special (showcase and highlight) in each neighborhood.

Takis– is interested in finding ways to harmonize the NC program with other County programs, such as the Neighborhood Complete Streets Program. He is looking forward to staff exploring these synergies with other programs. He feels neighborhood character is important and needs to have future opportunities considered and explored to create that neighborhood character.

- iv. Thora Colot – What else can NCAC contribute to the County as a whole? We are a house of representatives for Arlington County with almost every single community here, but right now no one asks our advice. A goal for NCAC – get all neighborhoods represented and serve as an advisory board for priorities in neighborhoods.

Takis – agrees an asset of the program is a gathering of representatives with a detailed knowledge of their neighborhoods. He knows there was a presidents breakfasts of 10 Civic Associations (CA’s) once a month on Columbia Pike. Now have the same on Lee Hwy. and there is a lot to hear from them.

- v. Bill Braswell – feels many CA’s not on major highways get overlooked. The CB members and others need to focus on these other CA’s. Speeding is a problem in neighborhoods and NC builds sidewalks. No other real initiative than NC and NCS to look at their needs, especially around safety. A park built in his neighborhood was sponsored through NC, and that park is constantly used. The minimum CIP funding needed is about \$20 million to support the program.

Takis –believes what happens in every area of the County is equally important.

Bill – further noted that neighborhoods don’t have developers to fund projects, and they depend on NC Program to provide improvements.

- vi. Brent Burris – is concerned about long term County funding, and asked how much is the County accounting for the possibility of a contraction in commercial real estate and commercial lease loss?

Takis – replied that the County Board is aware of this and paying attention to it. He noted some of this may continue, but areas like Rosslyn and Rt. 1 are recovering with their spaces filling.

- vii. Sarah McKinley – believes the NC Program lost CIP funding in part because of the perception that CA’s only represent single family homeowners. She noted that over 50% of Arlington residents live in multifamily units. CA’s need help from the County to

help with including multifamily buildings to participate, because they don't have access to those residents. Need policy from the County to encourage that connection.

Takis – agreed with Sarah. He noted another factor that plays into this is that much of the basic service needs are built already for multifamily buildings, such as sidewalks. But it is also true that some streets don't have sidewalks and are deficient in lighting and parking. He was happy to see the Columbia Heights' NC 12<sup>th</sup> & Scott project in an apartment high-rise neighborhood.

- viii. Rob Swennes – remarked that the Neighborhood Conservation Program Review task force considered how to explain to a broader range of people what the NC Program can be. Consider having the 60+ neighborhoods get a webpage on the NC/NCAC website to describe and reflect on their identity in such a way that provides people with a snapshot of what they are about.

Takis – thought these were valid points and they touch on equity.

- ix. Tim McIntosh concluded the conversation by thanking Mr. Karantonis for visiting and talking with the NCAC.

6. Meeting adjourned