

DRCA Membership Meeting Minutes
Virtual via Zoom
September 13, 2023



7:04 pm: Welcome by President Katie Waynick

- This is our schools meeting

7:05 pm: Crime/Traffic report from Captain Dennis Andreas

- School zone cameras are now issuing tickets
 - In front of GW middle school north and south bound
 - Enforcement during pick up and drop off (school zone speed limit)
 - Francis Hammond
 - Ferdinand Day
- Crime:
 - Larcenies: 12 in Del Ray - shoplifting, not much pattern visible
 - Seeing it all over the City, primary driver of crime rate
 - 3 burglaries
 - Construction site
 - Residential - known party
 - Restaurant on Mt. Vernon - known party
 - Felonious assault
 - Arrest was made
- DRCA / DRBA reached out to ACPD to have some conversations about what residents and businesses can do to deter increasing nuisance crime
 - Significant uptick in disruptive crime - kids middle school age most likely, causing trouble at residential properties (night time disturbances), several neighborhood events, screaming obscenities, throwing trash
 - Teenagers - don't want to send them down a bad path but what are ways to intervene
 - Community policing philosophy
 - New communications person at police department
 - Dashboard to come out Monday - show more about crime rates
 - Focus group to address this problem, possibly use Del Ray as a pilot program
 -
- To get an update on crime across the country: [Communitycrimemap.com](https://communitycrimemap.com)
- Comment from Jim Snyder: There is excessive traffic and speeding on Commonwealth Avenue. This is very concerning since this is a very active pedestrian path way to Mount Vernon School. Windsor Avenue is particularly bad since there is no 4 way stop but a major pedestrian crossing with no stop sign. Lots of accidents - bad accident or tragedy waiting to happen.
- Capt. Andreas: Send in traffic concerns through Alex311 to get both T&ES and police department to look at it
 - Jim S: It was supposed to be a 4-way stop as part of the traffic calming years ago but never got put in
 - Jim S: New state law about requiring stopping at every pedestrian crosswalk, we were in a car accident at this location, many pedestrians
 - Katie Waynick: Please send an email to the exec board
 - Jim S: Arlington Ridge road has speed limit signs that post speed
 - Bryan Hayes, T&ES: Received a 311 comment on this place recently - trees are on private property, Dept. of right of way people will work with homeowners to resolve the tree blocking the stop sign. Also sent to traffic engineers to asses the intersection for

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appropriate improvements or interventions. Complete streets and vision zero looks at corridors that speeding is a problem, so we can look at this street. Community feedback is very important, even if it is slow, please submit the 311 tickets.

- Jim S: Please come talk to some of the neighbors on site with the people who are living adjacent to the intersection.
- Elena Hutchison : The DRCA used to have a Traffic Calming committee and we would love to bring that back, but we need volunteers who feel passionate about it

- Gayle Reuter : Please get word out to cyclists that they also have to obey the traffic rules so one of us don't hit them.

- Rod Kuckro: Solicitors coming selling candy with a story about their lives. Does Alexandria require people to have a permit to do this? Arlington and Fairfax County require this.
 - Capt. A: Pedlar's license through City Hall - should be available for review or inspection
 - Rod: Young people in a van that are collecting money for someone else - can't tell if it is a scam or not

7:24pm: Sheriff's office report from Sheriff Sean Casey

- Art on the Ave was a huge success, great job to everyone
- Keeping an eye on the community synagogues throughout the City - off duty security to two synagogues due to Israel
- Sheriff cruisers will be out during Halloween
- Community Academy graduation just occurred, follow up with Spring Semester if you are interested

7:27pm: Bryan Hayes, T&ES, Safe Routes to School

Email: bryan.hayes@alexandriava.gov

- Complete Streets coordinator works with Alex Carol who oversees the program: How can we use the City's infrastructure to encourage slower safer driving.
- Vision Zero - goal of 0 crashes by 2028
- Safe routes to school: 20th anniversary this year - promotes walking and biking through infrastructure improvements
 - alexandriava.gov/go/2685
 - Received a grant to install traffic gardens

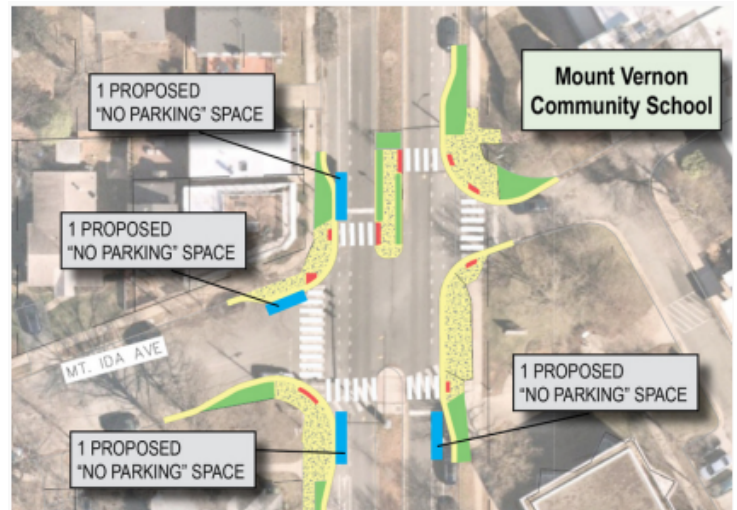
- **Walk Audits:** alexandriava.gov/go/4203
 - City collaborates with school, families, advocacy groups and police to document drop off or pick up - being on the ground to observe the reality
 - 2017
 - reviewed 13 elementary schools, more than 60% of recommendations are completed or in progress.
 - alexandriava.gov/go/2685#SchoolWalkAudits
 - 2023
 - 2 Middle schools, 2 high school campuses and 1 elementary schools
 - George washington Middle school - observed drop off

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- **Curb Extensions Near schools:** alexandriava.gov/go/4745
 - Identify sidewalk curb extensions to prioritize funding
 - Extend the curb into the street so that pedestrians have a shorter distance to cross the street. Instead of 20', 12-15'
 - Slows down drivers - narrower road makes us want to be more cautious
 - Slow down turns because they are sharper
 - More green space, more pedestrian waiting space
 - Proposed on Commonwealth near Mount Vernon Community school

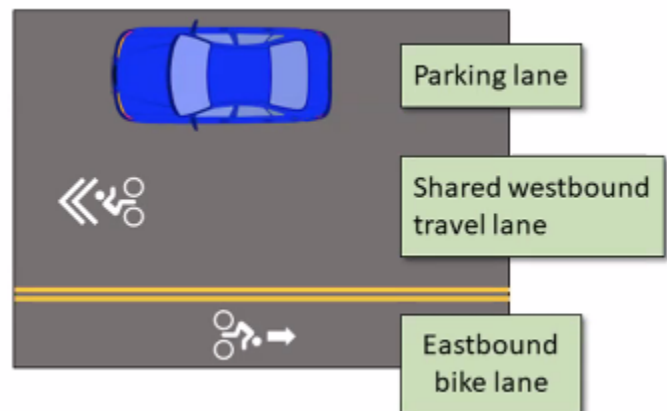
- "Z" crossing
- Sent a grant applicant to VDOT for 3 intersections near MVCS - will know next year if we get the grant
- Would be late 2025 and construction 2026 if this is funded
- There will continue to be more community involvement before the intersections are fully designed - still need to look at stormwater



- **Spot Improvements**

- East Uhler Ave
 - Crash involving a pedestrian (parent / teacher) hit by a car
 - Traffic and Parking board approved removal of parking spaces at intersection of Uhler and Clyde to create more visibility
 - Repaving will occur this year and new crosswalk and painted curb extension will be added

- Contra-Flow Bike Lane
 - East Glendale Ave is a one way street at this location, allowing eastbound bike lane
 - From Mt. Vernon ave to Potomac Yard
 - Westbound cyclists use travel lane



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- **Speed camera safety program**
 - Virginia passed law authorizing cameras in 2020
- Question: Can speed limit around schools be reduced to 20 mph
- What tools are at our disposal as an association for traffic calming:
 - Speed humps / speed tables - option for side streets, requires upfront community input
 - Requesting stop signs
 - Speed feedback signs
 - Rectangular rapid flash beacons

7:54pm: Dr. Michelle Rief, Rene Paschal and Jacinta Greene of the Alexandria City School Board

- **Jacinta Greene: School Board Member**
 - Sunshine law requires that 3 school board members can't be at the same meeting
 - Hired Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Superintendent of Schools
 - Transition Plan:
<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/about-us/leadership/superintendent-of-schools>
- **Rene Paschal: Acting Executive Director of School Leadership**
 - Support school Principals
 - Help us recruit, attract and retain quality teachers and staff for the school system, need substitute teachers
 - Strong focus on academic learning - incremental growth in most content levels, but not where we need to be or back to pre-pandemic levels
 - Improve school culture
 - Reduce the absenteeism rate which has skyrocketed across the country
 - Minnie Howard will be shifting to an academy focus - small learning communities clustered to enhance experience for children preparing for college
- **Dr. Michelle Rief, School Board Chair:**
 - Joined school board in 2019
 - Children at all levels currently
 - Lived in Warwick village for 20 years, and currently live at intersection of Uhler and Commonwealth
 - Priorities for the school Division



ACPS Priority Areas SY 23-24

Instructional Core



- **Academic Achievement**
 - Tier 1 Instruction: Alignment, Rigor, Engagement
 - The High School Project
- **Student Supports**
 - CASEL Social Emotional Learning Competencies
 - Student Connection and Attendance
- **Staff Supports**
 - Continue Culture Building
 - Recruitment and Retention

Governance



- Policies Equity Audit
- Redistricting
- Collective Bargaining
- K-8 School Analysis
- Class Sizes & Capacity Transfers
- Board Composition and Election Cycles

- **Collective Bargaining:** new in Virginia, got off to a slower start but have a board committee to draft a collective bargaining resolution
- **K-8 school analysis:** newer model in the City
- **Board composition and election cycles:** Does it make sense to go to staggered terms, other boards are also on a 4 year cycle
 - Request feedback from the Community on the staggered term proposal to put into a resolution to go to City Council for the 2027 election cycle
- **Redistricting:**
 - Population shifts among the City

Elementary School Enrollment and Utilization

School	Enrolled K-5	Live-In K-5	Capacity	Enrolled Utilization (PK-5)	Live-In Utilization (PK-5)
Charles Barrett	480	567	500	96.0%	113.4%
Cora Kelly	259	272	371	69.8%	73.3%
Douglas MacArthur	546	595	724	75.4%	82.2%
Ferdinand T. Day	583	626	638	91.4%	98.1%
George Mason	306	313	368	83.2%	85.1%
James K Polk	777	788	760	102.2%	103.7%
Jefferson-Houston	393	362	407	96.6%	88.9%
John Adams	716	638	595	120.3%	107.2%
Lyles-Crouch	408	422	375	108.8%	112.5%
Mount Vernon	855	628	755	113.2%	83.2%
Naomi L. Brooks	328	355	350	93.7%	101.4%
Patrick Henry	738	823	614	120.2%	134.0%
Samuel W Tucker	731	728	620	117.9%	117.4%
William Ramsay	556	559	716	77.7%	78.1%
Grand Total	7676	7676	7793	98.5%	98.5%

* 90% - 110% is considered the ideal range for utilization

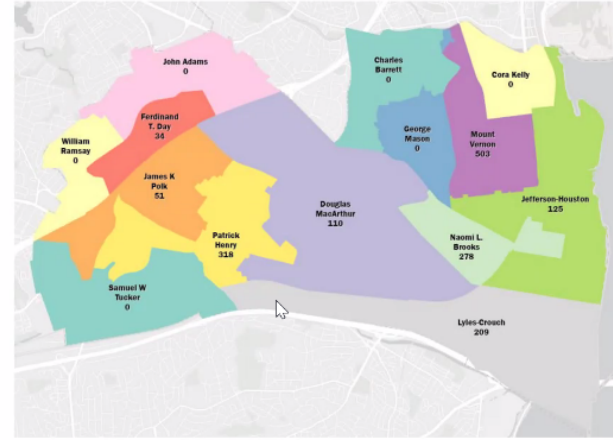
- Redistricting balances the enrolled population (students attending neighborhood zoned school) and the live in boundary (students that live within a schools neighborhood zone)
- Expected development over the next 5 years and how many additional students could be added

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Expected 5 Years Development (K-12)

Boundary School	Project Name	Expected Build-Out Year	Student Generation
Douglas MacArthur	AHDC - Seminary Rd	2025	32
Douglas MacArthur	Witter Place	2027	78
Ferdinand T. Day	Hilton MF Project	2026	34
James K Polk	Landmark - Block I	2027	27
James K Polk	Landmark - Block K	2027	24
Jefferson-Houston	Heritage - Block 4	2025	73
Jefferson-Houston	Transpotomac	2026	21
Jefferson-Houston	Montgomery Center	2027	31
Lyles-Crouch	Paradigm	2024	30
Lyles-Crouch	Heritage - Block 1	2024	68
Lyles-Crouch	Simpson - Block 23	2026	67
Lyles-Crouch	Rushmark - South Tower	2027	44
Mount Vernon	Oakville - Block A1	2024	35
Mount Vernon	AHDC - Glebe	2026	393
Mount Vernon	3908 Elbert Ave	2026	75
Naomi L. Brooks	Samuel Madden	2027	278
Patrick Henry	Parc View II	2026	318



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| Mount Vernon | Oakville - Block A1 | 2024 | 35 |
| Mount Vernon | AHDC - Glebe | 2026 | 393 |
| Mount Vernon | 3908 Elbert Ave | 2026 | 75 |

- City Staff estimates number of students generated
 - Adding additional capacity in new schools as they are modernized and renovated
 - Boundary Analysis: <https://alexandria.ic-board.com/attachments/39678dd5-37b3-46fb-ba5b-46e3f5b0e319.pdf>
- Question** - Teacher retention: Compensation and benefits package. Steps that were frozen, when will those get back - teachers that came in after the freeze are getting equivalent to teachers that have been working longer.
 - Answer: Rene Paschal: Washington area board's annual survey comes out soon and it should show that our salaries are competitive and ACPS offers benefits packages that can't be matched by other NoVA districts.
- Question:** Please address out of boundary students.
 - Answer: Michelle Rief: Try to limit reasons for why students would transfer. Most were driven by capacity issues - if a school is full sometimes students are transferred. Dual language schools are attractive - MVCS and John Adams. Look at expanding dual language to other schools or how do we address Mt. Vernon capacity.
- Question:** Please address State Standardized Tests.
 - ACPS has seen small increases, not back to pre-pandemic levels. Continue to focus on improvement. Virginia Literacy Act - focus directed toward reading and literacy, tweaking the way that reading is taught which will probably have a big impact.

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- **Question:** Have you considered other buildings for school expansion - such as 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave (Department of Community and Human Services) for an expansion of MVCS:
 - Answer: Michele Rief / Jacinta Green: Joint facilities master plan is a document that was produced looking at all of the buildings owned by the City and School that assessed the quality of the building. This could be a good location for an early childhood center. Let's bring it up to the mayor and see what he has to say about that.
- **Question:** Expansion of Pre-K programs
 - Answer: Rene Paschal: Had problems filling all of the spaces this past year.
- **Question:** What are you doing to address the Credited with conditions status of Alexandria City High School and Jefferson Houston K-8? :
 - Answer: State has different criteria that the schools have to meet. Need to give additional focus to those schools. Can share additional information with the Association via email. Schools are working through a Virginia State system that requires an external process that is also replicated within the school district.
- Jacinta: Always looking for members to serve on school board advisory committees - budget, TAG, athletic hall of fame and other.
<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/school-board/school-board-committees>

8:05pm: Announcements

- Special meeting related to Zoning for Housing / Housing for All at 7pm on Oct. 23 via Zoom
 - Land Use Committee and Executive Board met to discuss the information that has been shared by the City
 - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning-and-zoning/zoning-for-housinghousing-for-all>
 - Read through document with background information will be shared via email next week with the Membership
- Membership
 - If you have not renewed you are past due- go [renew online](#) so you can vote in the next meeting
 - Expect an email to come out this week with a member survey
- Association is exploring more in person options for meetings, social events, etc.
- Gayler Reuter: Announcements
 - 27th annual Halloween Parade
 - Best decorated house, Stroller competition, Group costumes
 - Scavenger hunt - 5 winners for a \$50 gift card to whatever business in Del Ray you want

8:33pm: Meeting adjourn