



Arlington County Civic Federation

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES, TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2025

MEETING

- Arlington County Civic Federation, General Membership Meeting, 2/11/2025 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Meeting convened virtually via Zoom only to account for inclement weather, called via email invitation, web notification, and Facebook post.

ATTENDANCE

- Zoom: Member delegates registered in-advance, and were recorded via Zoom.
- Facebook Live: Open to the public.

CALL TO ORDER (Nicholas Giacobbe)

- Called to order at 7:00 p.m. with quorum met with 1/10th of member delegates (required 25).

MINUTES APPROVAL (Nicholas Giacobbe)

- A motion was made to approve the January General Membership (GM) [minutes](#), the motion was moved, and seconded. The January GM minutes were approved by acclamation.

PROGRAM:

ACCF was honored to welcome Arlington County government and civic leadership to discuss a range of topics including community planning, housing and development, and a new effort within the community to memorialize the enslaved in Arlington. We included time for the audience to ask questions throughout, with membership involvement in the discussion a priority. Discussion topics and questions included:

1. Samia Byrd, Arlington County's Director of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD), shared an overview of CPHD and outlined key initiatives within the community. Conversation with and questions from the audience included:
 - a. Rising concerns regarding responsiveness to stakeholder input during the site plan review process.
 - b. Concerns over appropriate building heights.
 - c. A question was raised on how can the CivFed and Civic Associations work together with CPHD to create a meaningful dialogue during the site plan review process.
 - d. Concern over the sometimes short timeframes provided for the review process for a given site plan.
 - e. It was noted that the [Council of Governments](#) (CoG) suggests shortfalls may be in the area of affordable housing, especially at the lower AMI levels.
 - f. One member asked about how we avoid displacement of seniors given how high taxes are.
 - g. Who is the 'community' in community benefits provided by private development.

- h. What is the CPHD view on approving development that will impact existing homeowners (example: new development which will block the iconic views of 100 homeowners).
 - i. Concerns raised over 'high density transit oriented' development.
 - j. Community benefits that follow from the rebuilding of commercial spaces.
 - k. You can review Samia's presentation [here](#).
- 2. Anne Venezia, Arlington County's Housing Director, discussed affordable housing in Arlington. The conversation was moderated by Matt Hall, ACCF housing Committee Co-Chair. Questions from the audience included:
 - a. Are loans coming from Amazon, how are they structured?
 - b. Do most of the housing projects come with tax abatements?
 - c. What is the unit of cost to create affordable housing and how does that compare to other jurisdictions?
 - d. How do you prioritize Arlington residents that are already contributing to the community?
 - e. Lack of parking creates conflict rather than community.
 - f. You can review Anne's presentation [here](#).
- 3. Tim Aiken and Jessica Kaplan, civic leaders representing the Memorializing the Enslaved in Arlington (MEA) project, shared an overview of their project. Discussion was moderated by Nicholas Giacobbe. Questions from the audience included:
 - a. Are there any plans for a single memorial to the enslaved?
 - b. Is there an impact on the plaques to people with disabilities?
 - c. Have you thought about utilizing QR codes as an option to get more digital information?
 - d. Will the full history be told, going back to Africa?
 - e. It was noticed that some of the housing deeds discriminated against people of Syrian descent. Have you been able to uncover any related stories?
 - f. You can review the MEA presentation [here](#).

OPEN FLOOR – 8:55 p.m

- 1. Nicholas Giacobbe reminded the audience that CivFed will be holding a working session with the County Board on Feb 26th in the Bozman building. There will be five discussion topics including economic/fiscal resilience, good and open government, planning and zoning, housing, and climate action.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:00 p.m.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and approved by acclamation.

Meeting Video Link: [Arlington County Civic Fed \[ACCF\] \(vimeo.com\)](#)

Submitted by: Matt Gloudeman, ACCF Secretary 2/23/2025