



Columbia Heights Civic Association Neighborhood Newsletter

Issue 13

<http://columbiaheightsva.org/>

Fall 2015

President's Message:

I hope that everyone will attend the **annual meeting of CHCA**, scheduled **Monday, September 28**, at 7:00 p.m. at the Walter Reed Community Center. This year we are featuring a special presentation about a revolutionary transportation system that could become an alternative to the Columbia Pike Streetcar and benefit the entire region.

This year we have also been extraordinarily busy, actively participating in the Arlington County Facilities Committee as well as the South Arlington Working Group to select a new elementary school. We distributed detailed reports of these meetings to our members, and the reports are available on our web site.

We hope that you will renew your membership (or join us) to help us serve you.

We will also be voting in a new board, for which we have two vacancies.
--Ron Haddox, President

Sign up for CHCA Web Group

Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ColumbiaHeightsCA/join/> and follow instructions to sign up.

CHCA Board:

Ron Haddox (President); Ed Miltenberger (Vice President); Takis Karantonis (Secretary); Joshua Folb (Treasurer) and Sarah McKinley.



Annual Meeting Features JPod Discussion

The Annual Meeting of CHCA on September 28 will feature a special presentation about an alternative to the Columbia Pike Streetcar. CHCA has invited Bill James, President of JPod, Inc. to present a new transportation technology called JPods, which would move people and cargo overhead.

The basic technology has been around, used at Fairgrounds to create rides that give a bird's-eye view of the fairgrounds. In this application, JPods would carry up to four people (or 1,200 lb. of freight) across an overhead rail powered by solar panels.

The poles could be located in the middle of the street and would not impede traffic. Because the pods don't have to stop at lights, they can move at 37 mph down the Pike, making for quick travel times--less than five minutes from Glebe Rd. to the Pentagon City metro. Even better, this transportation would be carbon free. With no fuel costs, the fares alone would pay for the system. This option would be privately-funded, with no need for public funding.

Unlike the streetcar, which is created in a single corridor, the JPod system is designed to be created in a grid with many "nodes." This system could be expanded to Fairfax, Alexandria, with north-south interconnection with Ballston, Crystal City and beyond. With this system, there's no need to get off one bus or train to get on another. Passengers just choose their destination when they buy their tickets, and the pod takes them there.

JPods, Inc. could start building a demo along Columbia Pike as early as next spring. Please come to discuss this exciting possibility for Columbia Pike and beyond!

Arlington Facilities Committee

Columbia Heights Civic Association actively participated in the Arlington Facilities Committee, an 11-month process beginning in February 2015 to make recommendations about needed facilities throughout the County.

The Committee, with 23 official members and over 115 members of a “residents forum” is an effort to resolve long-term land issues for the siting of schools, fire houses, vehicle storage sites and other facility needs.

The study focused on demographic and economic forecasts, existing county property, and identified needs to create recommendations to guide facility planning for the next 50 years.

Sarah McKinley was the CHCA representative, who created detailed reports of the meetings and made them available to CHCA members and others along the Pike. The reports are available on the CHCA web site.

The final report is due this November, which will be presented to both the County and the Arlington Public School Boards.

South Arlington Working Group

Beginning in June, the Arlington Public School and the County Board began a separate public process to identify sites for elementary

schools in South Arlington and give recommendations for at least one new 725-seat school, which would go online in fall 2019. It is anticipated that South Arlington will need at least two schools in the next decade, and the group will probably make at least two site recommendations.

Some sites that are part of the list to be considered include the Thomas Jefferson Middle School/Community Center site, which was studied last year but tabled by the County Board. New sites identified by the Working Group include: Walter Reed Park on 16th Street, the on-ground parking lot at Barcroft Park on Four Mile Drive, property on Carlin Spring Road currently owned by Arlington Hospital, the Aurora Hills Community Center/Virginia Highlands Park in Crystal City, and a number of other sites.

Beginning in August and September, the group will consider programming issues for the schools and begin to whittle down the possibilities. Initial architectural drawings will be presented this coming week.

Sarah McKinley serves as the CHCA representative, and Lida Anestidou is the alternate. Separate reports have been created for each meeting, which will occur every other week through the fall.



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Make checks payable to Columbia Heights Civic Association, 2611 Columbia Pike, Arlington, Virginia 22204. To use PayPal, go to <http://columbiaheightsva.org/>, click on “Become a Member!” and go to the bottom of the page.

Membership is annual, from October to the following September.