

Arlington's Families for Safe Streets ("Arl FSS") Advisory Committee

26 May 2021: 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Location: Zoom

Meeting Notes

Introductions – 15 people in attendance

Discussion Topics

- **Safe Streets in Arlandria: A Presentation from the Maret School – Roger Schlegel**
 - Maret is an independent school in DC with students from Arlington and Alexandria. Roger Schlegel teaches a class of 10th and 11th graders that is focused on equity and safety. Students recently worked on a project to look at the impact of HQ2 on Arlandria and Chirilagua and identify opportunities to improve safety for pedestrians. These are denser, lower-income areas with a lot of pedestrians and bus users.
 - Roger shared a presentation of the recommendations from students. Recommendations included adding bollards, extending sidewalks, creating shorter crosswalks, reducing the number of lanes for cars, introducing bus and bike lanes, building bus aprons, and reclaiming pavement for public space.
 - Roger recommended the book “Streetfight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution” by Janette Sadik-Khan, Seth Solomonow.
 - Next year, Roger would like to connect with Arl FSS earlier in the semester to work on a consulting/project opportunity for his class.
 - Recommendation from Gillian: Arlington has a program called Customer Care & Communications (C3) to address problems that are not maintenance. These suggestions should be sent to des-teo@arlingtonva.us where they will be received and presented to the appropriate point of contact. Ideas can include new crosswalks, new stop signs, new warning signs, etc.
 - In addition to C3 or as an alternative, people can use Arl FSS's new “Near Miss / Dangerous Location” survey because the app will map the “dangerous location”, pass the information onto the County's Transportation staff, and can follow up with the County's staff as to what action might result from the report.
- **Safe Route 1 in National Landing:** a presentation from Darren Buck
 - Livability 22202 is a combination of civic associations from three neighborhoods: Arlington Ridge, Aurora Highlands, and Crystal City. The organization has several working groups focused on rapid development in the National Landing. The Route 1 working group is focused on a VDOT proposal to change Route 1 (Richmond Highway).
 - Since Amazon is building HQ2 in the National Landing, VDOT is working on a study to identify enhanced multimodal connectivity and accommodations along and across Route 1 in Crystal City.
 - Livability 22202 represents the interests of people who live, work, and visit National Landing. It is examining design alternatives outside of the options considered in the VDOT study. They have held two public meetings on August 26, 2020, and September 30, 2020. They have drafted project goals and surveyed the community.
 - Survey responders want to cross Route 1 using the underpasses because it is difficult to cross 8 lanes of traffic.
 - They also have concerns with the safety of the current at-grade cross-section and the potential traffic diversions to parallel streets.

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- The number one priority of survey responses was pedestrian travel across Route 1 with auto travel second.
- The 18th St underpass provides a safe and convenient connection for all modes of transportation: walking, biking, driving, etc.
- Safe and convenient east-west connections are priority.
- 23rd St is perceived as dangerous, confusing, and congested by pedestrians and cyclists. It is generally avoided by survey responders.
- o The Livability 22202 working group is concerned that the scope of the VDOT study is very narrowly limited to the feasibility of bringing Route 1 down to grade, including at 15th and 18th Streets, and is not considering other alternatives. The working group is trying to think of creative solutions to address the Route 1 challenge, taking inspiration from other cities and thinking beyond potential budget restraints to find ideal solutions.
- o Discussion
 - Robert Mandle and Malaika Scriven of the National Landing BID shared that National Landing is focused on "People Before Cars" and has been promoting their commitment to focus on vulnerable road users. The best way to create a safe downtown is to remove the automotive mentality. This is difficult with a highway that goes through downtown. The BID is looking to find consensus for solutions. Arlington has been good about focusing on transit but not on making a connected system. There are components of good connectivity such as transit stops and density, but not fully developed with good connections for bikes, etc.
 - Gillian – Livability 22202 is doing a good job of looking at the development as a system. It is difficult to ride a bike in National Landing. It is flat, but the infrastructure isn't there. It is also important to resolve the issues around Route 1 with a complete system otherwise the traffic will be pushed into neighborhoods. The solution has to be focused on reducing the number of cars.
 - Darren – A wholistic approach must be used to proactively reduce traffic and create safe, comfortable networks to walk, bike, and use public transportation. It needs to be desirable to not bring your car when you move to this area.
 - Mike – NoVA FSS wrote a letter to VDOT because a new district manager will soon be appointed for NoVA. The letter advocates for a district manager that is responsive to Northern Virginia issues such as multi-modal transportation and the role of VDOT in Arlington and Fairfax. The letter also incorporates the request for more local control of roads.
- o Resources and links:
 - [VDOT is working on a study](#)
 - [The citizen-led Livability 22202 has a working group](#)
 - [The National Landing BID has a related campaign](#)
 - Upcoming meetings: [June 16 VDOT public meeting](#) and [June 7 joint Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committees](#)
 - [Statistics on Route 1 from National Landing BID](#)
 - Darren shared a citizen-designed Crystal City Bike Network: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wra1VzgRmaCV1PV0urRv7JJYSV4qy1rbeUANBTOdue8/edit>
- o **Arlington County adopted a Vision Zero action plan that Arl FSS supported.**
 - o The action plan identified a list of unsafe traffic conditions. However, missing from their list was the volume of cars on the road and it did not include a plan to reduce the number of cars on the road and the number of times cars are used.

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- o **NoVA FSS's new Near Miss/Dangerous Location survey app** (developed with VT grad student)
 - o Cris Burbach presented the Near Miss (NM) Survey that was developed by VT grad students over the last two semesters.
 - o The Near Miss survey asks users to input information about near miss incidents or dangerous location observations so that these data points can be analyzed and plotted in a GIS map. Survey users may also choose to provide contact information and sign up for updates from Arl FSS.
 - o The survey asks for information such as the reason for the incident (multiple reasons can be selected) and the types of individuals involved (driver, pedestrian, cyclist) as well as other pertinent information about the incident.
 - o The map displays data collected from our NM survey data with crash data from VDOT's TREDs (Traffic Records Electronic Data System). Thus, Arl FSS's NM web site will show the NM entries identifying a pedestrian, cyclists, etc. type of information and under-lying the NM data points, the TREDs crash data points will be visible. Our real time, crowd sourcing aggregation of this information will help support our advocacy efforts.
 - o Link to survey: [Survey](#)
 - o Link to map: [Map](#)
 - o We will need help spreading the word about the survey so that we can collect as many data points as possible. An announcement will be sent from Arl FSS when the survey is live. Please share on social media and with neighborhood groups.
- o **NoVA FSS's marketing plan** (developed with VT grad students)
 - o Discussion tabled for next month's meeting.
- o **Arlington's proposed Capital Improvement Plan** - [You can read the proposal here.](#)
 - o Discussion tabled for next month's meeting.
 - o Consider reviewing Arlington's proposed Capital Improvement plan prior to the discussion. Arlington County has a capital budget for projects to build things that last more than three years such as roads and buildings. Funding for capital can be complicated since it is not funded by taxes. Funding may come from bonds, grants, etc. The Capital Improvement Plan is updated every two years to plan how projects will be funded. Last year the Capital Improvement Plan was only for one year due to COVID. This year, they are working on a three-year plan.
 - o One item of note from the proposed plan is a new program for street safety that will fund Vision Zero. However, it is only \$5 million over three years.
 - o If you have questions, contact Gillian Burgess.
- o **Other projects/meetings of interest:**
 - o [Vision Zero Action Plan](#): adopted as proposed (with our support!)
 - o Crystal City bike plan: [survey open now](#); [meeting June 15](#)
 - o N Ohio St & 12th St N project (near McKinley ES): [survey open now and meeting June 2](#)

Upcoming Events

- Fairfax FSS Meeting – 1st Mon of the Month, June 7, 2021, 6:30-8:00
- AFSS Meeting – the 3rd Tuesday of the Month, June 15, 2021. 6:30-8:00
- Arl FSS Meeting – 4th Wed of the Month, June 23, 2021, 6:30-8:00
- NVRC Safe Walking Summit - June 10th 1:30 pm 4:00. Register at [Here](#).