

TARA-LEEWAY HEIGHTS COMMUNITY NEWS



www.taraleewayheights.org | December 2021

JOIN our next
meeting virtually!



The Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association will host its next meeting on January 12 at 7pm via Zoom. Check our website at taraleewayheights.org for a link to join the session.

TARA LEEWAY BOARD

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Vice President: Laura Stout

Treasurer: Irene Szopo

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Add your email address to our listserv so you can get updates, newsletters, and alerts straight to your inbox. Our Summer 2022 newsletter will be distributed to your mailboxes.

taraleewayheights.org

Hi Neighbors!

On behalf of your Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association, we wish for all of our friends and neighbors a joyous, peaceful and SAFE holiday season. We hope you can enjoy this wonderful time safely with family and friends.

Neighborhood updates: Most activity has ceased recently at the stormwater detention vault construction site on the Cardinal School grounds. This is because the county now wants to install a permanent power line on site before construction begins, which should reduce or eliminate the need for noisy generators.

Excavation work at the site should begin around the beginning of February. The school fields should be restored and ready for community use in mid-2023. Meantime, at the other end of our neighborhood, the large Arlington Hospital Center expansion project is still set for completion at the end of 2022.

One major school and community safety issue continues to concern us – safety for pedestrians at the busy local intersection of N Patrick Henry Dr. and N 18th St.

On December 8, [we sent a message](#) to the County Board and County Manager urging immediate remedial traffic calming measures at this intersection, now used by elementary and middle schoolers, as well as many older residents walking to the popular Westover shopping center and library, and on Sundays, to our Farmers' Market.

We were joined in this effort by the presidents of the Cardinal Elementary and Swanson Middle School PTAs, both of whom co-signed our message. We received a reply from County Board chair Matt de Ferranti the next day. Both communications are available on our TLHCA website at taraleewayheights.org.

On December 11, one of our members with children at Cardinal and Swanson who must cross Patrick Henry Drive at this intersection outlined her continuing concerns about safety to the Board at its [regular Saturday session](#). Her remarks are at minute 31:30 and Mr. de Ferranti's response is at minute 52:50.

We are hopeful for quick remedial action by county transportation staff.

In this newsletter you will also find articles by TLHCA board members about a recent successful Neighborhood Conservation project designed to increase pedestrian safety on N 15th St; an interview with a leading organizer of the Sunday Farmers' Market in Westover; an introduction to the acclaimed Arlington Neighborhood Village project; a holiday food drive organized by two members of your board, and a short quiz to test your knowledge of our neighborhood and nearby environs.

As always, we appreciate your support. If you have not yet renewed your 2022 membership, a form and instructions are attached to this email, as is our address if you wish to contact us. And again: HAPPY and SAFE HOLIDAYS to all!!

Thanks,

John Ford, President, Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association

Community News

Westover Farmers Market

By **John P. Richardson**

“Farm to Table,” the non-profit corporation providing the legal structure for the Westover Farmers Market, has grown from its original project in 2012 to four current weekend markets in Arlington. Executive Director Rob Swennes embraced the concept in its infancy when he retired as a Navy lawyer and has overseen its expansion to include markets in Fairlington, Lubber Run, and now Cherrydale. Rob noted that each market has unique characteristics depending on its location. He has conducted user surveys revealing patterns that resemble “kinetic blasts,” with dense participation close by each market but quickly dissipating about one-quarter mile away.

Westover Farmers Market began as a summer market but added the winter market later that year, when a number of vendors showed interest in continuing throughout the year; winter participation may well rise to some 30 each Sunday, about the same number as for the summer market. Rob said that vendor participation falls into two categories – farmers who sell products they grow and vendors who sell “value added” products they prepare at home, such as baked and cooked products. Each of the four Farm to Table markets is run on the same, decentralized basis, with a volunteer market committee that makes local decisions, e.g., selection of vendors and the products they sell. Because of each market’s impact on local traffic, Arlington County is part of negotiations, along with the market’s immediate neighbors. Rob noted that Westover Farmers Market is the only one of the four situated on public streets, which increases concern about pedestrian safety. Farm to Table has three core employees, all on an hourly wage basis, and engages other contract workers who perform on-site



management at the markets, e.g. providing assistance with erecting tents and overseeing issues like power supply and parking.

Rob said that while the principal criterion for vendor inclusion is the requirement that their base of operations be within 125 miles of the market location, vendor patterns reflect different characteristics; e.g., many vendors from the Northern Neck (between the Potomac and Rappahanock Rivers) are Hispanic and return to other warm climates in winter. Their farms are heavily reliant on normal weather patterns, while vendors from West Virginia and southern Pennsylvania make use of greenhouses and are able to support longer growing seasons. Makers of value added products in many cases continue to provide items for sale throughout the year, being less dependent on the weather.

One popular value added vendor is Mama’s Donut Bites, an original participant in the Westover Farmers Market,

whose familiar pink truck attracts hungry customers to its current location near the entrance to the new Cardinal School. The business owner is from Bethlehem, Palestine, and now has two trucks, one that he deploys to the Fairlington market.

Rob Swennes has provided a service to Arlington residents through growing Farm to Table into a solid link between our suburban community and the nearby countryside.





Tara-Leeway Heights Holiday Food Drive for AFAC

The Arlington Food Assistance Center needs your help to feed families every single week! This holiday season, Tara Leeway Heights is collecting food donations to serve our neighbors in need.

Please bring your donations to **1701 Patrick Henry Drive** until Sunday 12/19.

The foods most needed are:

- Canned Tuna
- Canned Soup
- Canned Vegetables
- Peanut Butter
- Cooking Oil
- Low Sugar cereal

Organized by
Laura Stout and
Meredith Judy

Safer for All

THE MAKING OF A SIDEWALK ON 15TH STREET NORTH

By **Pete Erickson**

Our family moved to Tara-Leeway Heights in January 2012. We really love our street and the neighborhood, but the lack of a sidewalk on 15th street N between Inglewood and Kenilworth and several other streets in the area is something that's become more of an issue, as the years have gone on. There has been a noticeable increase in traffic through the area with the advent of mapping programs like Waze which send traffic up Washington Boulevard for drivers without I 66 EZ Pass during commuting hours. This traffic then gets sent through neighborhood streets like 15th which become cut-through streets. To top it off, the opening of Cardinal Elementary school puts hundreds of kids between the ages of 5 and 11 onto the streets with these cars in addition to the hundreds of Swanson middle school students. The U.S. Department of Transportation [studies show](#) that sidewalks reduce pedestrian accidents by up to 89%. With so many using our streets such as young families with strollers, school aged children, retirees, dog walkers and more, it's really our duty to make sure we're doing all we can to make this a safer neighborhood.

We contacted Arlington County in 2017 and learned about the process. This led us to a Tara-Leeway Heights Civic

Association meeting in 2018 where we raised the issue. Our timing was good as the Association was accepting and prioritizing improvement projects that could qualify for the [Arlington County Neighborhood Conservation \(NC\) Program](#), which is set up to improve and enhance Arlington neighborhoods. Fortunately for us, building a sidewalk on our street was selected by the TLHCA Board as the highest priority project and submitted to the neighborhood conservation committee.

My wife and I were appointed as Street Captains and asked to do an official sidewalk survey in June of 2019 to ask the 25 homeowners on either side of the street if they would be open to seeing a plan for the sidewalk. Note, this was not a vote for or against the sidewalk itself, this was to approve the County drafting a plan. We needed to gather a yes from at least 60% of the property owners, and after four or five weekly rounds throughout the neighborhood, we had gathered the necessary signatures.

In February 2021, the County presented to the neighborhood a thorough overview of the project design via Zoom where questions could be asked and answered. The 25 homeowners would then be asked to submit their official ballots which they received in addition to the detailed plan via mail from the County approving or disapproving the project. By the deadline of March 31, 2021, the project achieved more than 70% approval

and became qualified to receive consideration and approval by the Neighborhood Conservation committee.

Now, the project is going through the final phases of funding approvals and detailed architecture design. It's estimated that the sidewalk will go in sometime in spring/summer 2023. The estimated cost of the project will be in the \$2M range and will be much more than a sidewalk. This project will improve storm water drainage along the route, add trees, and a rain garden at 15th and Kenilworth to capture storm runoff. It will also greatly improve pedestrian safety with brightly painted crosswalks and bump outs with ramps for strollers, wheelchairs and kids waiting for a school bus.

By the time the sidewalk goes in it will be six years from our first inquiry. We're happy that 15th Street N will be a safer street for all who pass through for generations to come.

The Neighborhood Conservation Program is set up to improve and enhance Arlington neighborhoods. Civic Associations across Arlington are welcome to submit proposals to the program. However, the Associations must pick one, as TLHCA did with ours, and the civic association can submit an added project as the civic association's 2nd priority. What about your street? Do you feel like it can use some safety improvements such as sidewalks, street lights or other ideas? If so, contact the civic association with your ideas.

Arlington Neighborhood Village

MAKING ARLINGTON YOUR HOME FOR A LIFETIME

By **John P. Richardson**

Do you love where you live? Arlington is full of wonderful neighborhoods, and it is no surprise that as people age, most desire to stay in their own homes. 90% of older adults want to age in place, but doing so often requires a bit of extra help.

Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) is a local nonprofit that does just that—gives seniors the extra hand they need to stay safe and independent in their own homes as they age. Friendly volunteers provide direct services like transportation, errands, and help around the house. Just as importantly, they provide companionship and opportunities for meaningful connection. ANV offers a full social calendar with a weekly speaker series, dine arounds, happy hours, and outings as well as interest groups like gardening, bocce, and Tai Chi. ANV is a village of neighbors helping neighbors—members and volunteers form bonds and lasting friendships. Family members have peace of mind knowing their loved ones are connected to a vibrant community.

If you, or someone you know or love could use a little help to age in place, please reach out to the ANV office at 703-509-8057. You can also visit www.arlnvil.org to learn more. ANV offers a generous financial aid program—no one has ever been turned away. If you are looking for a flexible and extremely rewarding volunteer opportunity, click here <https://arlnvil.org/volunteer> for more information.

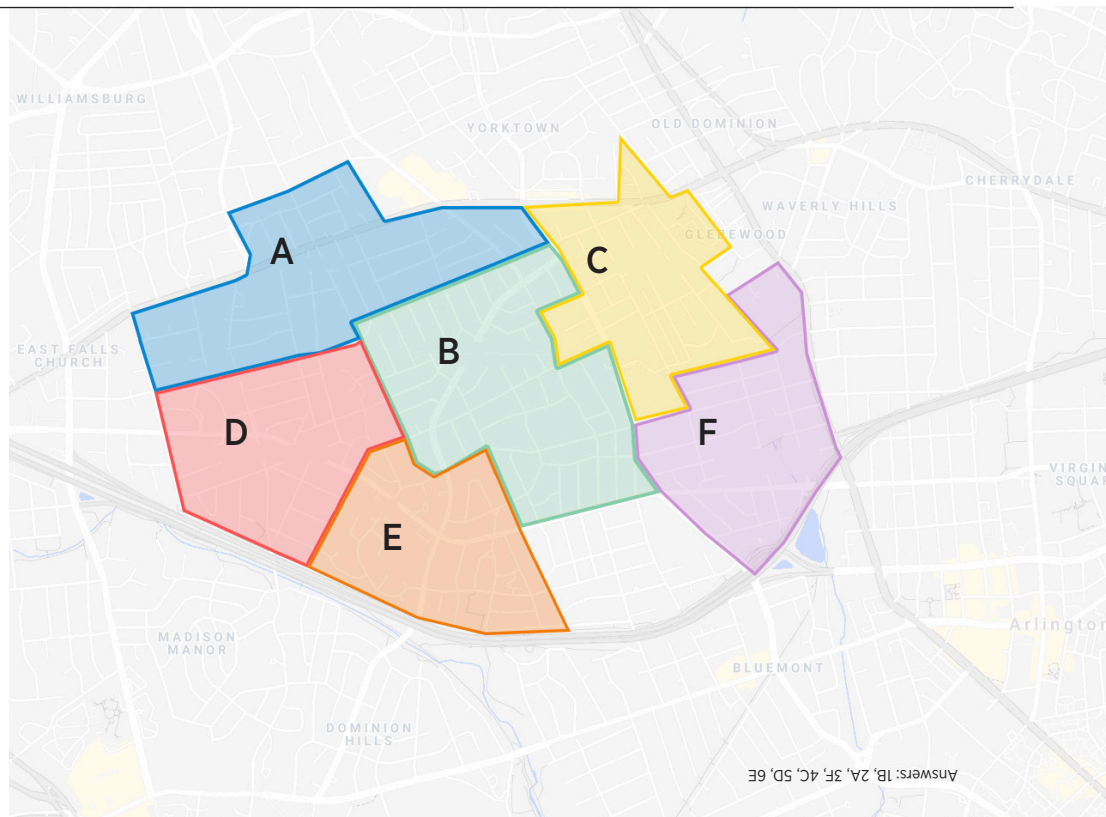


Time for a Quiz

Can you identify where our neighboring civic associations are?

Match the numbers below with the letters on the map.

1. Tara-Leeway Heights
2. Leeway Overlee
3. Waycroft Woodlawn
4. Langston
5. Highland Park Overlee Knolls
6. Westover



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This newsletter was brought to you by your neighbors.

Help Support TLHCA

Each year, we ask every household within our boundaries for an annual contribution of \$10. Please consider a donation for 2021-22 below. Funds are used for neighborhood events, guest speakers, and other investments in our community. Additional donations are always welcomed and appreciated.

We offer two payment options:

1. PayPal: go to our website at taraleewayheights.org. And click on our PayPal link to pay with your PayPal account or a credit card.

2. Check: mail us a check using the form to the right.

Annual Dues and Donations to TLHCA

(December 2021–December 2022)

Name

Address

Email **

☐ Family Membership (\$10)

☐ Additional Contribution In the amount of \$

Mail check to: TLHCA, P.O. Box 50022, Arlington, VA 22205

** Please provide an email address to ensure receipt of the TLHCA Newsletter which is distributed electronically periodically throughout the year.

