

BBHCA

Brookland Bush Hill Civic Association - Spring 2026

A Message From Your President

Spring Renewal & BBHCA

Jeannie Graham, President

**Please join us! Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association meeting:
Tuesday, May 12th at 7:30 pm - Bush Hill Elementary Cafeteria.**

New BBHCA Board Taking Up Duties

We have a brand new BBHCA Board in place this year! Everyone has been working hard in recent months to get their arms around the partnerships, official contacts & contracts, documentation requirements, & duties for their new roles. Please bear with us as we go through this process. It's very unusual to have this level of turnover all at once, but the retired Board members have been very giving of their time & energy to try & help us come up to speed. Since some of those Board members had actually moved out of the area, this has been doubly appreciated. When one newly elected member had to step away from their role, the retired officer agreed to continue performing the duties of that role until a replacement could be found. A big shout out of thanks to Katie Mitchell for her continuing work in handling finances! This has been a critical help! Also we want to thank our recently retired officers for their years of service to BBHCA, & these include Elise Swinehart, Raquel Gutierrez, & Jessica Jones. I know it's not easy to keep civic associations going at a time when everyone is more overworked & distracted than ever. At the same time, the advocacy role that civic associations play on behalf of neighborhoods has never been more critical as local government grows more remote, land use pressures become more intense, & developers become ever more determined & powerful. Northern Virginia is changing rapidly. Many neighborhoods are struggling to escape the worst consequences of that. So, the new Board wants to thank Elise, Katie, Raquel & Jessica for your years of service in holding the line for your neighbors! Our thanks as well to our continuing Committee Chairs, Carol Alim (Land Use) & Clem Bezold (Constitution & ByLaws)—we could not do this without you.

Here We Go Again

While we have a brand new Board, not everyone on the Board is new. In 2005, the BBHCA was looking at dissolution because all officers were stepping down & new volunteers were scarce. I was brand new to the neighborhood but had relevant experience & so I answered the call because I felt my new neighborhood could not afford to lose its voice with the county. I served for many years before stepping down, but 2005 repeated itself last fall, & so again I put my hand up along with a great crew of new Board members to represent you. We are getting the new processes figured out, but are all looking forward to working with you in the coming years.

Annual Neighborhood Yard Sale Saturday, June 13th

Now for something fun! It's nearly time for the annual BBHCA neighborhood yard sale. Are you looking to do a little decluttering from your closets & garage (or maybe the spare bedroom that has become a no-go zone)? The annual BBHCA yard sale is the perfect opportunity to find a new home for your excess treasures while making a little cash too. Participation in the yard sale is free, but in order to help us create ads that attract the largest possible crowd to the neighborhood, we need to have an idea of how many households might participate & the kinds of goods available. If you are interested in having some of your items listed for publication, please send an e-mail to bbhca2022@gmail.com. On June 13th, a large directional sign will be placed at Franconia, but please feel free to put up your own directional signs & balloons within the neighborhood. Recommended times for a successful yard sale are 7:30 am - noon (people often keep going until as late as 2pm though).

BBHCA Land Use Update

Landuse Activity January – March 2026

CAROL ALIM, Land-use Liaison

During January & February, we continued to review the proposed changes to the Franconia Triangle which would change the Governmental Center site to affordable housing & the other side of the triangle from commercial to residential. The two properties would share a one-acre urban park that would be open to the public. At the behest of the committee, a combined site plan was requested so that we could get a clearer picture of interconnectivity.

In January, the Committee heard presentation from both developers of the Franconia Triangle. The site plan provided a better picture of how both vehicular & pedestrian parcel interconnectivity would flow & the location & design of the public park with amenities. The urban park is the sole amenity that is open to the greater Franconia community as a meeting/gathering place.

For the Governmental Center, the developer hoped to extend the median in front of the site to ensure right-in/right-out vehicular access; however, that was too costly. Also, the request for a bus pull-off was rejected; those aren't done anymore because the buses have difficulty getting back into the travel lanes. They increased the number of parking spaces, but it is still not enough. There is significant concern about proximity to several gas stations & the fact that government owned (taxpayer) property is not going to be used for the benefit of the public. Negative reaction to the design, looks more commercial than residential; committee would like to see a pitched roof rather than flat.

The other site on the Triangle (Beulah & Grovedale) consists of two office buildings. One will be converted into multi-family housing. The second will be demolished & replaced with townhouses. There was positive feedback on the design changes. The day care facility on the Grovedale side of the property is not part of the redevelopment.

At the February meeting, the Governmental Center was presented for a vote & two Kingstowne properties along Kingstowne Village Parkway were presented for informational purposes. The discussion related to the Governmental Center site was short given no changes that would eliminate the major objections were presented. A motion was made to reject the rezoning request & to leave the current zoning in place. This motion passed overwhelmingly: 17 yes (leave as is); 4 no (rezone for affordable housing); 1 abstention. In later meetings, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the rezoning for affordable housing. The Board of Supervisors voted to approve the rezoning to allow affordable housing on the site.

(Land Use cont.)

The Kingstowne proposals are designated Kingstowne M&N & Kingstowne building T. M&N is the current parking lot across from Bonefish Grill. Building T is located “next door” at the curve as you drive from Safeway to Van Dorn Street; this is a commercial building with some occupants, but it is not full. M&N is currently planned for residential with retail on the ground floor; they would like to eliminate the retail entirely given the amount of retail already available in Kingstowne; some opposition to this. Also, Hallee sold some of their retail to Safeway. They are eliminating the skating rink, some opposition. They redesigned the public space, a significant improvement to what was previously proposed: areas to walk, sit, small play area for children. This application was presented again at the March meeting for a vote.

- At the March meeting we received more information about the units. Earlier a request was made to provide some 55+ dedicated housing units; that was not agreed to.
- There will be 4 buildings with 1,200 units; questions about workforce units. Concern about parking & lack of retail on ground floor.
- Positive comments about the public/open space; some negative at the loss of the skating rink
- The Committee voted to recommend approval of the changes, with significant opposition: 11 yes; 5 no; 5 abstain.

Building T is proposed for residential. They would move current commercial occupants to Building K, on the other side of Bonefish Grill, which is part vacant. They will redevelop the building for residential & plan to build on top of the garage. No solar panels on the roof; that’s where the condensers will be. Questions about making this a green building. They will be back in April.

I attended a meeting that the County held on updating the zoning for Accessory Living Units (ALU), which were last updated in 2021 as part of zMod.

The goal is to make the rules less restrictive, hopefully providing more opportunities for affordable housing. 158 ALUs have been approved. The county’s regulations are more restrictive than neighboring jurisdictions. Some of the objectives:

- Provide an option for affordable dwelling units
- Reduce/remove the limits on permitted uses
- ALU doesn’t transfer to new owner; eliminate this restriction
- Allow ALU within townhouses
- Drop owner-occupied requirement; allow both primary & accessory units to be occupied by renters
- Remove requirement for off-street parking for ALU
- Decrease lot size requirement for a free standing ALU

Lots of discussion about what this will do to our single family neighborhoods. Conflicts with HOA. Some concern about increased purchases by corporate buyers if the regulations are reduced. No requirement for background checks, privacy.

I attended a meeting held by VDOT on plans they are looking at to improve the flow of traffic on Van Dorn, Franconia & the interchange. They have some good ideas that would help. They were receptive to views of those in attendance. They are assessing Van Dorn from the beltway interchange south to Telegraph Road. I asked about Van Dorn north of the beltway; Alexandria is not included in the study. I expressed concern given that Van Dorn is 3 lanes in the County & only 2 lanes in the City, which is frequently the source of the congestion.

Finally, I was asked to serve on a Task Force for 2025 SSPA applications; I agreed. There are 12 members on the task force; our first meeting was in person with County staff. Four applications were submitted for the Franconia District.

(Land Use cont)

- Hilltop Village Center, Beulah & Telegraph: was rejected in the 2019 SSPA process. The proposal is to convert a previous approved, but never built, office building to multifamily building.
- 6404 Telegraph Rd/6408 Highland Drive: convert existing commercial building to single family detached residential.
- 6801 Telegraph Road: former Federal office building to 120 affordable, senior independent living with 50 single family detached or duplex residences on the parking lot.
- Property on Beulah Street at Steinway Street proposal for new independent living housing. This application was recalled because it was determined that it can be built “by-right”.

The Task Force members requested that all future meetings be held in person.

There was a second Task Force meeting in March to discuss 6404 Telegraph. The site had a commercial/industrial business on one side of the road & undeveloped land on the other side. Much discussion, many concerns about the density, impact on the swim club, inconsistency with the adjacent Rose Hill community. No decisions. April meeting will discuss Hilltop Village.

As a note, the Goddard School & Safe Splash School opened with a Ribbon Cutting on 28 March. This facility is located at 5508 Franconia Road behind the Shell station. This is the site of the former ShadowLand Adventures, & former roller skating facility.

Franconia District Governmental Center Grand Opening

Diane Williams, VP of Membership

On the gorgeous Spring morning of Saturday, April 11, 2026, hundreds of curious & enthusiastic people gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the new Fairfax County facility known as the Franconia District Governmental Center. The “Ribbon Cutting & Welcome Ceremony” began with the Presentation of Colors by the FCPD Honor Guard, followed by comments from Rodney Lusk (the member of the Board of Supervisors who represents the BBHCA) & Jeff McKay (Chair, Board of Supervisors). After several other County officials provided welcoming & celebratory remarks, the public was allowed to enter & explore the beautiful new facility, which replaces the former Franconia District Governmental Center on Franconia Road & greatly expands the services offered there.

Excited folks of all ages were invited to explore the organizations housed here: the Kingstowne Regional Library, the Kingstowne Center for Active Adults, the Kingstowne Childcare Center, the Franconia District Supervisor’s Office, the Franconia Museum, & the Franconia District Police Station. Live music was provided throughout the day; light refreshments were available; & demonstrations such as Zumba, Tai Chi, & Yoga were offered in the Center for Active Adults. The Springfield Art Guild exhibited dozens of works of art, some of which were offered for prize in a free random drawing. Best of all, the professional staff were obviously excited to welcome the public into this bright, new environment!

The center is approximately 90,000 square feet & offers a large parking garage & easy access. The Kingstowne Regional Library occupies about a third of the total area. This beautiful new government center offers a pleasant environment for the residents of the Franconia/Kingstowne area to access their county services in one central location.

The Franconia District Governmental Center is located at 7130 Silver Lake Blvd, Alexandria (south of Manchester Boulevard & east of Beulah Street). For more information:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/franconia>



We're Hiring at Bush Hill Day School!

If you are interested in working with young children in a warm, supportive, collaborative environment, we'd love to hear from you. We're looking for caring, reliable, and creative people to join our staff.

Bush Hill Day School is a play-based morning preschool program serving children ages 2-5 located at Bush Hill Presbyterian Church at the corner of Jane Way and Franconia Road. Come work for a preschool located right in your neighborhood!

Lead and Assistant Teacher Openings Available!

Please contact us for more information or to express interest:

Email: bushhilldayschool@gmail.com Phone: 703-922-9185

Bush Hill Day School * 4916 Franconia Road * bushhill.org

Neighborhood Novelties

Nancy Ostrowski

Have you visited Bush Hill Park, Kim Street, or Dayton Place? According to various Fairfax County websites, entering Bush Hill Park from Waycross Drive you are actually on Dayton Place, & as you walk through the park & depart approaching Lane Drive you are on Kim Street. As we know it today, both Kim Street & Dayton Place are not roads at all, but rather a paved trail providing a quiet, peaceful walk right in our Brookland-Bush Hill community. Fairfax County acquired the park site in January 1979 from the Phillips Development Corp. for \$159,965. In 1982, \$50,000 was made available from a Park Bond Referendum for development. The park was named after a plantation in the area called "Bush-Hill" which was established in 1791. With input from BBHCA in 1983, a preliminary master plan was developed calling for multiple paved & gravel trails, a tot lot with play apparatus, picnic area, benches, & bike racks. However, a portion of the funding was diverted to the Mark Twain Park to correct a drainage problem, resulting in a single paved path with bridges in Bush Hill Park.

Today the park provides a strenuous climb of 60 feet (six stories) in a relatively short distance. During the climb you will see birds, small streams, & a mature oak-hickory forest. You can gather information for science, conservation, & school projects by entering details of all the birds you see & hear at the worldwide birdwatching data collection "eBird". "eBird" is a free mobile app managed by Cornell Lab on Ornithology. With summer approaching it is a good time to check out the Fairfax County Bush Hill Park for an enjoyable cool shady spot in our neighborhood.

BBHCA Annual Membership Meeting November 18, 2025

Bush Hill Elementary School

Minutes

7:10 – BBHCA President Elise Swinehart convened the meeting & described the need to elect BBHCA officers as the current set were not running again.

Carol Alim, Chair of the Land Use Committee, gave the Land Use Report. Carol described the emerging plans around the area for development. The major focus was on the redevelopment of the Franconia Road Government Center property after the Center moves to its new location. In addition to the development of a multi-story, multifamily affordable housing facility where the Government Center currently is, much of the surrounding property in the triangle bounded by Franconia Road, Beulah Road & Groveton Road would be redeveloped, including town homes, multifamily units, & a 1-acre park space.

Clem Bezold, Chair of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, reported that in 2026 the Committee will be working to update & revise the Constitution & Bylaws to reflect on currently needed changes (e.g. adding text & email communications) & the directions, systems & priorities of the new officers & BBHCA members.

Election of New Members

The President described the functions, duties, & current operation of the five offices & took questions about them as well as the larger purposes of BBHCA. Core purposes of BBHCA identified included 1) Enhancing the quality of life of members & the neighborhood & 2) Protecting the value of homes in the neighborhood.

Each of the five officers were unopposed & elected unanimously:

President – Jeannie Graham

Vice President for Membership – Diane Williams

Vice President for Communication – Chrissy Blackwell

Treasurer – Sean Adam

Secretary – Kevin Henry

Additional members volunteered for various tasks & committees

19 Households attended.

The meeting adjourned around 8:30

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association
Membership Year: January 1–December 31

Join us—for the good of *your* community

BBHCA provides many opportunities for you to take an active role in decisions that affect your quality of life and property values as well as make a difference in your community. BBHCA prints a newsletter, maintains a website and Facebook page, and e-mails community updates and alert notices. Only members have a vote at BBHCA meetings on decisions that affect the community and the governance of BBHCA. Join today and support your civic association's efforts to keep our neighborhood a great

place to call home. For current information on BBHCA activities, please go to www.bbhca.net

Enclosed are my member dues: ☐ **\$20.00 (household)** ☐ **\$10.00 (individual)**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY The information provided here will be considered confidential and used only for BBHCA communications and membership verification. Dues are applied to the year in which they are received.

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL(S): _____
(required for e-mail communications and community alerts; see below)

E-mail Communications

☐ ***Please notify me by e-mail*** of community concerns deemed important by BBHCA. I may request that e-mail communications be discontinued at any time. Your e-mail will be used only by BBHCA.

Request for Donation

Your donation will be used to help offset the cost of printing and mailing the BBHCA print newsletter, the website, and other member-approved services. Thank you!

☐ I would like to make a donation to BBHCA for ☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ Other \$ _____

Please deliver this completed form with your check (payable to "BBHCA") to:

BBHCA Membership Dues
6020 Mayfair Lane
Alexandria, VA 22310

Or you may apply and pay online at www.bbhca.net

Questions? E-mail: bbhca2022@gmail.com / www.bbhca.net / [Facebook.com/bbhca.net](https://www.facebook.com/bbhca.net)

BROOKLAND-BUSH HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

BROOKLAND-BUSH HILL NEWS

A newsletter for the Residents of Brookland-Bush Hill
and Gunnell Estates in Alexandria, VA 22310



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