



Wards Corner Civic League

Crossroads

Serving: Academy Terrace, Colony Point, Hariton Gardens, Merridale, Pinehurst, Restmere, Rose Gardens, Sussex of Norfolk, Virginia Gardens, Wards Corner, and Wexford Terrace

October 2021

www.wardscorner.com

Upcoming Events

Virtual Meeting via Zoom Monday, October 18th @ 6:30pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85170198590?pwd=QlNhYkowsdEZ1L3lHZWg4WWtCUTFUdz09>

Meeting ID: 851 7019 8590

Passcode: 301284

Featured Speaker:

Joe Baron, Sherriff City of Norfolk

Upcoming Events

Adopt-A-Spot Cleanup Saturday, November 13th @ 9:00am Norfolk Fitness & Wellness Center Field

President's Message

I will address the elephant in the room, but first I want to give my annual shout-out to our neighborhood for its Halloween decorations and community spirit that make it such a great place to live every October. We have one of the best trick-or-treating neighborhoods in the city (if not *the* best), which is fantastic for my kids, but I also love getting to walk around and visit with neighbors on Halloween. It's a great night with so many people outside enjoying the evening together.

On to that elephant... there has been much discussion over the past year, and especially over the past month or two, in city planning meetings, civic league meetings, and on the NextDoor app with regards to the planned Granby Street Bike Lanes. If you're not aware of this planned project, you can get more information at <https://www.norfolk.gov/granbybike>. This potential project seeks to implement bike lanes on Granby Street between Willow Wood Drive and Admiral Taussig Boulevard (just south of the I-564 overpass) by repurposing a vehicle lane in each direction into bike lanes.

Olga Beltsar from the city's Department of Transit presented the results of the city's studies to our civic league at our September meeting. She and her team have already presented to other nearby civic leagues, institutions, and businesses. This is all leading up to a planned vote by city council before the end of the year to accept or not accept Smart Scale grant money from the state to fund this project. At this point, the project is only in the conceptual design stage with many details to be worked out later. The city council vote is only regarding the potential funding of the bike lanes, not acceptance of any design.

Based on feedback from residents at our September meeting, our board has crafted a resolution to be formally voted on at our October 18th meeting. What we generally heard from residents was something like "we want dedicated bike facilities and prefer to use state money rather than city money, but we have concerns with some of the design details that were suggested by the conceptual design." So in short, the resolution states that the Wards Corner Civic League recommends the Norfolk City Council to vote in favor of accepting the Smart Scale funding for the Granby Street Bike Lanes

project, on the condition that the City of Norfolk Department of Transit continues to seek input from the Wards Corner Civic League as the project progresses into detailed design.

(It must be noted that only qualified members who are current on their membership dues are permitted to vote on official civic league resolutions and recommendations to city council. If you need to renew your membership with our civic league, please visit <https://wardscorner.com/membership>.)

I will briefly share my personal opinion on this proposed project. Traffic studies have shown that this section of Granby Street is oversized for capacity and can be reduced to two vehicle lanes with minimal impact to commute times (less than 15 seconds on average). With that in mind, the primary concerns I have heard from Wards Corner residents over the past six months are about safety. And that is my own top concern as well. I will admit that I was skeptical of the conceptual design for a long time; I just couldn't envision how the bike lanes on the right side of the roadway could be safely implemented with so many institutions, bus stops, and cross streets along the route. However, more discussion and reflection led me to recognize that the current methods of riding a bike in the roadway or on the sidewalk are less safe than the proposed bike lanes. So the bike lanes do present a safer alternative to the status quo. City staff have also accounted for temporary closures in their planning for things like church services, funerals, and Greek Fest. I do still have some concerns and suggestions for improvement on the details of the plan, but I believe those can be addressed later in the project. Overall, I now feel that this project does have merit and should be pursued, and that it should be pursued now to take advantage of the state grant funding that is currently available.

I respect that others may feel differently. If this project's future matters to you, please share your thoughts with myself and the other civic league board members and/or plan to attend our upcoming Zoom meeting to vote on the resolution. Our civic league represents one of the best ways for you to be engaged with city operations.

See you all soon!

Scott Guirlinger

Halloween Decorating Contest!

Per our usual tradition, we will host a simple Halloween decorating contest this month. There have been some great displays at Wards Corner homes in the past and we're certain this year will be no different. Two overall winners will each receive gift certificates to local Wards Corner businesses. If you would like to help judge on Halloween night, please contact us.

Proposed Redistricting Maps

The Virginia Redistricting Commission has started the map drawing process! As they release draft maps, the OneVirginia2021 foundation will post them at

<https://www.onevirginia2021foundation.org/maps>.

You can view and comment on all proposed maps on the [Commission's website](#). (*Most recent drafts for House of Delegates maps are A7 and B6; for Senate are A5 and B4.*)

Now is the time to make your voice heard. These maps are discussed by the full Commission at their meetings – [click here](#) for a full schedule. You can find district report, data report, and GIS data for each proposed map on the [Commission website](#). The Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP) has also done some great analysis on the maps so far – [check out their work here](#).

HRT Looks to Extend Light Rail to Military Circle Then Pursue Bus Rapid Transit to Naval Station Norfolk

Hampton Roads Transit plans to pursue extending The Tide light rail to the Military Circle Redevelopment Area and invites the public to a conversation on the project.

"Light rail serving the expanding Sentara Leigh Hospital campus and the redevelopment of Military Circle would give The Tide a solid anchor on its eastern end that supports access to jobs and economic development," said Sam Sink, Director of Transit Development for HRT.

The project kicked off in 2019 to lay the foundation for an expansion of high-capacity transit in Hampton Roads and hosted public engagement opportunities in the winter of 2020 with various stakeholders.

An analysis has shown that two high-capacity transit projects on the eastern side of Norfolk warrant

further evaluation – a light rail extension to Military Circle and a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line connecting the eastern end of the light rail line to Naval Station Norfolk. As the next phase of this project, HRT recommends conducting an environmental analysis in order to advance the light rail extension. HRT further recommends advancing BRT to Naval Station Norfolk in a future phase.

Learn where the project has been, where it's going and how you can be involved. Through an online story map, participants can view information, graphics and maps that provide updates about the study and provide feedback by answering survey questions along the way.

Everyone is invited to learn more about the recent findings and next steps in the process at <http://www.navalstationnorfolktransit.com>

Treasurer's Report

	ACCOUNT		
	CHECKS	CASH	PAYPAL
Beginning balance	\$1,264.01	\$70.00	\$916.37
Funds received	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$36.64
Funds deposited	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Funds dispersed	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Ending balance	\$1,264.01	\$70.00	\$953.01
Total balance	\$2,287.02		

Civic League Board of Directors

Contact Information

www.wardscorner.com/board-of-directors

Important Numbers

Police Non-Emergency	757-823-4433
Community Resource Officer	757-651-4577
Police Red Sector	757-823-4450
Norfolk Cares Call Center Call for: Sewer Backup, Code Enforcement, Waste Management, Animal Control – everything else!	757-664-6510
Police Emergency	911

Membership Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2021

(Virtual meeting recording posted on website)

The meeting was opened by President Scott Guirlinger.

Officer Steven Toth provided an update on criminal activity in the Wards Corner area.

Olga Beltstar Project Manager Norfolk Department of Transit provided an update on the Bike Lanes Project Development updates and answered questions.

- Webpage-www.norfolk.gov/granbybike.

Meet the Candidate, Commissioner of the Revenue, City of Norfolk

- Nicole Sanders gave an opening statement and what she expects to accomplish if elected and answered questions.

Vice Mayor Martin Thomas added city updates and answered questions.

- Plan to schedule public meetings in 60 days to discuss the Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center project.

Andria P. McClellan City Council Representative (Superward 6) added city updates and answered questions.

- \$151 million received from the American Rescue Plan Act. City Council will begin discussions at City Council retreat October 15th and 16th.
- CNI project reviewed and answered questions.
- Broadband updates provided.

Adale Martin School Board Representative (Ward 1) added school updates and answered questions.

- \$1000 bonus approved for contracted personnel.
- Wearing masks in classrooms per Governor's mandate.
- Bus driver shortage discussed.
- Considering mandatory vaccination for teachers.
- NPS received \$110 million from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Halloween Decoration Contest 2021. Halloween decorations will be judged on Oct. 30th & 31st. Two winners will receive gift cards to a local restaurant.

The next WCCL meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 18 at 6:30. It will be virtual.

President Scott Guirlinger closed the meeting.





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PROBLEMS

1 Leaves raked into streets **clog** storm drains and cause **local flooding**.

2 Too many leaves add **excess nutrients** into waterways.

Decaying leaves feed **algae**. An overgrowth of algae... makes our water green and smelly

causes fish kills

SOLUTIONS



NORFOLK Fertilize your lawn naturally - mulch mow with a lawn mower.



Compost leaves to use in the garden.



Bag leaves and place on curb for trash day.



Keep streets and storm drains clear of leaves.

