



Falls Church Pulse

Dear Neighbors,

In the wake of former Council Member Caroline Lian's sudden resignation last week, the City Council decided Monday to petition the Arlington County Circuit Court for a special election on November 5, 2024, the date of the general election, to fill the vacancy. With the Court's approval, potential Council candidates would have until August 30 to complete the necessary steps for their names to be included on the ballot. However, if the Court either denies or doesn't grant the petition by the end of the day this Friday, August 16, the City will withdraw it, and the Council will meet on Monday, August 19, to begin the process of appointing someone to the seat. We will provide an update on Friday.

The City officially began discussions on revising the accessory dwelling code last month to permit detached structures. We can expect more developments on this topic in the coming months.

In addition, City staff intend to wrap up amendments next month to reduce the number of parking spaces required for new commercial tenants in existing buildings. *A public hearing is scheduled for the September 4 Planning Commission meeting*, with a Council decision by September 23.

The Planning Commission, neighbors, and City staff provided feedback on the Lee Park Townhomes project, a development that resulted from the new T-Zone code. Commissioners discussed whether the "affordable" housing goal has been achieved and the impacts of the code change on the City's stormwater infrastructure.

On the environmental front, the Falls Church Climate Action Network has published an assessment of progress through June on the City's Energy Action Plan. Also, the design for the Greening of Lincoln Avenue has been finalized.

Thank you for your interest in this City.

The Editors
August 2024



[City Council Petitions the Court for Special Election to Fill Vacant Seat](#)

On August 12, City Council voted to petition for a special election in November. If this request is not granted by August 16, City Council will appoint a replacement for Caroline Lian's seat. Of the five options offered by staff, the discussion focused on appointment by Council versus a special election by the voters.



[Planning Commission Public Hearing On Commercial Parking Reductions Delayed to September](#)

Proposed parking reductions are now limited to buildings less than 20,000 sq ft. New business tenants can exempt 1,000 sq ft when calculating their parking requirements, although the EDA, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce, and ESC favor raising that number. *The public hearing will be on September 4.*



[The First Review Of The Lee Park Townhomes Reveals The Consequences Of The New T-Zone Ordinance](#)

At the Lee Park Townhomes' first review before the Planning Commission, positive design reviews from commissioners and the neighbors were mixed with worries about the inadequacies of the storm drains and sewers for denser development and the high projected selling prices. New renditions are included.



[Community Discussions on Accessory Dwellings](#)

This post describes the questions raised during the two City organized community discussions at the end of July and some board reviews on accessory dwellings. Several people suggested that a public survey of community views was needed.

[The City's Energy Action Plan: Progress Updates](#)

FCCAN gives an update on how the City is progressing on its Community Energy Action Plan and its Government Operations Energy Action Plan, based on City staff status reports. While there are many accomplishments thus far, funding and staffing continue to be problems.



[The Greening of Lincoln Avenue Final Concept Plan Is Ready](#)

The final concept plan for Lincoln Avenue was published in June. It includes two new stormwater vaults and the use of permeable parking. Lincoln Avenue will become narrower with these changes although the speed limit is unchanged at 25mph.

Updated Post



[Establishing the Tinner Hill Historic and Cultural District in the Falls Church Comprehensive Plan](#)

On June 24, City Council approved the addition of the Tinner Hill Historic and Cultural District to the City's Comprehensive Plan. No zoning or tax changes are expected. This area is tied to the history of the African Americans who once made up 42% of Falls Church.

Posts you may have missed



[Lee Park Townhomes Project Brings 20 More Luxury Homes to Park Avenue](#)

Lee Park Townhomes, located on a 0.69ac site on the corner of N Lee St and Park Avenue, is a 20-unit Madison Homes project. This by-right development sits in an area known to have inadequate stormwater infrastructure for the existing buildings. The City requires a runoff rate reduction without specifying any amount.



[City Formally Begins Discussion of Accessory Dwellings](#)

The City has set a schedule to begin formal discussion to amend the accessory dwellings regulations, allowing these units to be built more easily to increase the City's housing options. Two public meetings are being held on July 23, 6:30-8pm, and July 28, 2:30-4pm, at the Mary Riley Styles Public Library.



[Accessory Dwelling Units Will Be a Key Focus of City Planning in 2024. What Are They? What Are Other Jurisdictions Doing?](#)

Alexandria City and Montgomery, Arlington and Fairfax counties have all revised some aspects of their regulations for accessory dwellings in recent years. This post explores what these neighboring jurisdictions have done.