

Shirlington News You Can Use

By Shirlington Civic Association | April 14, 2022



[photo: Shirlington copes 03-2021.jpg (delete this note before posting)]

The Village at Shirlington emerges from the Covid-19 crisis doing pretty well indeed. Some of the credit goes to you. One thing we hear over and over is that the loyal support of Shirlington, Fairlington, Douglas Park, and Green Valley residents ordering from our restaurants and buying from our shops made a critical difference in the survival of many of these businesses. Thank you!

A few highlights of the year ahead - Astro Beer Hall will open in the Capitol Brewery spot at the end of Campbell Ave this fall. Mason's Famous Lobster Rolls is filling the Reflexology space and Jenni's Ice Cream will go into the I.C.E. NY spot.

Yes, we lost The Cookery but, in a recent meeting with SCA members, owner Cary Kelly noted that "2021 had been the shop's best year ever." Cary told us that people would walk into her shop last year saying, "I don't really need anything but I am going to buy from you to help keep you here." It wasn't Covid that made her close either. After 11 years, she decided it was time to retire from retail and explore other paths related to food and cooking. All her staff are now working at the Village Marche shop.

We lost some other businesses but that's the nature of retail. We don't know what the actual profit/loss situation is for our remaining businesses but we assume this has been a very tough period for all. The good news is that almost all the commercial properties are leased. Indeed,, several leases were signed in the middle of the pandemic, a big vote of confidence, among them Bearded Goat Barber, Stellina Pizzeria, Chiko, and Taco & Pina.

And in a significant show of support, WETA opted to stay in Shirlington even though it could have moved anywhere in the DC Metropolitan Area. The new broadcast studios for PBS Evening News and Washington Week in Review are under construction on S. Quincy between the WETA office building and its garage with a projected finish date of mid-2023. This has kept several hundred well-paying jobs in the Village and will bring a stream of VIP guests here for interviews with the news anchors.

Finally, there are millions of dollars in other significant improvements in motion all around us. An all-new Jennie Dean Park has been constructed across the street, a \$17 million project we and others worked hard to shape. It should open soon, though not the ball fields this season because the grass needs to mature. The Robinson Town Square in Green Valley is almost finished and looks beautiful. There are also

several important road improvements on all sides of us, from Shirlington Road bridge to Shirlington Circle over I-395 to paving South Arlington Mill Drive – all short-term pain but long-term gain.

The SCA continues to talk to County officials and Federal Realty (FRIT) about plans for major improvements along Campbell Avenue and, eventually, a new building on the surface parking lot. We expect to hear more later this year. Will the expanded outdoor dining areas and pedestrian walkways stay? Will “Sip ‘n Go” continue? Will we ever get access to all the parking spaces in our garages? These are many of the things we don’t know yet, but the festivals are back on and so is good weather. See you around the Village!