

A Guide to the Records of the Alcova Heights Citizens Association, 1967-2014

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Title Statement

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Author: Heather Crocetto

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Descriptive Summary

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RG 369

Language

English

Creator

Alcova Heights Citizens Association

Extent

5 boxes.

Repository

Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Michael Rhode on February 13, 2019.

Preferred Citation

Records of the Alcova Heights Citizens Association, Collection # RG 369, Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

[RG 3, Arlington Hall, Collected Materials](#), contains material on the history of Arlington Hall as both a girls finishing school and as a federal property. [RG 126, Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization Records](#), has more information on the development of Columbia Pike in the 1980s and 1990s. Finally, [RG 334, the J. Cloyd Byars Papers](#), contains the papers of the founder of Alcova Heights.

Historical Information

Alcova Heights is a neighborhood in Arlington County, Virginia, bordered by Glebe Road and George Mason Drive on the east and west sides, and Arlington Boulevard and Columbia Pike on the north and south. Alcova Heights was originally developed by Joseph Cloyd Byars (Alcova is a combination of letters from Alexandria County, Va.). Mr. Byars bought a 142-acre farm from the Columbia Land Company in 1921 and sold lots for five cents an acre. The original home on his property was built by John M. Young on what was then called Springhill Farm. He renamed the house Alcova, and it is still located at 3435 8th Street South.

The Alcova Heights neighborhood originally had been part of the Columbia Pike Citizens Association. However, on January 21, 1933, the Alcova Heights Citizen Association (AHCA) was formed as a "forum for community activism and social life" (Anthony B. Toth, *Alcova Heights - A History of our Neighborhood*, 2005).

Scope and Content

The files and items donated by the Alcova Heights Citizens Association (AHCA) came in several binders, bags, and file folders. Most valuable for the history of the association are the newsletters (1996-2014) and the neighborhood conservation plans (1967-2013). Of particular interest are three series of files. The first, *Series 6, Arlington Hall*, involves the installation of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Army National Guard on the former grounds of Arlington Hall.

Series 8, Arlington Presbyterian Church, involves the Arlington Presbyterian Church, 3507 Columbia Pike, which sold its property in 2016 to the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing to build low-income apartments. Alcova Heights, a neighbor, was asked to weigh in on the possible historic designation of the church to save it from demolition.

Series 7, Columbia Pike Initiative, comprise another important Alcova Heights issue. The Columbia Pike Initiative was established by the Arlington County Board in 1998 "to build a safer, cleaner, more competitive and vibrant community along the entire length of Columbia Pie, from the Pentagon to the Fairfax County line." Areas studied include land use, urban design, historic preservation, parks and recreation, housing and transportation.

Most of the records that make up this collection date predominately from 2000 to 2014, but there are other records that predate this time period, with clippings from as early as 1909. RG 369 is 2.3 linear feet.

Index Terms

Subjects:

Citizens' associations
Community organization.
Neighborhoods.
Alcova Heights (Arlington, Va.)
Arlington (Va.)
Arlington County (Va.)

Arrangement

Agendas, minutes, and correspondence were found in two binders, organized by the president at the time,

ranging from 2000 to 2009. These were designated as *Series 1* and *Series 2* with the files retaining the same labels. *Series 1* was identified as the files of Robert Dawson; *Series 2* is probably the files of Elly Merica but this has not been verified. Files that were found loose in the box were arranged by the archivist in *Series 3* in subseries such as History, By-laws, Minutes and Agendas, and other administrative items, and then chronologically.

The newsletters, found separately in the donation, make up *Series 4*. There are also newsletters in *Series 1* and *Series 2* which were retained there. Other items found unfiled were separated into *Series 5*, *Neighborhood Conservation Reports*. Three bags containing information about the Federal Government takeover of the former Arlington Hall, the Arlington Presbyterian Church, and the Columbia Pike Initiative comprise *Series 6*, *Series 7*, and *Series 8*. *Series 9* contains reports not published by the Alcovia Heights Citizens Association but most are of Arlington County origin. Photographs from Neighborhood Night Out events from 1999-2002 are in *Series 10* as is a CD-ROM containing digitized images of the photos and other items. Folders containing photographs have an asterisk [*] after the file name. Folders with oversized materials have a double asterisk [**] to denote where material was removed and separation sheets added.

All files except for those in the first two series have labels created by the processor. Folder titles in those first two series were created by the AHCA President.

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