

A Guide to the Carrie Johnson Papers, 1958-2005

Carrie Johnson Papers, 1958-2005
1958-2005

A Collection in Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History RG 199
Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History
2019

Title Statement

A Guide to the Carrie Johnson Papers, 1958-2005

Subtitle: Johnson, Carrie, Papers

Collection: RG 199

Author: Heather Crocetto

Publication Statement

Date: © 2019 Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Publisher: Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by Gregory Pierce, 24 August 2020

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Collection number

RG 199

Language

English

Creator

Johnson, Carolyn W. (Carrie), 1941-2018

Extent

11 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

Donated by Carrie Johnson in 2011. Additional material donated by family members in 2018, after her death. These materials will be processed at a later time.

Preferred Citation

Carrie Johnson Papers, Collection # RG 199, Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Records

[RG 137, Arlington County Democratic Committee](#)

Related Records

[RG 130, Arlington County Planning Commissions Records](#)

Biographical Information

Carolyn W. "Carrie" Johnson (1941-2018) was born in Milwaukee, WI. She graduated from Smith College in Massachusetts, and then came to the Washington, DC, area to work for centrist Republicans such as Senator Charles Mathias, Jr. (MD). In 1971, she helped advance the bill that established the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. Johnson's writing work attracted the attention of Katherine Graham, owner of the Washington Post, and Graham hired Johnson to write speeches for her.

Johnson moved to Arlington in 1979 and started getting involved in her new community. She worked with the Arlington County Democratic Committee (ACDC) compiling lists of actual and potential voters, keeping the list up-to-date in a transient area. Over time, her lists became more complex and she welcomed new technology to create and maintain them. Johnson became known in ACDC circles as "The List Lady." In 2009, she won their Mary Marshall Outstanding Democrat Award.

Carrie Johnson's biggest contribution to Arlington County was her long tenure on the Planning Commission, from 1986 to 2005; Johnson was one of the longest-serving members in County history. She worked to make Smart Growth theory a reality, and was a key compromiser, able to bring disparate parties together to make a planning project a reality. Johnson was particularly proud of her work to create Long Branch Park, and was instrumental in the development of Fort Meyer Heights, Virginia Square, and Four Mile Run. After retiring from the Planning Commission, Johnson was still active in planning issues, joining working groups on projects and speaking at County Board meetings. Johnson made a vacation home in Butte, MT, and supported the local history efforts of the public libraries in both Butte and Arlington.

Scope and Content

RG 199, the Carrie Johnson Papers, is 4.6 linear feet, and dates 1958-2005, with the majority of the materials dating between 1990-2004. This collection contains Johnson's working materials for her tenure on the Planning Commission and publications that supported her work. There are memos, correspondence, meeting minutes, architectural plans, and maps, many with Johnson's handwritten notes on the margins.

These materials cover the development of several Arlington locations; this can sometimes be an entire neighborhood or just one particular building or project. It includes development of neighborhood sector plans, most notably for Virginia Square. There is significant material on Arna Valley, Pentagon Row, Rosslyn, and Virginia Square. Johnson also kept documentation on the actions and progress of the Planning Commission itself, recording its workplans and its yearly reviews. Lastly, Johnson collected publications that supported her Planning Commission efforts. Many Arlington County publications analyzed census data, and there are several publications on metro development and planning in the Washington DC area.

Index Terms

Subjects:

Arlington County Planning Commission
Arlington (Va.)
Arlington County (Va.)
Rosslyn (Arlington, Va.)
Clarendon (Va.)
Ballston (Arlington, Va.)

Arrangement

RG 199 has three series. *Series 1, Projects and Planning*, has materials on specific planning projects. This series has several subseries, each focused on a neighborhood or a particularly complex and large project. Some of these projects have turned into small neighborhoods themselves. Material in each subseries is generally arranged chronologically.

Series 2, Planning Commission Administration, has materials on the inner workings of the Arlington Planning Commission, and is generally arranged chronologically. *Series 3, Publications*, includes non-Planning Committee publications on topics related to planning and housing. This series is organized into two subseries: Arlington publications, and those published outside the county.

Folder titles in quotes (" ") reflect the original file names created by Johnson. Within quotes, anything in brackets ([]) were created by the archivist to clarify titles for the user. Folders with an asterisk (*) after the folder title has oversized materials that are located in special housing.

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