

**MINUTES**  
**City of Alexandria, Virginia**  
**OPEN SPACE STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Community Meeting – Virtual <sup>1</sup>**  
**March 3, 2022**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Call to Order**

**Kurt Moser called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

**Open Space Steering Committee Members**

***Present:***

Kaitlyn Blume, Member-at-large  
Tatiana Gutierrez, Member-at-large  
Martha Harris, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission Member  
Barbara Marvin, Park and Recreation Commission Member  
Kurt Moser, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT)  
Mike Olex, Environmental Policy Commission Member  
Brandon Pinette, Member-at-large  
Micheline Smith, One at-large member from the development community (Paradigm)  
Denise Tennant, Beautification Commission Member

***Vacancy:***

One at-large member from the business community

***Absent:***

None

**City Staff**

Judy Lo, Acting Principal Planner, Park Planning Division, RPCA  
Ellen Eggerton, Sustainability Coordinator, T&ES  
Melanie Mason, Principal Planner, Stormwater Management Division, T&ES  
Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner III, Park Planning, RPCA  
Aaron Bethencourt, Planning Associate, RPCA

**Guests**

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<sup>1</sup> **January 18, 2022 Steering Comm. The meeting video is posted at [https://alexandria.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=29&coa\\_view\\_id=29&coa\\_clip\\_id=5337](https://alexandria.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=29&coa_view_id=29&coa_clip_id=5337)**

None

## **Call to Order**

The co-chair Moser called the meeting to order, noting that proper notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum of six committee members was present, and the meeting could proceed.

## **Updates**

Vicinanzo introduced Barbara Marvin, who is representing the Park and Recreation Commission. She will replace former representative Brian McPherson, whose Commission term concluded in January 2022.

Public comment is received at the end of the meeting, with individual comments limited to no more than three (3) minutes per person.

The meeting's focus was to discuss committee task updates regarding methods of pursuing open space, the Open Space Fund, and city acquisition criteria.

### ***Presentation PPTs are posted to:***

***<https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/recreation/parks/open-space-steering-committee-meeting---3.3.2022.pdf>***

***Presentation details are posted online at the above link. Highlights included:***

### **AGENDA ITEM 1: Administrative - Ana (RPCA)**

#### **Review and Adoption of December Open Space Meeting Minutes**

- Mr. Moser directed the Committee's attention to the minutes from the meeting of January 18, 2022, which had been provided to the Committee in advance. On motion duly made, seconded, and carried, Brown and Olex abstain; the Committee approved the minutes of the January 18, 2022 meeting. It is advised that staff will send draft meeting minutes as they become completed. Any comments should be sent to Ana and then forwarded to the consultant.

### **AGENDA ITEM 2: Committee Task Updates\_– Vicinanzo & Lo (RPCA)**

#### **Task 2. A: Open Space Acquisitions: Vicinanzo, Urban Planner.**

- Vicinanzo & Lo: postulated an overview of the 2003 Open Space Acquisitions Criteria (OSAC) of the twelve measures to implement, modify or remove. In conjunction with reviewing the goals and

objectives to adopting the best practice framework that is most likely to impact achieving numerous benefits. The overview of the commission's proposed changes to the OSAC from the meeting held on January 18, 2022. The changes consist of modifying the OSAC framework structure to integrate metrics to mitigate the risk at all levels. And integrating natural resources, wildlife corridors, refuges, and reduction of heat islands; site redevelopment; and strategies implementation to close the recreational gap, a socio-economic deterrent.

- While the Committee voted on the OSAC, questions opposed to discussion ensued on the views of aligning the goals and initiatives with the OSAC. Thus, the template was beneficial for easement time, and there are no objections or needs for modifications. The Committee approved the OSAC template.
- Vicinanza clarified the "goals" specifically for the open space and the overlapping content with the goals and criteria. It was agreed upon the goals to be used to identify the criteria perspective. Shared a refresher to the Committee's memory of the "goals" that jarred the Committee reevaluating the goals and criteria configuration.

#### **Questions Addressed:**

- **Q.** How can the Committee become more active in supporting the process with the OSAC; perhaps the community can provide suggestions and activities to get involved. However, there is uncertainty in which direction to start. Staff can think of strategies and ideas to launch community involvement activities.
- **The task for Staff:** Develop and implement strategies to get the community feedback that would be most helpful for the Committee regarding reporting and encourage communities to think about opportunities in their neighborhoods for current and future accessibility.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2(continue):**

#### **Task 2. B: Revisiting Metrics & Goals: Aaron Bethencourt, Planning Associate**

- Bethencourt conducted a qualitative and quantitative data analysis of several states (PowerPoint available on the website noted above) of the public space metrics and goals master plan (2003). Aaron's data analysis evaluated the open space ratio based on national standards and benchmarks for localities with similar densities. Bethencourt explicitly referenced the Committee that Alexandria's population is 100,000 and 250,000 on 7.3 data average per 1,000 according to NRPA and 8.9 acres per resident according to all reporting municipalities. Bethencourt questioned whether this goal is sustainable and how we can move initiatives forward to achieve the goals. (See the presentation for more information)

**Questions posed to the group regarding Task 2 that require feedback by the next meet:**

- Q:** Are there other metrics we should be tracking?
- Q:** Does these metrics accurately capture our properties.
- Q:** Should we maintain the open space ratio aligned with the overall national average.

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Kathleen Burns (Community Representative)

- Lo will connect with Burns offline to address her concerns.

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Next Steps**

**Questions needed addressing for the next meeting Task 2B:**

- Marvin would like the source of the 7.3 acres ratio to question the validity.
- The next meeting will revisit the metrics and goals feedback from Bethencourt on the following:
  - An assessment of open that is not public open space.
  - Evaluate the metric to measure the progress of the available space.
  - What are the types of open spaces other than public?
  - What statistical measure can be implemented to measure the private open space high density?
  - Impart heat map of the population density for private open space
  - Postulate qualitative and quantitative data calculations of private open space
  - Create a framework of planning area that applies to the small area plans or track
  - Generate a heat map of layer build density

- Provide analysis of the future development projection and measures to reach the open space committee goals.
  
- The zoom link for the next meeting will also be sent out as a follow-up for the updated date.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2022, at 7 pm.

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.