A Tale of Two Old Towns:
Old and Historic Alexandria District
Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD)

Speakers and Tour Leaders:

Historic District
Al Cox, FAIA
Historic Preservation Manager,
City of Alexandria

Nuisance Flood Mitigation
Ann Horowitz,
Urban Planner, City of Alexandria

Waterfront Master Plan
Dennis Carmichael, RLA
Parker Rodriguez, Inc.

Waterfront Development
John von Senden, AIA
AECOM Design
Chairman, OHAD Board of Architectural Review (BAR)
A Plan of Alexandria now Belhaven

Potomack River
Local Laws Affect Form and Materials

The Original Alexandria Building Ordinances

1. Must build on the lot within two years of purchase.

2. Buildings to be constructed of brick, stone or wood, at least twenty feet square and nine feet in height, with a brick or stone chimney.

“Flounder” house
S. Lee Street

Slave cabin, Stratford Hall
Local Laws Affect Form and Materials

3. A 1752 resolution by the trustees further required that “all dwelling houses … be in line with the street as chief of the houses now are, and that no gable or end of such house be on or next to the street.”
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* A Field Guide To American Houses, McAlester, 1984
John Carlyle House
ca 1753

517 Prince
John Douglas Brown house, ca. 1775
Gadsby’s Tavern
ca 1785

Hooe House
200 Prince St., ca. 1780
Christ Church
1767-73
James Wren, Architect
Tower 1785-99
Alterations 1818

St Paul’s Episcopal Church
1817, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Architect

Christ Church
1767-73
James Wren, Architect
Tower 1785-99
Alterations 1818
Former 2\textsuperscript{nd} Presbyterian Church, 1840
Re-modeled in a Richardson Romanesque Style by Glenn Brown in 1889

Washington Street Methodist Church
1850, present façade 1875
William Fowle house
711 Prince St. ca. 1797, 1811

Lloyd’s Row
ca 1816
1930's Aerial Perspective of the Alexandria Waterfront
USGS River Elevation

May 2008 - May 2015
Maximum Daily Water Surface Elevation

10 yr WSEL

3 days/yr

34 days/yr
Flood Levels

-1.2’ --- Mean Low Water
1.4’ --- Mean High Water
6.0’ --- 10-year flood level
2.6’ --- Top of Bulkhead
1.4’ --- Mean High Water
-1.2’ --- Mean Low Water

10.2’ --- 100-year flood level
8.8’ --- Hurricane Isabel

Potomac River
Strand Street
Union Street
Existing Conditions
River Elevation = 3.0 Ft

Fitzgerald Warehouse

ODBC

POTOMAC RIVER
Protecting the Historic District from Recurrent Flooding

- **Primary damage – Water exposure and inundation**
  - Interior finishes and walls damaged
  - Strength of walls, ceilings, and floors reduced
  - Basement walls at risk of collapse
  - Damage to utilities in basements
  - Economic cost of loss of revenue

- **Secondary damage – After flood water recedes**
  - Mold growth
  - Economic cost of post-flood cleanup
Flood Mitigation Study

- Study completed in 2010
- Evaluation:
  - Existing conditions – historic structures
  - Flood levels
  - Mitigation options
- Balance mitigation, cost and aesthetics
Existing Conditions
River Elevation = 6.0 Ft
Bulkhead/Promenade

- Flood mitigation bulkhead to Elev. 6’
- Enhancements
  - Promenade
  - Lower boardwalk
Flood Mitigation System

- Emergency generator located above 100 yr. flood
- Stormwater runoff into system from core area
- Wet well
- Submersible pumps
- Valve vault
- Discharge into Potomac River
Additional Flood Mitigation Strategies

• 2 Duke Street first floor elevation
• Backflow preventers
• Use of flood resistant materials in interiors
• Land elevation in areas of new development
• Street elevation
Waterfront Master Plan
Design Response to Flood Mitigation within the Historic District Core

Dennis Carmichael, RLA
FITZGERALD SQUARE WATER FEATURE - REFLECTIVE
FITZGERALD SQUARE – INTERACTIVE WATER FEATURE
MADISON TO CANAL CENTER
RALPH’S GUT - EXISTING
RALPH’S GUT - PROPOSED
Review of New Waterfront Development

John von Senden, AIA
Chair, Board of Architectural Review
Waterfront Plan Development Guidelines

Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of the History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
220 S Union St.

East Elevation

West Elevation
Robinson Landing
Pioneer Mill, 1861-1865

The west elevations of the two-story Soldiers Mess house with the one-story attached kitchen and shed are viewed looking northeast. Alexandria Library, Special Collections
2 Duke Street Warehouse

EAST ELEVATION
Robinson Terminal North
West Building
Robinson Terminal North

East Building

East Elevation of the Pavilion
A tobacco hogshead was used in British and American colonial times to transport and store tobacco. It was a very large wooden barrel. A standardized hogshead measured 48 inches (1,219 mm) long and 30 inches (762 mm) in diameter at the head (at least 550 l or 111 imp gal or 445 US gal, depending on the width at the middle). Fully packed with tobacco, it weighed about 1,000 pounds (454 kg).
Old Dominion Boat Club

Original Beachcombers Restaurant, 1946

Existing Condition
Old Dominion Boat Club
Old and Historic Alexandria District Walking Tour