

**Summary Meeting Notes *As Revised per the Work Group***  
**ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT PLAN WORK GROUP**  
**August 10, 2011 Meeting City Hall**  
**8:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

**MEMBERS - Present**

**Christopher Ballard**, At-Large Member. Principal at McWilliams/Ballard.

**Bert Ely**, At-Large Member. Head, Ely and Company; Board member, Citizens for an Alternative Alexandria Waterfront Plan (CAAWP) and Old Town Civic Association.

**Mindy Lyle**, At-Large Member. Vice President Client Development, Haley & Aldrich, Inc., and President, Cameron Station Homeowners Association.

**Nathan Macek**, Waterfront Committee Chair and Representative and Transportation Consultant.

**David Olinger**, Old Town Civic Association Representative. Realtor, and Senior Foreign Service Officer (Ret) with a background in urban planning.

**Councilman Paul Smedberg**, Non-voting City Council representative and Work Group Convener.

**Lt. Gen Bob Wood** (USA, Ret). At-Large Member. Alexandria resident and business owner.

**MEMBER – Absent with notification**

**Elliot Rhodeside**, At-Large Member. Principal, Rhodeside & Harwell, a firm offering urban planning and landscape design with a focus on revitalization and sustainability.

**FACILITATOR** - Sherry Schiller, Ph.D., (President, Schiller Center)

**CITY STAFF**

**James Spengler**, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs (RPCA)

**Jack Browand**, Deputy Director, RPCA

**Cheryl Lawrence**, Supervisor, RPCA

**Sharon Annear**, Aide to Councilwoman Alicia Hughes

**Joanna Anderson**, Assistant City Attorney, Office of the City Attorney

**Jennifer Harris**, Communications Officer, Office of Communications

**Karl Moritz**, Deputy Director, Planning & Zoning (P&Z)

**Barbara Ross**, Deputy Director, P&Z

**Tom Canfield**, City Architect, P&Z

**Al Cox**, Historic Preservation Manager, P&Z

**Nancy Williams**, Principal Planner, P&Z

**Emily Baker** –City Engineer, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)

**Sandra Marks**, Division Chief, T&ES

**Brian Rahal**, Engineer, T&ES

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES:** Gina **Baum**, Christine **Bernstein**, Stephanie **Brown** (ACVA), Yvonne **Callahan** (resident), Katy **Cannady**, Susan **Cohen** (Public Art Committee), Deena **Demontigny** (resident), Linda **Hafer**, Val **Hawkins** (AEDP), David **Houston** (Pillsbury Winthrop, LLC), Lauren **Keenan** (Bean Kinney & Korman, LLC), Tony **Kupersmith**, Marguerite **Lan** (Rosemont Citizens Association), Stephanie Landrum (AEDP), Janice **Magnuson** (Alexandria Archaeological Commission), Sandy **Northrop**, Kathryn **Papp**, Carey **Roessel** (Marquise Management). Carl **Smith**, Van **Van Fleet** (resident), Sandra Weiner (Taylor Run), Ken **Wire** (McGuire Woods), Margaret **Wood**

## **I. OPENING**

- A. Welcome and Introductions** - Councilman Smedberg convened the meeting at 8:00 a.m. and the Waterfront Plan Work Group (WPWG) Members (Members) introduced themselves. Mr. Ely participated by phone. Mr. Rhodeside was absent with prior notification. Councilman Smedberg then acknowledged City staff and indicated staff is available to provide technical information and answer questions as needed.
- B. Approval of Meeting Notes** - Moved by Mr. Wood and seconded by Ms. Lyle, to approve the July 27<sup>th</sup> Summary Meeting Notes. Passed by unanimous voice vote.
- C. Meeting Overview** – Members indicated an interest in posting to the WPWG website recent emails between individual Members pertaining to flood mitigation and the WPWG Road Map and asked the City Attorney to advise them on the appropriateness. Joanna Anderson from the City Attorney’s Office spoke to this matter. In general the rules state:
1. Everything that the group does in writing is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
  2. All meetings must be open to the public. A meeting is defined as more than two members of the group. Email is considered a meeting if there are simultaneous responses.
  3. The penalty for violations of FOIA rules (open meetings and documents) is a monetary fine that is personal to the person committing the violation.

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS - Outcomes

- A. Website and Comment Board** - Members indicated they would like to continue to receive staff summaries of public comments submitted through the WPWG website comment board, underscoring the importance of community input. *The Work Group also agreed to discuss how it will incorporate public comment into its final report.*
- B. Meeting Schedule (Time and Location):** Members asked that several of the meetings be evening meetings including one dedicated to stakeholder input and that the location of several of the meetings be held outside City Hall within the greater community.
- C. July 2011 Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan (Plan)** - Members received a hard copy of the Plan. The Plan has also been posted to the WPWG and Waterfront websites for public review. Mr. Moritz reviewed the highlights of the Plan, indicating that it contains changes requested to-date by the Planning Commission and City Council. He indicated that a list of the changes are included in a Guide available on the Waterfront website:  
[www.alexandriava.gov/Waterfront](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Waterfront)

## III. ROAD MAP

- A. Discussion** - Members discussed a member's proposal for an alternative Road Map which incorporates a more detailed analytical framework than the Road Map discussed at the first WPWG meeting. Members' reactions were mixed: some supported the approach; others were concerned that WPWG might not be able to complete such an information-dense work plan within a timeframe that would let WPWG submit its recommendations to City Council in time for Council to resume its consideration of the Plan in November as reflected in the Council resolution. Councilman Smedberg reiterated several provisions of the resolution relating to the WPWG mission.
- B. Road Map Outcomes**
- November 1 was set as the target date for WPWG to finish its report with the idea that City Council would have it by mid-November.
  - A suggestion to revise WPWG's organization, *through the selection of a Work Group Chair*, was, after discussion, set aside. *Councilman Smedberg indicated that he effectively assumes the role of Chair through the Convener position identified in the Council resolution.*
  - Members will identify the Road Map topics and issues from the Plan that are important for WPWG to weigh-in on to Council and then use a four-phase approach – investigate, learn, hear from stakeholders, and draw conclusions – for each topic/issue considered, recognizing that depth of analysis will vary by topics/issues (borrowing from the alternative Road Map approach).
  - A full calendar of upcoming meetings and Road Map topics/issues will be confirmed for Members and posted to the WPWG website.

- As topics/issues are discussed, WPWG will identify areas which need more information, than what is being provided, and will return to the issue at a later meeting.
- WPWG agreed that it will not be bound by the rule that once an issue has been considered at a meeting it cannot be revisited during a future WPWG meeting for reasons other than a person's absence.

#### IV. PUBLIC REALM – PART I DISCUSSION

##### A. **Flood Mitigation** – Emily Baker, P.E., City Engineer, T&ES

Ms. Baker provided an overview of the T&ES report, "Potomac River Flood Mitigation Study" (Study), completed July 2010. The Study examined the flooding problem, determined the causes and identified potential solutions and incorporated recommendations. The Plan describes the Study's recommendations and solutions for the waterfront planning area on pages 29-30. At the request of City Council, some of the Study's elements will be submitted as part of the T&ES Capital Improvement Program budget request in the fall, independent of the Plan's approval. A portion of the Cummings/Turner site is within the flood mitigation area; Robinson Terminal sites are outside it.

##### B. **Q& A regarding Flood Mitigation**

- Where in the Plan are the Study's issues and recommendations referenced? *An overview of the flood mitigation approach is in Chapter 2 of the Plan; specific elements are discussed in Chapter 3, such as in recommendations 3.65 and 3.74.*
- Is there a Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) that is more detailed than the information contained in the Plan? *The Study includes a BCA. There is an overview of the benefit-cost methodology in chapter 5 of the Study; the results of the analysis for each of the mitigation alternatives are contained in chapter 6. The recommended alternative has a benefit-cost ratio of 2.4 (a ratio above 1.0 means that benefits outweigh costs). The Study evaluates the various flood mitigation alternatives; that evaluation is not repeated in the Plan, which, instead, focuses on how the recommended flood mitigation approach is integrated into the Plan.*
- Is the Study online? *The Flood Mitigation Study has been on the T&ES website since its completion in 2010 and will be placed on the WPWG website: [www.alexandriava.gov/WaterfrontWorkGroup](http://www.alexandriava.gov/WaterfrontWorkGroup)*
- FEMA guidelines affect construction, insurance, architectural and other requirements within the 100-year flood area. How would these requirements affect either boutique hotels or a museum or other cultural assets put on the Robinson Terminal North site? *Within a flood plain, residential construction is*

*more constrained than non-residential development. Among the issues for residential development: the first habitable floor must be elevated to one foot above the 100-year flood level and below-grade parking is not permitted. For non-residential development such as hotels, office buildings or museums, below grade parking is permitted but the structure must be flood proofed to one foot above the 100-year flood level. The City's complete floodplain ordinance is located in the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance, Section 6-300.*

- Please explain the potential impact of proposed street elevation and drainage improvements on adjacent buildings, sidewalks, on-street parking, and access. *The proposal to elevate the streets in the vicinity of the foot of King Street recognizes that the amount by which the streets can be elevated is limited in order to ensure that water does not drain to adjacent buildings, that access is not impaired, and that the historic character is maintained.*
- Are there engineering-based cost estimates for all actions that might be needed if the street grade is raised? Is there additional detail about the pumps and pumping station (e.g. engineering study costs, possible pump locations, etc.)? *The Study contains detailed but planning-level cost estimates for each of the alternatives, including the grade elevation and pumps. For clarification, the recommended street and drainage improvements in the vicinity of King/Union Streets and The Strand does not involve pumping. The pumps are associated with the flood mitigation project between Duke and Queen Streets. The purpose of the planning level of analysis is to determine which alternatives merit moving to the next step, which is detailed engineering.*
- Will site developers contribute to the flood mitigation project's overall cost? *With the exception of a portion of the Cummings/Tuner site, the flood mitigation project does not provide flood protection for any redevelopment sites. The Plan does not currently include contributions by development to off-site flood mitigation among the proposed conditions, but it could.*
- Will height limits on by-right development create an incentive for Robinson Terminal South developers to go through the SUP process? *By-right development is limited to 30 feet in height, but a Robinson Terminal South development project could go to 50 feet with an SUP, and this provides an incentive for a developer to go through the SUP process.*
- What potential federal and state funding sources are available for flood mitigation elements? *Potential funding sources are outlined in Section 7.10 of the Study (page 7-15). Staff is evaluating these options.*
- More discussion should occur as to whether flood mitigation costs need to be included among those that that would be covered by revenues generated by new economic activity within the waterfront area.

### **C. Follow-up actions by City Technical Staff – Flood Mitigation**

- Provide a link to the Flood Mitigation Study on TES' website: *This link has been provided on the WPWG web page.*
- Does T&ES have an engineering cost estimate before proceeding ahead to fund and implement elements of the Study's recommendations? *Staff is currently preparing a budget request for moving forward with design of both the flood mitigation project (to Elevation 6.0) and the roadway drainage improvements at King/Strand/Union Streets. This request will be submitted with the T&ES FY2013 CIP budget request this fall. A preliminary cost estimate for design is included in the cost estimate prepared for the Study, included in Appendix G.*
- Provide a link to the Study's reference to the BCA performed for the flood mitigation: *Chapter 5 of the Study contains a detailed discussion of the BCA performed for the Study. A discussion of the BCA performed for the recommended flood mitigation project is on page 6-19 of the Study. As discussed at the meeting on August 10, the flood mitigation project in the Study is an elevated walkway. The recommended option in the Plan has been modified to be more appropriately incorporated into the Plan. These modifications allow the mitigation to be integrated into the proposed parks. Detailed information regarding the cost estimate for this alternative as well as preliminary design computations are located in Appendix G of the Study. Please note that there is a typo in the BCA table on page 6-19 of the report. The total benefit calculated for the walkway is \$14,745,000. It is shown correctly in the paragraph at the top of the page, but incorrectly in the table.*
- Provide a summary of stakeholder comments on the flood mitigation proposals: *Staff is researching records to provide this information.*
- Provide links to (a) the Potomac River Flood Mitigation Study, (b) the Plan's Figure 11, and the parts of (c) Flood Mitigation Study and (d) Plan that discuss the lower King Street flood mitigation area and related street elevations: *The Study (which was prepared by URS) has been posted on the WPWG web page. A discussion of the recommended flood mitigation alternate (identified in the Study as the Elevated Walkway) begins on page 6-10 of the Study. A discussion of the roadway drainage improvements at King/Strand/Union Streets begins on page 6-25. The diagram illustrating this improvement is Figure 6-8, located on page 6-27 of the Study.*
- Research whether rainwater pumped into the Potomac River to mitigate King Street nuisance flooding would be covered by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act: *Staff has researched this issue. Pump facilities constructed as part of the recommended flood mitigation would be covered under the City's existing Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit for Municipal*

*Separate Storm Sewers (MS4). No water quality treatment would be required specifically for these pump facilities.*

- Research potential federal and state funding sources for flood mitigation elements. *Potential federal funding options are addressed in the Study, and are discussed on page 7-15. Staff has been and will continue to research these alternatives for any potential funding in support of the recommended flood mitigation.*
- Provide a list of the structures affected by Elevation 6.0 flood mitigation efforts. *Figure 7-5 in the Study illustrates the structures that will be protected (up to Elevation 6.0) if the recommended flood mitigation is constructed. The properties shown in dark blue and light blue will benefit from flood protection, up to Elevation 6.0. The buildings located inside the shaded area that are not highlighted in blue have first floor elevations above 6.0, so will not receive additional protection from the recommended project.*

## **V. MEETING SUMMARY AND PREPARATION FOR NEXT MEETING**

- The Road Map discussion occurred with outcomes identified above.
- A discussion on flood mitigation occurred with questions raised and addressed by technical staff.
- Additional information on flood mitigation was requested by Members and staff has incorporated that information in these notes.
- A wrap-up of flood mitigation will occur at the next meeting with the discussion to then continue on the Public Realm.

## **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **DEENA DEMONTIGNY**

Areas of interest: the WPWG timetable, preserving an unobstructed waterfront view, and the possibility of unanticipated impacts from flood mitigation.

### **VAN VAN FLEET**

Areas of interest: the T&ES flood mitigation plan, the WPWG work timeline and deadline, and addressing traffic, parking and the impact of tour buses.

### **KATY CANNADY**

Areas of interest: unanticipated consequences of flood mitigation proposals, and the Alexandria Archaeological Commission's Waterfront History Plan.

### **RICHARD F. DORMAN**

Area of interest: Having WPWG approach its work with a sense of urgency.

**MARGARET WOOD**

Areas of interest: the need for all three development alternatives to be fully vetted; having the Plan reflect the principles of the Virginia Constitution's Article 11 on conserving public lands; and Virginia's United Land Trust as an information **source** (<http://www.landscape.org/virginia/programs/vault/>).

**VII. ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.