

# Public Realm

*The public realm recommendations that the WPWG has yet to discuss are for the foot of King Street; for parks and public spaces; for marina, piers, and shoreline; and for art and history. This memo focuses on the recommendations that 3-4 or more WPWG members wish to discuss. All of the recommendations that address the same issue are grouped, and staff has suggested edits based upon the WPWG's comments and plan statements. Staff's suggested edits are highlighted with strikethroughs (for deletions) and underlines (for additions).*

## PUBLIC REALM - FOOT OF KING STREET

### WPWG Plan Statements on the Foot of King Street

- Where King Street meets the river, there should be a significant public space that acts as a gateway to the City from the river and offers a variety of activities for residents and visitors.
- A plan should include a new pier extending from near the foot of King Street for uses such as water taxis, permanent or visiting ships of character, and for people to walk along. The view of the Potomac River from King Street should be preserved.

### Issue 1: Recommendations related to the “significant public space” at the foot of King Street.

*There are four recommendations for the foot of King Street that can be revised based upon the Work Group's discussion and plan statements. Two points emerged from the Work Group's discussion:*

- *that the plan should recommend a “significant public space” where King Street meets the river, and*
- *that if the ODBC parking lot is to be used for public space, it should be a mutually-agreeable result of negotiations between the City and ODBC.*

*To address these points, staff suggests eliminating three of the recommendations and replacing them with a single recommendation (underlined text) based upon the WPWG's plan statements.*

**~~3.63 Create an exceptional public plaza/promenade from Union Street to the riverbank, replacing the unit block of King Street and King Street Park.~~ [Staff note: this recommendation is no longer needed, given other recommendations, including 3.69 below]**

**~~3.68 Consider eliminating the ODBC parking lot along The Strand through negotiation with the ODBC.~~**

**~~3.69 Create a new public park/plaza where the ODBC parking lot currently exists, with a public promenade along the water's edge from King Street to Waterfront Park.~~**

~~Consider naming the park/plaza after John Fitzgerald, one of the pivotal figures in Alexandria's maritime history. Where King Street meets the river, there should be a significant public space that acts as a gateway to the City from the river and offers a variety of activities for residents and visitors. The preferred approach for acquisition or use of the ODBC parking lot for public space is through negotiation with ODBC.~~

**3.75 ~~Negotiate parking lot land transfer or acquisition with ODBC.~~**

***WPWG comments on these four recommendations:***

**Comments on 3.63**

1. See comments on 3.62 (Wood)
2. There are no practical alternatives to the present size and location of the ODBC parking lot. Also, the lot should not be downsized. (Ely)
3. This may not be part of the plan based on the ODBC property being removed (Lyle)
4. Discuss in lieu of alternate plan for the parking lot (Ballard)

**Comments on 3.68**

1. We need to look at an alternate plan that beautifies the parking and replans the area. (Ballard)
2. Modify to call for "re-envisioning" rather than "elimination" of ODBC parking area. Couple with a parallel recommendation to Council that the Work Group supports using negotiation as the preferred negotiation strategy. (Macek)
3. Add the word "preferably" after The Strand; the parcel is too important to tie the City's hands. (Olinger)
4. Inadequate recommendation in light of the protracted negotiations facing the city as it attempts to reverse a federal court ruling. It is fine to pursue negotiations with ODBC. But, this recommendation should also state that the city should pursue a feasible alternative to accomplish its goals at the foot of King Street. (Wood)
5. This idea is an absolute non-starter. Drop it! (Ely)
6. This should no longer be discussed; the plan should move forward without odbc (Lyle)

**Comments on 3.69**

1. This idea is an absolute non-starter. Drop it! (Ely)
2. this should no longer be discussed; the plan should move forward without odbc (Lyle)
3. see above (Ballard)
4. No; Our plan statements call for a significant public space at this location, not Fitzgerald Square (see E1, Public Realm - Foot of King) . Fitzgerald Square as presented and detailed in the WFP depends on judicial reversal of federal court settlement with the Boat Club and reference to this entity misleads the public and

their accurate understanding of the WFP. Further, it masks the very real work still to be done to present a feasible alternative to Fitzgerald Square in the plan. (Wood)

**Comments on 3.75**

1. See above [3.68] (Ballard)
2. See 3.68 comment (Wood)
3. There are no practical alternatives to the present size and location of the ODBC parking lot. Also, the lot should not be downsized. (Ely)
4. same as above [3.68] (Lyle)

***Additional Recommendation related to the “significant public space” at the foot of King Street.***

*Nate Macek suggests a new recommendation for how interim use of ODBC parking lot should be reconfigured.*

**NEW** Any interim improvements to this site reached through negotiation with the ODBC should include public access along the waterfront and preserve public access at King Street Park. Existing chain-link fencing should be removed or, if replaced, constructed of materials consistent with the architectural fabric of Old Town. Art and historic interpretation should be incorporated into the reconfigured site.

**Issue 2: Recommendations related to a new pier in the vicinity of the foot of King Street.**

*There are three recommendations related to the proposed new pier in the vicinity of the foot of King Street. The recommendation can be revised to reflect the WPWG’s thoughts on Fitzgerald Square as well as specific comments on each point. Staff proposes several edits to address WPWG comments:*

- *Recognizing that the location of the pier will need to accommodate the current status of the ODBC parking lot as well as interim or ultimate agreements with ODBC;*
- *Recognizing that some potential locations for the pier would result in the historic ship not being visible from King Street; and*
- *Deleting recommendation 3.80 as unnecessary since the negotiations with ODBC are referenced in other recommendations.*

**3.77** **Create a new commercial pier ~~off Fitzgerald Square~~ in the vicinity of the foot of King Street to accommodate water taxis and historical vessels. Pier designs shown in this Plan are illustrative; the ~~ultimate~~ design will be determined during the implementation phase and may be of a different length, width or location from that shown in the Plan. Pier location and design should be compatible with interim or ultimate agreements with ODBC.**

- 3.78 Attract a tall ship or other ship of character to be berthed at the new pier. ~~and visible from King Street.~~**
- 3.80 ~~Negotiate dock and boat ramp agreements with ODBC.~~**

***WPWG comments on these three recommendations:***

**Comments on 3.77**

1. Also supports Plan Statement E2 (Macek)
2. This recommendation reflects a key weakness of the proposed waterfront plan -- a lack of specificity as to where key water-related activities will be located, notably the docking and service facilities for the commercial boats serving Old Town. Further, Fitzgerald Square is a non-starter. (Ely)
3. pier should be relocated (Lyle)
4. consider line of sight to the river in locating berthing facilities for boats (Rhodeside)
5. See above (Ballard)
6. No; Conflicts with language in H3 Plan Statement in Marina statements (Wood)
7. This assumes Fitzgerald Square exists; is this a long term recommendation?  
Relocating water taxis would necessitate supporting infrastructure. Why shouldn't water taxis be placed with other commercial water uses? (Olinger)

**Comments on 3.78**

1. Also supports Plan Statement E2 (Macek)
2. A tall ship or a "ship of character" (whatever that means) should be located adjacent to and be an element of a maritime/riverine-related museum. Such a ship should not be stuck in a no-man's land, as proposed here. (Ely)
3. this is implementation and not planning (Lyle)
4. see comment for 3.77 (Rhodeside)

**Comments on 3.80**

1. Also supports Plan Statement E2 (Macek)
2. What does this statement mean? (Ely)
3. move forward without ODBC (Lyle)
4. What does this mean? (Olinger)

## **PUBLIC REALM – PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES**

### **WPWG Plan Statements for Parks and Public Spaces**

- A plan should improve the quality, design and programming of existing parks and public spaces.
- There should be continuous public access to the shoreline from Daingerfield Island to Jones Point Park.
- There should be a meaningful increase in parks and public spaces along the waterfront.
- Parks and public spaces should support activities for a wide range of users including families and children.
- There should be both active and passive uses in the public spaces along the waterfront.
- Parks and public spaces should be respectful of Alexandria's history.
- The City should consider its parks and open spaces as an integrated system. It needs to have a holistic design vision.
- There must be active, integrated management of the public spaces, both maintenance and programming.

*Several WPWG members suggested that a recommendation be added to address plan statement F7: "The City should consider its parks and open spaces as an integrated system. It needs to have a holistic design vision." The Work Group also discussed the importance of applying a holistic, integrated approach to maintenance and programming. A new recommendation on this subject would logically be located among the other "waterfront-wide" recommendations on page 37 of the Plan.*

*Staff's suggested new recommendation is:*

**New** The parks and public spaces of the Waterfront should be considered an integrated system and should have a holistic design vision. Similarly, Waterfront public spaces should be actively managed – both maintenance and programming – as an integrated system.

#### ***WPWG comments on this recommendation:***

Need to have recommendation that addresses the Plan Statement F7: "The City should consider its parks and open spaces as an integrated system. It needs to have a holistic design vision." (Macek)

The City should consider its parks and open spaces as an integrated system. It needs to have a holistic design vision. (Wood)

There must be active, integrated management of the public spaces, both maintenance and programming. (Wood)

## PUBLIC REALM – MARINA, PIERS AND SHORELINE

### Plan Statements Related Marinas, Piers, and Shoreline

- A plan should include options for expanding docking locations for commercial boats (water taxis and tour boats) as well as permanent or visiting ships of character.
- A plan should include the option of a new pleasure boat marina in the Waterfront Plan area. Consideration should be given to a variety of options for operation (public, public-private, private or other).
- Conceptually, pleasure and commercial boat activities should be separated. Commercial boat activities should generally be north of King Street (primarily the Torpedo Factory/Chart House area).
- Environmental issues should be addressed in the design and engineering of shoreline improvements.
- Where possible, rip-rap should be replaced with a more natural shoreline treatment.
- In principle, a plan should incorporate the concepts embodied in the Waterfront Committee's Marina Vision Statement and Briefing Paper.
- A public boat ramp for trailered vessels is incompatible with the center of Old Town; trailered boat ramp activity should be accommodated elsewhere in the Waterfront study area or nearby.
- The plan should include locations for launching non-trailered watercraft, such as canoes and kayaks.

Staff suggests the following edits to the recommendations to better conform to the WPWG's plan statements:

- 3.82** ~~Create a new pleasure boat marina at Robinson Terminal South. Consider private construction and operation, possibly in conjunction with a redeveloped Robinson Terminal South redevelopment.~~ The Alexandria City Marina should be a modern, well-maintained facility for docking boats that meets the technical specifications and market demands of recreational boaters. Re-locate the pleasure boat marina to avoid conflicts with commercial operations. The preferred location is Robinson Terminal South. The Marina should be a self-sufficient enterprise, with user fees covering the cost of operations, maintenance, and capital improvements that primarily benefit boaters. Consider private construction and operation.
- 4.26** ~~Commercial and pleasure boat activity should be segregated as much as possible to enhance each operation. Commercial boating should be combined together in the vicinity of King Street; pleasure boat marina should be moved to the south~~ Commercial boat activities should generally be north of King Street (primarily the Torpedo Factory/Chart House area).
- 4.27** ~~Water taxi stops should be added at~~ considered for the King Street pier considered for the new pier in the vicinity of the foot of King Street in order to reinforce Fitzgerald

**Square that area as the “hub” of the waterfront and make the commercial boat operations, especially the water taxi, more visually and physically accessible to the public.**

- 4.31 ~~The Plan recommends that a new pleasure boat marina be located offshore of Robinson Terminal South. Tie-ups should be available in front of Waterfront Park and The Strand for Accommodation should be made for daytrippers visiting by boat, possibly in the vicinity of Waterfront Park and The Strand.~~**

#### **Comments on 3.82**

1. This marina idea is a non-starter because (1) the Army Corp of Engineers is highly unlikely to approve it and (2) it will not be feasible to provide sufficient parking for the proposed marina because below-grade parking is not feasible in the waterfront area. (Ely)
2. Need to make this recommendation consistent with Waterfront Committee recommendations. Consider, *“The Alexandria City Marina should be a modern, well-maintained facility for docking boats that meets the technical specifications and market demands of recreational boaters. Re-locate the pleasure boat marina to avoid conflicts with commercial operations. The preferred location is Robinson Terminal South. The Marina should be a self-sufficient enterprise, with user fees covering the cost of operations, maintenance, and capital improvements that primarily benefit boaters. Consider private construction and operation.”* Note that this recommendation is reiterated in 4.31 and that points raised in re-written recommendation are addressed in 4.32. (Macek)
3. No; Yes to more marinas, but...Traffic, amenities, roadways, compatibility of public uses in concert with dock operations here are all left undefined and unstudied. Size of the marina is less than suggested as economically viable by Waterfront Commission. Docks, as depicted, extend 330 feet into the navigable channel. No sense from Army Corps of Engineers if plan is feasible or acceptable. No mention made of plans or intentions to restore the viability of City Marina, even as we suggest a much larger marina is likely in the interest of some future developer. Public space expansion on RTS pier conflicts with expected private Marina operation. We continue to ignore the obvious alternative. Since we are suggested a "potential site" for a marina, it's appropriate to address the GenOn site as another "potential" site. Such a suggestion is easily added in the last paragraph on pg 82, ie....the waterfront ...could include a significant new public amenity, like a marina. (Wood)
4. Are we convinced that a marina at RTS is possible? 4.26 should say “moved elsewhere” rather than “to the south”. What is Plan “B” for private boats? (Olinger)

#### **Comments on 4.26**

1. Are we convinced that a marina at RTS is possible? 4.26 should say “moved elsewhere” rather than “to the south”. What is Plan “B” for private boats? (Olinger)

2. State that pleasure marina “should be moved elsewhere” instead of “to the south.” Also supports Plan Statement H6. (Macek)
3. No; no mention of restoring the viability of the city marina. Additional pleasure boat marina space should be sought on the river. (Wood)
4. Segregating commercial boats from pleasure boats is highly desirable but a marina off the south Robinson Terminal is a non-starter. (Ely)

#### **Comments on 4.27**

1. Needs further discussion in lieu of potential ODBC changes. (Ballard)
2. This assumes Fitzgerald Square exists; is this a long term recommendation? Relocating water taxis would necessitate supporting infrastructure. Why shouldn't water taxis be placed with other commercial water uses? (Olinger)
3. No; This "hub" is dependent on an agreement with ODBC and reversal of a federal court decision regarding the property disputes with the city. The commercial "port" is suggested to be north of King Street, and particularly in the area of the Torpedo Factory, see H3. (Wood)
4. Neither Fitzgerald Square nor a pier at the bottom of King Street is going to be built. Also, the present waterfront plan lacks clarity as to where the commercial boats are going to be docked. This recommendation needs to be completely rethought. (Ely)
5. May need to be moved away from ODBC (Lyle)

#### **Comments on 4.31**

1. Are we convinced that a marina at RTS is possible? 4.26 should say “moved elsewhere” rather than “to the south”. What is Plan “B” for private boats? The first part of 4.31 is repetitive. (Olinger)
2. Delete “should be located offshore of Robinson Terminal South” and instead state that it “should be separated from the commercial users. This recommendation should be consistent with 3.82. (Macek)
3. No, see comments above (Wood).
4. This marina idea is a non-starter because (1) the Army Corp of Engineers is highly unlikely to approve it and (2) it will not be feasible to provide sufficient parking for the proposed marina because below-grade parking is not feasible in the waterfront area. While the idea of tying up day-trippers resembles the tie-up facilities at Washington Harbour in Georgetown, one must ask if there are sufficient differences between the two docking facilities as to render the idea of day-trippeeer docking in Waterfront Park impractical, especially from a security perspective. (Ely)

#### **Additional WPWG Recommendation on Marina, Piers and Shoreline:**

*Nate Macek suggests the following new recommendation to address the WPWG's plan statement “A public boat ramp for trailered vessels is incompatible with the center of Old Town; trailered boat ramp activity should be accommodated elsewhere in the Waterfront study area or nearby.”*

**New** A public boat ramp for trailered vessels is incompatible with the center of Old Town; trailered boat ramp activity should be accommodated elsewhere in the Waterfront study area or nearby.

## **PUBLIC REALM – ART AND HISTORY**

### **WPWG Plan Statements on Art and History**

- In principle, the plan should incorporate the concepts set forth in the document “Alexandria Waterfront History Plan: Alexandria, A Living History.”
- Alexandria history should be incorporated in the design process of the public spaces and private redevelopment.
- All historic buildings in the plan area should be preserved and adaptively reused. Redevelopment programs should allow public access to and promote active use of the ground floor.
- In principle, the plan should incorporate the concepts set forth in the “Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal” and include the public art plan recommendations.
- A plan should adopt the Art Walk concept and public art should be a distinguishing feature of the public realm.
- The plan should support multiple, flexible venues for performing arts, activities and programming along the waterfront.
- A plan should support the retention, expansion and/or establishment of museums, cultural and educational institutions, and related elements (such as historic ships and the history/cultural anchors).
- Artists and historians should be included in the design and implementation processes of public spaces.
- A plan should address a range of sources for the funding of art and history elements.

*WPWG members Nate Macek and Bob Wood have two suggestions for new recommendations relating to art and history in the public realm. Staff suggests that WPWG accept both of them.*

**New** The City should take proactive measures to retain existing cultural institutions on the Alexandria Waterfront as the Plan is implemented, including the Seaport Foundation, The Art League, the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and others.” (Macek)

**New** Funding by the plan for Art and History should reflect the importance of these elements to the overall plan.” (Wood)

## Private Realm

*The recommendations for the private realm are primarily contained in the development guidelines for each site and in the “Waterfront Restaurant/Hotel Policy.” Staff has divided the recommendations into three categories to facilitate review by the WPWG: those recommendations already discussed by the WPWG, those that few members of the WPWG want to discuss, and those that the WPWG does want to discuss. For those that the WPWG does want to discuss, WPWG comments are provided and staff has suggested possible edits to address WPWG issues.*

### WPWG’s Plan Statements on the Private Realm

- There should be some additional mixed use development on Alexandria’s waterfront.
- Current guidelines for redevelopment (existing small area plans, zoning ordinance, etc.) are not sufficient to ensure that the public’s goals for architecture and site design, land use, historic preservation, public art, public spaces, and other public benefits are met.
- If there is increased density on redevelopment sites, it should be balanced by increased amenities and benefits and additional zoning controls.
- Uses on redevelopment sites that face public space should accommodate and be compatible with active, publicly accessible public space.
- Boutique hotels (hotels limited to 150 rooms) should be added to the list of land uses permitted in the W-1 zone with a special use permit.
- The permitted heights on redevelopment sites should ~~permit~~ be the existing height district limits.
- Architecture and site design could be contemporary design inspired by historic precedent while maintaining compatibility with nearby neighborhoods. Contemporary design that meets these standards is acceptable.
- New development must make significant contributions to on-site and off-site public amenities, including parks, streetscapes, other public spaces, and art and history elements of the plan.
- Parking for new commercial buildings will be accommodated on site below grade. New parking should not be visible from public spaces.

## Private Realm Development Parameters

Site	Current Zoning Permitted FAR (sf)	Proposed Zoning Permitted FAR (sf)	Current Height Limits	Proposed Height Limits	Added Land Uses
Robinson Terminal North	195,296	238,816	30, 45, 55	30, 45, 66	Boutique Hotel
Robinson Terminal South	327,393	380,529	50	50	Boutique Hotel
Cummings/ Turner Block	128,360	192,540	50	50	Boutique Hotel
<b>Totals</b>	<b>651,049</b>	<b>811,885</b>			

## Robinson Terminal North

### Development Guidelines

**KEY:** Gray means “Previously discussed” or “Few or no members want to discuss this recommendation.”

**BOLD means “Several members want to discuss this recommendation”**

1. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along North Union Street between the two Robinson Terminal North parcels should be enhanced through sustainable design; in addition to special pavement, underground utilities, street trees and appropriate light fixtures, Union Street should present an obvious continuation of pedestrian access between open space areas to the north and south and be improved with, at minimum, wide sidewalks, landscaping, and special street paving.

#### Comments

- Where would the wide sidewalks be and what property would they encroach upon? (Ely)
  - Add sustainable design treatment. (Rhodeside)
  - How far up North Union? Only within the Waterfront core? All the way to the Metal Worker's building? I am in agreement with all enhancements on Union but such enhancements make this single North-South route along the river less and less able to handle the traffic generated by 4 hotels, increased marina and harbor traffic, etc. This simply argues for managing capacity, in all its varieties, in this area very intensely. (Wood)
2. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing the water or North Union Street, and should be minimized if facing open space along Oronoco Street.
  3. Active uses should be part of any development and should constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be generally located as depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 31), and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
  4. **The preferred use on the site east of Union Street above the first floor is a boutique hotel. The second preferred use would be for office.**

#### Comments

- Also supports Plan Statement J5 (Macek)
- The focus on hotels is misleading, economically dangerous, and prevents full examination of alternatives. The owners of RTN and RTS, in their own studies

conducted by their own experts, state that hotels are not feasible or economically viable. Hotels are not required to be developed on these sites, but this plan depends on hotels to succeed. This plan relies exclusively on hotel development to meet its financial objectives. The four hotels in the plan (three on South Union and one on North Union) do not fill any foreseeable shortage, depend on flawed analysis (see study done by Marriott for RT), deprive current hotels of needed occupancy, compound traffic and congestion problems, and amount to directed land speculation by the city. Redevelopment is needed, desirable, and most probable. We need to find a compromise that is economically viable, on a scale that matches this locale, and brings necessary vibrancy to the waterfront. FOUR HOTELS are not needed and, by assertions contained in CT and RT statements, should not be built. If ever there was a location for a city supported public space, it is on West's Point. (Wood)

- No hotels east of Lee Street. (Ely)
- Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like “discouraged” or “preferred” have any force of law? (Olinger)

5. **Residential use is specifically discouraged east of Union Street unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to: coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the residential development; provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront; and preferably not include permanent owner occupied residential units.**

#### Comments

- Yes, but...not sure what last sentence means. We may allow residential development, but not for permanent residences? (Wood)
  - The City should be more welcoming towards the construction of new, high-end residences -- townhomes and condos -- near the waterfront. (Ely)
  - Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like “discouraged” or “preferred” have any force of law? Why do we prefer that residential units not be “permanent owner occupied”? (Olinger)
  - Discuss permanent owner occupied language (Ballard)
6. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site ~~and~~ below grade. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio for hotels must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
7. Bulk and scale of the buildings should be stepped down from Union Street toward the water.

8. Shoreline treatment at Robinson Terminal North should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
9. Redevelopment should be compatible with any biosparging technology, or other bioremediation, being employed by the City in treatment of the Oronoco Outfall-Alexandria Town Gas site located at the eastern end of Oronoco Street.
10. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of the History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces, with particular attention given to the West's Point site which is the area which extends from the water west along Oronoco Street to Union Street, and represents the origins of Alexandria.
11. ~~Encourage modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture)~~ Architecture and site design may be contemporary design inspired by historic precedent while maintaining compatibility with nearby neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations. Reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves. Contemporary design that meets these standards is acceptable.
12. **Upon redevelopment, public amenities shall be provided by the developer of the site. The specific amenities to be provided will be determined during the development review process. Desirable public amenities include:**
  - **Public art as a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the greatest extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.**
  - **Open spaces with public access easements and/or dedications, provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 31). The Plan encourages new open space to be provided on an improved pier, consistent with the federal settlement agreement.**
  - **Retention of the Robinson Terminal pier, repaired and expanded to be used as a public space and incorporated into the public space/pedestrian concept for the Plan as a whole. The Plan encourages retaining the pier's ability to accommodate larger ships visiting Alexandria. Use of the pier should be active and welcoming to the general public, and should advance the goal of the uninterrupted public pedestrian walkway along the water's edge. Examples of potential uses include water features, river watching, bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, plant and sculpture gardens, or outdoor cafes. Any structure erected on the pier should be temporary in nature, such as a tensile structure, fabric awning, or prefabricated, demountable, glass pavilion. The responsibility for the design, construction, maintenance and programming of the pier and public space will be determined in**

**the future; the Plan recommends close coordination between the City and the developer on all of these issues.**

### **Comments**

- Yes, but...RTN and its occupation of West's Point needs to be better highlighted, particularly regarding art and history ties and design criteria. If ever there was a place to suggest ties to a significant city managed public space, this ground is where it needs to be. The suggested "civic building" is better cited here, for example, to ease the density in the south. A partnering with a developer - city, developer, and public partner - could result in a great compromise. The design process (competition?), the partnering between commercial and public use, and the revenue potential for all parties make this location a very important setting to get right. (Wood)
- The practicality of docking larger vessels at the RTN pier needs to be reassessed in light of the periodic dredging required to maintain a sufficient water depth at the pier to accommodate larger ships. (Ely)
- Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like "discouraged" or "preferred" have any force of law? (Olinger)

**13. The maximum FAR, floor area and height allowed is included on the chart at page ~~101~~ 103.**

## **Robinson Terminal South**

### **Development Guidelines**

**KEY:** Gray means "Previously discussed" or "Few or no members want to discuss this recommendation."

**BOLD means "Several members want to discuss this recommendation"**

1. Active uses which welcome the public should be part of any development, and constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be located as generally depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 34), and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
2. **The preferred use on the site east of The Strand above the first floor is a boutique hotel. The second preferred use would be for office.**

### **Comments:**

- Also supports Plan Statement J5 (Macek)
- but add: or a combination of office and residential at end of sentence (Rhodeside)

- No; The focus on hotels is misleading, economically dangerous, and prevents full examination of alternatives. The owners of RTN and RTS, in their own studies conducted by their own experts, state that hotels are not feasible or economically viable. Hotels are not required to be developed on these sites, but this plan depends on hotels to succeed. This plan relies exclusively on hotel development to meet its financial objectives. The four hotels in the plan (three on South Union and one on North Union) do not fill any foreseeable shortage, depend on flawed analysis (see study done by Marriott for RT), deprive current hotels of needed occupancy, compound traffic and congestion problems, and amount to directed land speculation by the city. Redevelopment is needed, desirable, and most probable. We need to find a compromise that is economically viable, on a scale that matches this locale, and brings necessary vibrancy to the waterfront. FOUR HOTELS are not needed and, by assertions contained in CT and RT statements, should not be built. (Wood)
  - Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like “discouraged” or “preferred” have any force of law? (Olinger)
3. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located away from the water.
  4. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of The Strand unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to: coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the residential development; provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront; and preferably not include permanent owner occupied residential units.
  5. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along South Union Street, The Strand, Duke Street and Wolfe Street should be enhanced; in addition to special pavement, undergrounding utilities, street trees and appropriate light fixtures, and to enhance the views of the water, pedestrian access and porosity and reflect the historic orientation of buildings and alleyways.
  6. A new east-west connection north of Wolfe Street between South Union Street and the existing Robinson Terminal South pier is strongly encouraged.
  7. An extension of The Strand from Duke Street is strongly encouraged, with a pedestrian-only connection at The Strand/Wolfe Street intersection to buffer the Harborside community.
  8. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of History Plan, should inform ~~every aspect~~ of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces, including recognition of the southern point of the original shoreline.
    - Buildings and open space should reflect Alexandria’s maritime history.
    - The Plan encourages modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture) while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations.
    - Architecture should reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves.
    - The historic 2 Duke Street warehouse shall be preserved and adaptively reused.

9. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing the water or South Union Street, and should be minimized if facing residences along Wolfe Street.
10. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio for hotels must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
11. Shoreline treatment at Robinson Terminal South should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
12. Robinson Terminal South is a one potential location for a new and expanded pleasure boat marina. If implemented in this location, the proposed marina ~~is conceived to be financially self-supporting as either a publicly or privately built and operated marina,~~ and may be developed and operated in conjunction with the landside redevelopment of Robinson Terminal South. If the developer of the Robinson Terminal South development site does not develop the marina, it shall cooperate with the City and others to allow its development by others.
13. Upon redevelopment, public amenities shall be provided by the developer of the site. The specific amenities to be provided will be determined during the development review process. Desirable public amenities include:
  - Public art as a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the greatest extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.
  - Open spaces with public access easements and/or dedications, provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 34). The Plan encourages new open space to be provided on an improved pier, consistent with the federal settlement agreement. The Plan encourages the use of Parcel E for park, civic, or cultural activities.
  - Significant improvements shall be designed for Duke, Wolfe and additional street ends with green, pedestrian areas extending from The Strand to the water to expand the waterfront open space area.
  - A new kayak launching area at the foot of Duke.
  - Retention of the Robinson Terminal pier, repaired and expanded to be used as a public space and incorporated into the public space/ pedestrian concept for the Plan as a whole. The Plan recommends that connections be provided at both the northern and southern ends of the pier, and improvements made to ensure the safety of users. Examples of potential uses on the pier area include water features, river watching, bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, plant and sculpture gardens, or outdoor cafes. Until or unless a pleasure boat marina is constructed adjacent to the Robinson Terminal South pier, the use of the pier as a docking location for larger vessels should be maintained.
14. **The maximum FAR and floor area allowed is included on the chart at page ~~101~~ 103.**

## Cummings/Turner Block

### Development Guidelines

**KEY:** Gray means “Previously discussed” or “Few or no members want to discuss this recommendation.”

**BOLD means “Several members want to discuss this recommendation”**

1. Active uses which welcome the public should be part of any development, and constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be located as generally depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 34) and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
2. **On this block, the required preferred use facing The Strand above the first floor is boutique hotel. The second preferred use would be for other non-residential.**

#### Comments

- "Required use" should be changed to "preferred use." Also supports Plan Statement J5 (Macek)
  - Inconsistent with Table 6; Cummings Turner "required usage" is not reflected in this table. Further, we know that Turner has already rejected hotel usage in the absence of an integrated block plan and allowance for at least 200 rooms. (Wood)
  - Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like “discouraged” or “preferred” have any force of law? Can a hotel be required on the C-T parcel(s)? (Olinger)
3. For the cluster of buildings that includes the historic warehouses, residential (including owner occupied units) is permitted above the first floor along Union Street and around the northwest corner on Prince Street. *[Staff note: this guideline does not grant new rights, since the W-1 zone permits residential uses. It is to clarify that the preference for non-residential uses does not apply to these buildings.]*
  4. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located a distance from the water. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of South Union Street unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to face existing residential development across Union Street; coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the block; and provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront.
  5. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along South Union Street, The Strand, Duke Street and Wolfe Street should be enhanced; in addition to special pavement, undergrounding utilities, street trees and appropriate light fixtures, and to enhance the views of the water, pedestrian access and porosity and reflect the historic orientation of buildings and alleyways:
    - a. At least two midblock breaks between new buildings, with public space, including alleys and courtyards shall be provided extending from South Union Street to The Strand;

- b. A third alleyway between 10 Prince Street and 204 South Union Street shall be opened, with new infill construction permitted, provided that it creates an open, transparent space reflecting the historic alley in that location.
  - c. Access to uses within the alleys and courtyards is essential to the pedestrian experience.
6. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
    - Buildings and open space should reflect Alexandria’s maritime history.
    - The Plan encourages modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th Century Alexandria warehouse architecture) while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations.
    - Architecture should reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves.
  7. Redevelopment of any portion of the block should be coordinated with restoration and adaptive reuse plans for the historic warehouse buildings in the block. As part of any SUP for any development of Cummings property, the applicant shall provide a plan for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic buildings at 10 Prince Street, 204 South Union Street and 206 South Union Street. Adaptive reuse should emphasize uses that are open to public access and shall include a civic or cultural use. *[Staff notes that this guideline was intended to ensure that redevelopment could not move forward without a plan for restoration of the historic warehouses. However, it now appears that restoration of the historic warehouses will be the first element of this block to occur.]*
  8. Public art should be a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.
  9. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing open space.
  10. Redevelopment on the Cummings/Turner block should contribute significantly to the public amenities in the new park between the ~~redevelopment~~ block and the Potomac River.
  11. Open space with public access easements and/or dedications shall be provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 34).
  - 12. Both the Cummings and the Turner properties are encouraged to develop jointly under a single scheme and in such a way as to share amenities such as an on-site restaurant or other common space. However, if that does not occur, each site can develop on its own. At ultimate buildout, the underground parking will share a single entrance on Wolfe Street, with a knock out panel provided between the underground garages.**

**Comments:**

1. Also supports Plan Statement J9 (Macek)
2. Seems to be too late to accomplish an integrated vision, or is it?? (Wood)

3. No hotel should be constructed on either the Cummings or Turner sites. Further, the economic feasibility of below-grade parking on those sites or anywhere else east of Lee Street is highly questionable. (Ely)
4. Should we be going into design details to the extent proposed at this stage of the process? Do words like “discouraged” or “preferred” have any force of law? (Olinger)
5. Discuss parking garage (Ballard)

## **Restaurant, Hotel and Commercial Policy**

**KEY:** Gray means “Previously discussed” or “Few or no members want to discuss this recommendation.”

**BOLD means “Several members want to discuss this recommendation”**

Each SUP for a restaurant, hotel, entertainment or other commercial use on the waterfront must be reviewed, and appropriate findings made, according to the following guidelines:

- City Council shall not approve an SUP for a use on the Waterfront unless it finds that the use does not create significant negative impacts on the vitality and character of King Street or the character and enjoyment of nearby residential neighborhoods
- City Council shall consider the cumulative effect of the proposal and the number of already established uses in the nearby area.
- In the case of an expansion or other intensification, the entire operation shall be taken into account in determining the impact on King Street and nearby residential neighborhoods.
- In making its determination, City Council shall consider the following factors as applied to the proposed use:
  1. The availability of off-street parking for the restaurant’s patrons and employees, including whether the restaurant has contracted with nearby garages for additional off-street parking for patrons and/or employees.
  2. The extent to which garage spaces will be available to the public. Parking garages must be operated so that they are open to the public at least at peak times.
  3. Parking for visitors, customers and employees must be provided on site. Additional parking may be provided by contract with a nearby garage for patrons and/or employees. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
  4. The extent to which the hotel provides incentives for employees who are able to use transit.
  5. The potential for undue congestion of pedestrians or vehicles [in relationship to the approval of Restaurants].

6. The potential for undue congestion of pedestrians or vehicles [in relationship to the approval of Hotels].

**7. The extent to which the use is open in the late night hours and situated so as to potentially disturb residential areas.**

**Comments:**

- This language may suffice for a restaurants or hotels in other commercial areas of Alexandria. We need to add additional language that protects the peaceful enjoyment, the appropriate active uses, and the family orientation of our waterfront. The language is too generic. (Wood)
- Specific criteria have to be established for RHC SUPs. Without standards for measuring the impact of such uses, the SUP process is no more than a rhetorical exercise. (Olinger)
- Times and locations? (Ballard)

8. The extent to which alcohol consumption will predominate over food consumption and situated so as to potentially disturb residential areas.

9. The predicted extent of litter generated.

10. The potential for loud or otherwise inappropriate noise.

**11. The extent to which other restaurants already exist in the same area. Restaurant uses should not located in such proximity as to detract from the character and authenticity of the waterfront by creating a monoculture similar to a Food Court or “restaurant row” environment.**

**Comments:**

- Given that Old Town is adequately served by many fine restaurants, especially near the waterfront, the City should approve little in the way of additional restaurant space along or near the waterfront. (Ely)
- Specific criteria have to be established for RHC SUPs. Without standards for measuring the impact of such uses, the SUP process is no more than a rhetorical exercise. (Olinger)
- Need to discuss guidelines (Ballard)

**12. The type and size of hotel, and whether it is designed to attract large conventions, banquets, or other functions (such as trade shows). Hotels shall be “boutique” hotels: that is, hotels with 150 rooms or less, no ballroom, and meeting rooms for no more than 50 people.**

**Comments:**

- The focus on hotels is misleading, economically dangerous, and prevents full examination of alternatives. The owners of RTN and RTS, in their own studies conducted by their own experts, state that hotels are not feasible or economically viable. Hotels are not required to be developed on these sites, but this plan depends on hotels to succeed. This plan relies exclusively on hotel development to meet its financial objectives. The four hotels in the plan (three on South Union and one on North Union)

do not fill any foreseeable shortage, depend on flawed analysis (see study done by Marriott for RT), deprive current hotels of needed occupancy, compound traffic and congestion problems, and amount to directed land speculation by the city. Redevelopment is needed, desirable, and most probable. We need to find a compromise that is economically viable, on a scale that matches this locale, and brings necessary vibrancy to the waterfront. FOUR HOTELS are not needed and, by assertions contained in CT and RT statements, should not be built. (Wood)

- No new hotels should be authorized east of Lee Street. (Ely)
- Specific criteria have to be established for RHC SUPs. Without standards for measuring the impact of such uses, the SUP process is no more than a rhetorical exercise. (Olinger)
- Discuss 450 rooms versus the number of hotels- 3/4 Also, discuss meeting rooms (Ballard)

13. A restaurant within a hotel that is open to the public shall be the subject of a separate SUP and the same requirements as other restaurants.

**14. The location of the hotel and whether its layout is designed to produce the least impact on nearby residential areas and on the lower King Street area.**

**Comments**

- This focus on hotels is misleading in the absence of language addressing other, better development alternatives. See above. As written, this guideline is too generic regarding its impact. It should not impact lower King Street. In fact it should enhance this area of King Street and the entire Waterfront. We need to recast these statements to not only state what the restrictions may be, but also describe the positive nature of attributes provided by development. (Wood)
- See previous comment. (Ely)
- Specific criteria have to be established for RHC SUPs. Without standards for measuring the impact of such uses, the SUP process is no more than a rhetorical exercise. (Olinger)

15. The ability of the hotel to accommodate, and screen all of its service needs on site, including loading and delivery operations.

## PRIVATE REALM Numbered Recommendations

**3.40: If the Sheet Metals Workers building were to be redeveloped, such redevelopment shall provide a high level of pedestrian and visual connectivity between the redeveloped property and Oronoco Bay Park. ~~Provided that the redevelopment is compatible with the uses in Oronoco Bay Park, a rezoning may be considered.~~**

**Discuss:** Wood, Ely, Olinger, Ballard

**Comments:**

1. Unclear as to what sort of rezoning is considered (spot zoning?). Also, this requirement for pedestrian and visual connectivity is well short of plan statements J2 and J3. Also, it's not clear that the 450 room criteria for waterfront hotels applies to this parcel, should hotels be permitted development. It is within the Waterfront Plan Boundary and should be included under such a constraint on hotels. (Wood)
2. The Sheetmetal Workers building should be included in the waterfront planning area just as should the GenOn site. (Ely)
3. Explain the rezoning question please. (Olinger)
4. The site has been purchased and a by-right plan is underway (Ballard)

*Staff suggestion is to delete the final sentence as shown. As noted, this site has been purchased.*

# Implementation and Funding

*The recommendations for implementation and funding are not numbered, so page numbers are used here. Staff suggests edits to the “early phasing elements” recommendation (page 137) to reflect WPWG comments and plan statements: adding the Union Street study and more detailed engineering of flood mitigation to the early phasing elements.*

## **WPWG’s Plan Statements on Implementation and Funding**

- The revenues from increased economic activity should pay for as great a portion of the costs of the plan as feasible in an effort not to place an undue financial burden on the City.
- The City should pursue federal, state, and other governmental/non-governmental grants and funding programs to support the construction, maintenance and operation of the waterfront.
- Individuals, groups and cultural institutions should play a strong role in implementing the all aspects of a plan.

## **Plan Recommendations for Implementation and Funding**

Pg 122: The Parking Implementation Plan should be created immediately after the adoption of the Plan. It should be led by a multi-agency team and also be assisted by the advice of stakeholders, affected by parking issues in the waterfront area.

Pg 129: Utilize a phased approach for implementation by coordinating short-, mid-, and long-term activities in a manner that is the most economically and physically viable and efficient for the City.

**Pg 136: An Advisory Board for Plan implementation will be established by the City; the model may have multiple committees and will identify roles for the Waterfront Committee and Art and History commissions.**

### **Comments:**

1. Multiple citizen committees will fracture the waterfront implementation process, which in turn will empower City staff too much. Citizen oversight of the implementation of a scaled-down waterfront plan should be provided by just one committee dealing with all aspects of the implementation of the waterfront plan. (Ely)
2. As a starting point, how will the City organize to implement the Plan? Will there be one entity given the lead? How will actions of the various Departments be coordinated? What would be the role of the Advisory Board? Organizational questions should be addressed even before the “early phasing elements” are pursued. (Olinger)
3. While implementation is a post adoption item, a more specific framework for an Advisory Board should have a place within the Plan (Ballard)

Pg 137: The City will pursue early phasing elements outlined in the Plan with immediate attention on predevelopment activities such as tracking, reporting and managing parking; completion of City acquisition of The Strand properties and technical analysis work to convert it to parkland; addressing failing bulkheads; completion of the Union Street study; preparation of ~~CIP~~ the next phase of design and engineering for flood mitigation; pursuing reuse of the Beachcomber; completing ODBC negotiations; working with Art and History commissions on early phases of their plans; completing an engineering and permitting plan; and others such as an analysis for a new civic building with a related spatial needs assessment for the Archaeological museum; updating settlement agreements; development of a grants strategy; etc.

Pg 139: The Plan supports continued operations of the Art League in a location near the waterfront and the Torpedo Factory.

Pg 141: The City will identify options for park services and operations, including the storage of park equipment and vehicles; public restrooms; and a marina dockmaster office, showers and laundry room.

Pg 69: Relocate the City's fire boat and the Seaport Foundation floating facility - Alexandria Seaport Center- to the foot of Duke Street.

## Environmental Issues

*The recommendations for implementation and funding are not numbered, so page numbers are used here. The WPWG has reviewed the plan's recommendations related to the environment, but in the context of other categories, primarily the public realm recommendations.*

### WPWG's Plan Statements on Environmental Issues

- Environmental issues should be addressed in the design and engineering of shoreline improvements. Where possible, rip-rap should be replaced with a more natural shoreline treatment.
- A plan should promote the use of Best Practices that lead to more effective Storm Water Management and enhanced Resource Protection Area (RPA) buffers for improved water quality in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.
- A plan should support City efforts to remediate sources of contamination from current and past industrial uses found along the waterfront.
- A plan should encourage the use of the highest levels of Green Building standards in areas such as water conservation, emissions reduction, recycling of building materials and environmentally sensitive building design.

### Plan Recommendations on Environmental Issues

Many environmental issues are already addressed by City and other environmental policies, ordinances, regulations and guidelines. The Plan reviews these on page 28-32, These include shoreline protection; flood plain, flood mitigation, and sea-level rise; Resource Protection Areas; the combined sewer system; and the green building policy.

- 3.17 At the end of Montgomery Street, consider low impact hardscape options...
- 3.20 [In Rivergate Park] Provide additional plantings featuring native plants in the western half of the park, in part to subtly orient visitors toward the more public, eastern section of the park.
- 3.28 [In Oronoco Bay Park] Erect a large shade structure at water's edge to provide an overlook, picnic shelter, or stage. This structure would become the focal point of the park and should be a significant work of garden architecture. It may be fitted with solar panels on the roof to provide power for small events or ceiling fans.
- 3.29 [In Oronoco Bay Park] Create a series of terraced wetlands on the south side of the park that recapture the historic drainage swale called Ralph's Gutt. These terraces would be graded into the current ground and planted with aquatic plants which will naturally cleanse the storm water before it enters the river. Boardwalks can cross the wetlands to connect pedestrian desire lines and create opportunities for interpretive education.

These wetland enhancements could involve day-lighting the storm water pipes that currently convey the water under the park to the bay.

- 3.30 [In Oronoco Bay Park] Explore opportunities to reduce the impact of the combined sewer overflow (CSO) outfall that discharges at the foot of Pendleton Street. Options include installing a retention basin to reduce the volume of combined sewage discharged into the river during rain events and incorporating features into the proposed extension of Pendleton Street that would direct CSOs away from Oronoco Bay.
- 3.31 [In Oronoco Bay Park] Allow a successional forest to emerge on the north side of the park, extending the natural landscape of the tidal flats to the adjoining uplands. The intent is to plant a variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers, and to end the practice of mowing in a small area, allowing that area to evolve naturally. This could be an excellent interpretive and research opportunity for city school children to discover the restorative power of nature.
- 3.34 Replace the existing rip rap with a more natural and inviting shoreline treatment, to include native plants.
- 3.44 Where possible, replace existing large diameter rip-rap with appropriate (native and/or historic) plantings, using an engineered shoreline restoration system where necessary, in order to achieve the naturalized shoreline envisioned by the Plan. Consider interpretive signage or other means to explain the system to passersby, and to encourage ecologically friendly use and a “tread lightly” mentality in this sensitive area.
- 3.45 If rip-rap is retained in some locations, incorporate larger, flatter boulders to provide informal seating areas along the water’s edge.
- 3.58 Rebuild the bulkhead in areas where it is failing.
- 3.89 Complete the acquisition of the waterside properties between Prince and Duke Streets and develop them as a public park showcasing shipbuilding, and other important elements of the City’s past.

In addition:

- The development guidelines for Robinson Terminal North say that “Redevelopment should be compatible with any biosparging technology, or other bioremediation, being employed by the City in treatment of the Oronoco Outfall-Alexandria Town Gas site located at the eastern end of Oronoco Street.”
- There are several Traffic and Circulation recommendations that encourage mobility by means other than the automobile.

- There are several public realm recommendations that encourage the conversion of pavement, including street ends and surface parking lots, to parks. In the case of privately-owner paved surfaces, conversion to park is accomplished through City purchase, through a negotiated agreement with property owners, or through the redevelopment approval process.