

Waterfront Plan Work Group Meeting
Wednesday, November 9, 2011
8:00 – 11:15 AM
City Council Work Room

MEMBERS

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 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.

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

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

Lt. Gen. Bob Wood, (Ret.), At-Large Member. Alexandria resident and Business Owner.

CITY STAFF

Faroll **Hamer**, Director, Planning and Zoning (P&Z); James **Banks**, City Attorney; Joanna **Anderson**, Assistant City Attorney; **Karl Moritz**, Deputy Director, 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; Ben **Aiken**, Urban Planner, P&Z; Emily **Baker**, City Engineer, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES); Sandra **Marks**, Chief of Planning, T&ES; Faye **Dastgheib**, Parking Planner, T&ES; Jack **Browand** Acting Deputy Director, Parks Operations, Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs (RPCA); Jennifer **Harris**, Communications Officer, Communications; Sharon **Annear**, Aide to Councilwoman Alicia Hughes.

PUBLIC ATTENDEES (list of those who signed in)

Engin **Artemel**, Gina **Baum**, Christine **Bernstein**, Katy **Cannady**, Susan **Cohen**, Arthur **Fox**, Elizabeth **Gibney**, John **Gosling** (OTCA), Al Kalvaitis (CAAWP) Marguerite **Lang**, Andrew **Macdonald** (CAAWP), Janice **Magnuson**, Kathryn **Papp**, Nina **Randolph**, Leigh **Talbot**, Robert **Taylor**, Hugh **Van Horn**, Sue **Van Horn**, Van **Van Fleet**, Boyd **Walker**, Margaret **Wood**, Mike **Young** (Gemstones).

MEDIA: Sharon **McLoone** (Old Town Alexandria Patch); Patricia **Sullivan** (Washington Post)

I. Opening

- A. **Welcome** - Smedberg convened the meeting at 8:05 AM with a welcome.
- B. **Agenda Overview**
 - 1. Smedberg reviewed the full agenda and noted that there are two additional Work Group meetings scheduled and one tentative meeting:
 - a. Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 5:30 PM, City Hall
 - b. Wednesday, November 30, 2011 at 8:00 AM, City Hall
 - c. Thursday, December 8, 2011 as a tentative meeting if needed for added discussion of the report. The Work Group agreed to this date as the third remaining meeting with a start time of 8:00 AM. Smedberg indicated that he is unable to attend the entire meeting but anticipates participating in part of it.
 - 2. A request was made and the Work Group agreed to move the CAAWP presentation up on the day's agenda from 10:30 AM to 10:15 AM to ensure time for questions and answers.

II. Organizational Items

- A. **Meeting Notes** – Smedberg indicated that the meeting notes for October 26th and November 2nd are included in the day's meeting packet and can be considered for approval at the next meeting.
- B. **Comment Board Summary** – Smedberg noted only one comment on the Comment Board Summary included in the day's meeting packet.
- C. **Updates by Smedberg:**
 - 1. Work Group Status Report – Smedberg will provide City Council with a status report at tonight's City Council Meeting. A copy of the report is included in the day's meeting packet and it is item number 12 on the Council's docket. The purpose of the status report is to update the Council but no action will be taken. Work Group members are not required to attend the meeting but can do so if they so desire.
 - 2. Wayfinding Signs – The City is in the process of installing wayfinding signs for parking with 24 of the 46 signs installed to-date. The old green signs are being removed. The City is on schedule to finish installing the wayfinding signs and will then focus on signage for the garages.
 - 3. Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) Implementation - Many of the recommendations of the OTAPS are underway (for example, multi-space meters, parking hours, pay by phone, looking at obsolete commercial and other zones, etc.); however, the City will begin full implementation in January 2012 utilizing the OTAPS Work Group with the possibility that City Council will consider adding additional members. The City is looking at implementation of this study separately from the Waterfront Plan so it will move ahead with or without the Waterfront Plan.
 - 4. Questions regarding the Updates:
 - a. Is there a metric that City Council is using to determine if the OTAPS implementation process is working? *Staff indicated that while there isn't a specific metric there are a lot of measurements built into the implementation plan. For example, one of the ideas is that there will*

be triggers. Available garage spaces at peak hours now is approximately 700 but as new projects come on line the available space capacity will be counted again and measures will be implemented as needed to create new capacity. If you are at 85% or below capacity you are ok.

- b. *How accurately is capacity being measured? The City has done a manual count of the spaces during peak hours and will continue to monitor the capacity through additional counts as development occurs to ensure that adequate capacity is available. A status report related to parking is being prepared for this Work Group and City Council to let you know where the City is with implementation measures.*
5. Other Work Group Comments
- a. *Is environmental discussion scheduled? Yes; it is included on the November 16th meeting agenda.*
 - b. *Will there be a City analysis of CAAWP? Yes; the City Manager's memorandum in the day's meeting packet includes his request for staff analysis of the CAAWP report.*
 - c. *Will staff provide its response to the CAAWP report? It will be distributed to you and others.*

III. Recommendations

A. Process/Calendar

1. Smedberg explained that the audience does not have the handouts that the Work Group will be utilizing for this part of the discussion; however, the same information will be projected onto the board so that the audience can follow along.
2. Work Group members agreed that the draft recommendations discussed can be expanded and/or modified as needed as the Work Group considers the draft Work Group Report that will be prepared by Wood and Macek.
3. It was noted that the Plan Statements haven't been completed yet but the recommendations discussion can tie back to the statements as a way to help refine the statements.

B. Recommendations – The discussion relating to the following recommendation categories will be documented as part of the Work Group Report.

1. Parking
2. Traffic/Congestion
3. Flood Mitigation

IV. Citizens for an Alternative Alexandria Waterfront Plan Presentation: Andrew Macdonald and Leigh Talbott

CAAWP Co-Chair Andrew Macdonald divided the presentation into two parts. Part 1 consisted of an overview by him of the CAAWP Report highlighting areas of the Waterfront Small Area Plan with which CAAWP disagrees and providing a series of slides reflective of Alexandria and diagrams from the CAAWP Report relating to massing and park amenities.

Part 2 was a presentation from Leigh Talbot, CAAWP, relating to the financial component of the CAAWP Report. This part consisted of a slide presentation and handout. The following points are included by CAAWP in the slide presentation and handout:

- The CAAWP Report presents four alternatives based on the idea to allow the main property owners who are willing sellers to subdivide the parcels. CAAWP indicates this would result in benefits to property owners, the City, developers and small businesses, and residents.
- CAAWP's Report indicates its proposals would help improve tourism revenues and allow existing hotels which are not at maximum occupancy to benefit.
- CAAWP's Report indicates its proposals would boost Alexandria's current hotel occupancy of 70% by eliminating new hotel room development while providing increased cultural, historical and parkland amenities for tourists.
- CAAWP's Report indicates its proposals would increase the amount of historical and cultural amenities along the waterfront as important sources of revenues.
- CAAWP's Report estimates new local revenues and increased tax revenues of over \$23 million and \$800,000 respectively from one museum (10,000 sf).
- CAAWP's Report indicates that the Group has identified multiple funding sources for the acquisition of waterfront land:
 - Municipal Bonds
 - Grants
 - Public-Private Partnerships
 - Private Donors

In response to the presentation, several members of the Work Group raised questions relating to components of the CAAWP Report such as the proposed parking improvements; the notion of sub-dividing parcels; and the financial program. It was suggested that City Staff meet with CAAWP to determine if there are ways to bring their respective park alternatives closer together.

V. **Public Comment Period (Up to 3 minutes per speaker)**

Katy Cannady - Said she attended every public meeting to discuss the Waterfront Plan and at the last one in December 2010 the waterfront restaurant building was still in the plan but it was subsequently removed by the Planning Commission. At the December 2010 community meeting, she indicated she was seated at a table with a gentleman who owns the 2 FAR building (One Prince Street) that faces Waterfront Park across The Strand and he indicated he bought it with the understanding that his employees would be able to look out at park land and the whole idea of a building on Waterfront Park was a problem for him. At the Planning Commission public hearing, there was an office employee who testified how important it is to his daily life to maintain the park as it is. Thinks that is the best testimony in the world as to how valuable the land next to park land is.

Van Van Fleet – Concerned there was no mention of GenOn at today's meeting; it still needs to be in the Waterfront Plan. Indicated the Planner has it in planning's 2013 budget to hire a \$350,000 consultant to look at GenOn so it would be good if the Work Group would include the site in the Waterfront Plan. Sorry that the T&ES Director is not here; he and the Planner are both needed for discussion of parking, circulation and traffic. No discussion of delivery trucks and tour buses. Not true that the City has to go to Richmond to get authority to regulate tour buses. The City's charter notes in two places where the City can regulate the tour buses and they should be taken off the streets in Old Town. Delivery trucks are almost as bad; Alexandria has 18 wheelers but in certain cities in Europe you can't drive anything that is less than 40 feet long to deliver goods. I don't have confidence that we are heading in the right direction in terms of flooding; we need the Corps of Engineers to look at what we are doing.

John Gosling – Can you lay out a road map that explains when a Report will be delivered to the City Council and what opportunity the general public has to give input into this process. Smedberg responded that an update will be given to City Council tonight and the Work Group is on track to submit a Report by mid-December.

VI. **Next Meetings**

1. November 16 at 5:30 PM, City Hall.
2. November 30th at 8:00 AM, City Hall.