ABSTRACT

A Phase I Archaeological Investigation was conducted at Windmill Hill Park within the City of Alexandria, Virginia. Thunderbird Archaeology, a division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc., of Gainesville, Virginia, conducted the investigation for the City of Alexandria, Virginia. The study was initiated in anticipation of planned park improvements of the study area and the concern that significant archaeological resources may be impacted by construction. A documentary study and archaeological evaluation were required under the City of Alexandria Archaeological Protection Code. The archeological investigation followed a Scope of Work approved by Alexandria Archaeology.

The documentary study indicated that the site had a high probability of containing 19th – 20th-century archeological features that could potentially provide significant information about the commercial development on the waterfront in Alexandria. Based on the research, it is likely that remnant 19th-century wharves and a portion of the hulk of the early 19th-century sailing ship Young Hero are preserved below ground surface at the site. Archeological resources associated with mid- 19th century industrial and commercial use of the site and domestic refuse and cultural features associated with later 19th- and early 20th-century domestic use of the site may also be present.

The Phase I archeological investigation included mechanized trench excavation and limited shovel testing within the site at locations determined through consultation with Alexandria Archaeology. The vertical extent of the excavations was generally limited to the depths of proposed impacts and the excavations showed modern (mid to late) 20th century fill across the Park at these depths. No artifacts were recovered and no prehistoric or historic archeological features or living surfaces were identified.

One architectural resource was recorded. Resource 100-0121-1523 represents the Windmill Hill Park Bulkhead, a concrete bulkhead with wood pilings likely constructed in the late 1950s and completed by 1960. The Windmill Hill Park bulkhead is a late example of a concrete bulkhead in poor condition with what appears to be a relieving platform system, which were in use along the East Coast as early as 1900. As such, in our opinion, the Windmill Hill Park Bulkhead lacks integrity and is not individually eligible for listing on the NRHP. Additionally, it does not contribute to the Alexandria Historic District, as it was built decades after the end of the relevant Period of Significance.

No further work is recommended if impacts are limited to vertical extents of the current archeological testing as planned.