

**HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
Tuesday, March 27, 2018

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**PRESENT:**

|                         |                  |                   |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| John Dumsick            | Elizabeth McCall | Danny Smith       |
| Martha Harris           | Maddy McCoy      | Monica St. Dennis |
| Kelly Spradely-Kurowski | Krystyn Moon     | Stephen Stuart    |
| Laura Lieberman         | Keith Moore      | Tracey Tobin      |
| Linda Lovell            | Severiano Ortiz  |                   |

**EXCUSED:**

Melinda Barnes  
Elliot Bell-Krasner  
Jolande Goldberg  
William Hendrickson  
Gail Rothrock  
Nancy Tingen

**ABSENT:**

Stephen Damm  
Shawn Eyer

**CITY STAFF:**

Audrey Davis, OHA  
Nicole Quinn, OHA  
Al Cox, BAR  
Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA

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Note: this HARC meeting was rescheduled from Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> due to weather.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Danny Smith at 7:03 p.m. at Lloyd House.

**Approval of Minutes for February 20, 2018 Meeting**

On a motion by Linda Lovell, seconded by Krystyn Moon, HARC voted to approve the minutes from the January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Approval of Minutes for December 19, 2017 Meeting**

On a motion by Kelly Spradley-Kurowski, seconded by Maddy McCoy, HARC voted to approve the minutes from the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Chairs Updates and Discussions:**

**Freedom House Museum – City Council Action**

Audrey Davis, Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum opened the discussion. In February, more than 500 visitors attended the open house which was held every Saturday. Attendance dropped down in March, which is since people often use their money/resources during Black History Month. OHA has expanded the operating hours from Thursday through Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

Since OHA has been on site, a back door (was in very bad shape) has been replaced, a cleaning service has been provided, a small gift shop has been created, a cash register has been installed, and a new telephone has been set-up.

A formal agreement with the City has not been signed. There are concerns focused on the museum which have led the parties to divide an agreement into two parts: one for the loan and one for the museum. There will be meetings to discuss these issues. The main points of contact have been, Gary Carr, formal liaison between OHA and NOVUL for the museum and Tracey Walker, President of NOVUL.

So far, the museum agreement consists of removing the conference table, furniture, and photographs on the first floor. More exhibits will be installed including a short film. The storage area on the first floor will be expanded, allowing space for conversations. The reflections and Civil War area will be expanded. OHA would like to have access to the front desk where staff can direct visitors upstairs to the Urban League or downstairs to the exhibit. Urban League has requested that OHA staffing hours increase; Tuesday-Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

### Equal Justice Initiative

Equal Justice Initiative is a new museum in Montgomery, Alabama that will officially open on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The museum focuses on the history of lynching in America. Part of this project is to provide historic markers to states who have documented lynching.

Lynching in Alexandria, VA:

Joseph McCoy, 1897 – Cameron St. and Lee St.

Ben Thomas, 1899 – King St. and Fairfax St.

The Equal Justice Initiative has offered Alexandria two markers. EJI would fabricate the as yet unidentified marker and Alexandria would pay for the installations. As part of their proposal, their museum staff will work with communities to write the historic text. Along with historic markers, they would provide jars that the community would use to collect soil from the site of the lynching. These jars will be incorporated in a very powerful exhibit at their museum.

Duke Ellington School of the Arts is very interested in this project, and students from the school will be attending the opening ceremony on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The school has asked to bring a resolution before City Council to officially claim Alexandria's markers. Based on the discussions between Emily Baker and Gretchen Bulova, OHA is not opposed to this idea. Further discussions are needed to figure out the terms and the appropriate time to bring their resolution to City Council.

### Without Sanctuary

'Without Sanctuary' is a photographic exhibit which was created at the Levine Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina in the early 2000's. The extremely graphic photographs portray the American lynching culture. Audrey Davis believes the Equal Justice Initiative and the Without Sanctuary exhibit should be analyzed as we expand upon Freedom House Museum.

Danny Smith introduced Severiano Ortiz and Monica St. Dennis and welcomed them to HARC.

**Brief Descriptions of Represented Organizations:**

**Christ Church – Keith Moore**

Keith Moore opened the discussion, explaining the ongoing debate over relocating the historic plaques honoring George Washington and Robert E. Lee from the worship space of Christ Church. Keith Moore presented photos of the plaques and where they are located in relation to the room. The altar is in the center of the room and the plaques are located off to the right next to one another. He is not aware of any particular reasoning behind the manner of which they were placed. Moore believes that the positioning of these plaques is due to a spacial issue; the sanctuary is a small space. Recently, the congregation voted on this problem: 1/3 voted on removing the plaques, 1/3 wanted to keep them, and 1/3 remained neutral. He believes the plaques will most likely be taken down.

Danny Smith notes this is a topic HARC has discussed in the past, but they have decided to not weigh in on this matter. This issue must be handled within Christ Church.

**Interim Park at Zero King Street – Waterfront History Plan Element**

Danny Smith reminded HARC that Gretchen Bulova will be using the OHA budget supplement of \$25,000 for public programming at Interim Park at Zero King Street. As of now, no specific historic marker or object has been decided on. There are still ongoing discussions about this topic. There is a possibility money will come from elsewhere and be directed towards a historic element.

Elizabeth McCall explained that based on her conversation with Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager, any historic structural element would have to be later removed since the park is interim. Most of the installations will be considered temporary. HARC members agreed that although interim, the park could in fact remain for a considerable amount of time. In that case, something more substantial than programming would be needed.

Al Cox informed HARC that King Street, Interim Park does have a large kiosk like the one in front of City Hall. There is an opportunity to add an interpretive panel. Al Cox agreed that interim can take on different meanings, but feels it is not logical to install something permanent at this time. The Deputy Director of Project Implementation has agreed to hiring a professional who would coordinate the implementation of the Waterfront History Plan elements along the waterfront.

Al Cox added that the Old Dominion Boat Club currently has three blank windows that are intended for historic interpretation. One for the Boat Club. One about the waterfront. One about shipbuilding. The Old Dominion Boat Club will pay for the panels and their installation.

Martha Harris expressed that she is not satisfied with the outcome of Interim Park at Zero King Street. She explained that there is no clear decision-making process. Starting a campaign of letters and complaints to City Council is one way to ensure the installation of a substantial historical element. Harris is concerned about the lack of interest among HARC members concerning this matter.

Danny Smith disagreed, referring to the Waterfront History Plan that was created and the letter that was sent to City Council on behalf of HARC requesting a historical structure be implemented at the interim park. Elizabeth McCall suggested that there is not enough transparency with the city regarding the waterfront history planning and implementation process. This project ultimately comes down to when money is available, and not how much people care.

Elizabeth McCall urged HARC members to record volunteer hours. Not just time spent at meetings, but any work done for the commission.

### **Providence Sloop and its Birthing – City Allocation**

Danny Smith brought attention to Scott Shaw, principal of Alexandria Restaurant Partners who has been the leading force behind the tall ship Providence. Elizabeth McCall added that the city has allocated about \$395,000 for rehabilitation of the pier and the ship will be birthed at the Waterfront Park.

### **Pioneer Mills Foundation Stones – Ownership and Future**

Al Cox is waiting for a geologist report on the probable source of the Pioneer Mills Foundation Stones. About 100 of the stones are currently being stored at Alexandria Union Station. Twice that many are ebbing used temporarily as part of the waterfront bulkhead near Point Lumley, and will be incorporated into the design of ETH waterfront pathways. Keith Moore brought up the idea of selling the stones. Linda Lovell noted that the Office of Archaeology frowns upon selling artifacts. Al Cox notes that possibilities are still being discussed on how to use these stones.

Danny Smith inquired about the recent ships that were discovered. Elizabeth McCall reported that two more ships have been found at Robinson Terminal Site. They are portions of ships and they are believed to be part of the bank-out, but further excavation is required. They are still deep in the ground and not in a convenient spot for viewing. An interim decision will most likely be made (similar to the Indigo ship) until enough money can be raised/saved for conservation.

### **Harry Nice Bridge – Route 301 Over the Potomac River**

Danny Smith opened the discussion. He explained there are plans to replace the Harry Nice Bridge, which is very high and allows tall ships like the Providence Sloop to pass underneath. Elizabeth McCall referred to a letter that Mayor Silberberg sent to Governor Hogan of Maryland and Mayor Muriel Bowser of DC regarding the bridge. In the letter, she addressed the importance of keeping the new bridge at its current height to allow tall ships to pass under and make their way to Alexandria and Washington D.C. Governor Hogan responded and acknowledged Mayor Silberberg's concerns. He confirmed the new bridge will not be any lower than the current.

### **National Trust for Historic Preservation - Historic Museum Sustainability**

Martha Harris opened the discussion. She responded to the National Trust for Historic Preservation with a letter based off the input of HARC members who were present at the meeting. Gretchen Bulova has become the point of contact and has stated they will meet again sometime in late April. Martha Harris notes that issues like easements and other topics separate from OHA can be pursued and addressed by HARC members.

## **420 South Lee – Result of Appeal to City Council**

Danny Smith reports on HARC's success on convincing City Council to support the decision of BAR on the non-compliance of the easement at 420 South Lee Street. The owner has been told he needs to comply with the agreement he made back in 2012. The owner must replace the cast iron fence in the front yard and the pedestrian walkway should be reduced to a width of about six feet.

Al Cox elaborated that the BAR approved a Victorian cast iron fence based on the 1930s era photograph of the original fence. This wicked spear style fence will go along with the 1871 façade of the house and is historically appropriate. The owner has disclosed the fence will be custom made in Georgia and will be installed in April.

Elizabeth McCall inquired about the 402 South Pitt Street issue. Al Cox explained that the owners have moved out and are renting the property. They have until May 18<sup>th</sup> to remove the paint.

## **Combined Sewer System**

John Dumsick opened the discussion on the combined sewer system. John attended his first meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Three options were evaluated:

### **Option A:**

A separate tunnel system for each side of the affected areas. One would collect material in an underground storage tank until river reduced in height. This would require a 10-15 ft. diameter pipe and be installed about 100 feet below the surface. Option A is a non-uniform tunnel; two separate tunnels. One of the west end and one the eastern side.

### **Option B:**

A unified tunnel-system which would save money. It would resemble a U shape and would not require a second wet weather water treatment facility. This option was selected.

### **Option C:**

Not selected, mainly due to high costs. This would entail a tunnel and large containment tank under Oronoco Bay.

These holding tanks would store overflow until the Alexandria Renew treatment plant can process the storm-water, rather than release into the Potomac River. The project will cost between at least \$300-500 million, although no engineering designs have been drawn up upon which to make accurate estimates the cheapest and most logical option was Option B. Designers will increase the tunnel-diameters to account for the possibility of greater overflow in the future.

## **Effects of drilling:**

To create the tunnel, they will have to excavate a hole about 100 feet deep, then bring in a boring machine to drill horizontally. There will be a few different shafts around the city; two in Old Town. They will be positioned at intersections, but it has not been revealed which intersections. HARC can suggest drilling points where there is an absence of historic elements. John Dumsick confirmed that the city has acknowledged the 106 Process and they have agreed to actively monitor the drilling sites. These designs are still conceptual plans and nothing has been confirmed.

Future dates:

- 4/5 LTCPU public meeting
- 4/10 City Council Legislative meeting
- 4/14 City council public hearing
- 4/17 AlexRenew board meeting
- 4/23 LTCPU public comment period ends
- 4/24 City council legislative meeting.

### **Ramsey Homes – Preservation of a Panel**

The key issue is to preserve a piece of the building and set aside the material for future interpretation.

Al Cox confirmed a vertical wall panel and a floor panel would be a viable option. There is no demolition time frame yet, but John Dumsick and himself will be monitoring the site as demolition occurs. Al Cox has already taken 200-300 photographs for the 3D interactive model. Elizabeth McCall confirmed the materials will most likely be stored in the Car Barn. Gretchen is trying to coordinate with Parks and Recs or TES to provide a flatbed truck for transportation of materials.

## **Standing Sub-Committee Reports**

### **OHA and Planning Support**

Linda Lovell presented:

Committee met on March 12<sup>th</sup>, working with a list of issues furnished by Acting Director Bulova. Decided our mission and focus is to assist OHA and its staff with a variety of issues. In order to narrow this focus, we feel we need the following information:

An Organizational Chart of the staff of the various OHA historic sites.

Which City Administrator directly oversees OHA?

Is City Historian Dan Lee part of OHA or does he report directly to a City Administrator?

Which historic sites have active Friend's Groups and are they active on social media?

How active is OHA on social media? Being a City department, can they have separate branding? In other words, how do we raise OHA's visibility in the community?

One of the main issues is fundraising. The city has approved a development position but has not funded the position.

Would it make sense to focus on a single project? Hire an individual temporarily to search for grant money for that specific need.

The next committee meeting is schedule for Monday, April 9, at La Madeline's at 5:30pm.

**Action Item:** Laura Lieberman will put together a packet of OHA's historic sites and their staff/volunteer members.

## **Educational Outreach**

John Dumsick presented:

The Educational Outreach Committee is working on defining their mission. They acknowledge there is a need for a preservation/easement workshop.

Elizabeth McCall expresses the expertise is not only among HARC members, but within the organizations that HARC represents. Some of the individual organizations have staff that can lead educational programs and host individual workshops. This should be a year-round initiative, not just for Preservation Month in May. Also, there are professionals in the community that can help; there is a lot of expertise in Alexandria.

## **OHA Report**

Nicole Quinn presented on behalf of Gretchen Bulova:

Spring to Action: April 25th - 24-hour day of giving.

Historic Preservation Month in May – educational and fun programs planned.

May 3<sup>rd</sup> - Panel discussion for preservation tools.

May 10th – Open House/Happy Hour at Murray-Dick Fawcett House.

May 19<sup>th</sup> – Workshop on how to remove paint from masonry.

WWI Commemoration – Final commemoration on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Strategic Plan – Currently revising mission/value statement. Draft will be completed by June.

The Lyceum has acquired a portrait of tavern keeper, Richard Arrell.

## **Commissioner Updates**

Krystyn Moon:

March 28<sup>th</sup> - Alexandria Historical Society lecture at the Lyceum, Ramsey's Ledger Books given by Dr. Nancy Davis.

Kelly Spradley-Kurowski – Old Town Civic Association

Alexandria City applied for grant money with the National Park Service's Maritime Grant Program which would be used towards the Indigo Ship. The programs is still reviewing applications and Kelly Spradley-Kurowski will report back with further information.

Linda Lovell – Mortar & Pestle Society

Attics and Alleys tour in May. There will be only one tour each Saturday starting at 9 a.m. Only twelve tickets will be available.

Laura Lieberman – Lee Fendall House

Easter Egg Hunt has sold out at the Lee Fendall House.

April 14<sup>th</sup> – Food historian lecture on the history of chocolate.

April 19<sup>th</sup> – Spring to Action, Happy Hour at Light Horse Tavern.

May - Garden Party in honor of the Royal Wedding.

John Dumsick – Carlyle House

April 21<sup>st</sup> - Garden and Herb Sale at the Carlyle House.

May 5<sup>th</sup> - Chocolate and Wine Event at the Carlyle House

John Dumsick – Historic Alexandria Foundation

A new slate roof will be installed on the Alexandria Academy.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA Staff to the Commission