

**HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
Tuesday, December ~~18~~16, 2018

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**PRESENT:**

Alan Chodos  
John Dumsick  
Shawn Eyer  
Jolande Goldberg  
Martha Harris

Bill Hendrickson  
Laura Lieberman  
Linda Lovell  
Elizabeth McCall  
Maddy McCoy

Gail Rothrock  
Monica St. Dennis  
Danny Smith  
Stephen Stuart  
Nancy Tingen  
Tobin Tracey

**EXCUSED:** Keith Moore, Kelly Spradley-Kurowski

**ABSENT:** Melinda Barnes, Severiano Ortiz

**GUESTS:**

Allison Silberberg, Mayor  
Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker, Vice Mayor-elect  
Amy B. Jackson, Councilwoman-elect  
Mohamed E. “Mo” Seifeldein, Councilman-elect  
Ahmed Akari  
Nancy Kegan Smith  
Larry Goldberg  
Rob Taylor

**CITY STAFF:**

Gretchen Bulova, OHA  
Al Cox, BAR  
Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McCall at 7:05 p.m. at Lloyd House.

**Approval of Minutes for November 13, 2018 Meeting**

Approval of November 13, 2018 minutes postponed until January 2019 meeting.

**Naming of the Interim Park at the Foot of King Street**

Waterfront Park has been accepted as the official name.

Statement from Mayor Allison Silberberg thanking HARC Commission and OHA staff.

**Response from VDHR - 619 South Lee Street**

Danny Smith opened the discussion, recognizing the Advocacy Committee for keeping HARC informed about the easement on 619 South Lee Street. A letter was sent to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources regarding the following points:

1. The VDHR has given the owners preliminary approval for changes to the property which HARC believes are inconsistent with the State's Open Space Act and the easement held on the house.
2. HARC has requested an official easement notification process between the State and the City of Alexandria.

VDHR replied and extended an invitation to discuss these issues. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources holds this particular easement. Al Cox reminded HARC that the BAR has no jurisdiction over this easement. The agreement is between the VDHR and the property owners. Cox invited HARC members to attend the BAR meeting on December 19, 2018 but comments should be confined to design guidelines and zoning ordinance. Danny Smith volunteered to attend and speak on behalf of HARC.

### **219 King Street (addition to the agenda)**

219 King Street is the location of Two Nineteen Restaurant. They have proposed two renovations to their building:

- An upper level dining deck adjacent to the Visitor Center's garden. The deck would be highly visible from King Street.
- Replace their current entrance with a large glass façade.

The Advocacy Committee prepared a draft letter (which was circulated to HARC members prior to the meeting) objecting to the proposed renovations.

On a motion by, Martha Harris seconded by Gail Rothrock, HARC voted to approve the letter drafted by the Advocacy Committee with minor modifications. (The Alexandria Garden Club and the HAF will also be submitting letters.) The letter was approved. Key issues:

1. Highly visible deck overlooking the city street.
2. Neither addition is consistent with the design guidelines.
3. Renovations will affect the Visitor's Center and the neighborhood.

Elizabeth McCall advises that the language should express support for businesses. Martha Harris is not opposed to minor modifications but, believes the first paragraph is positive and effective as is. Mayor Silberberg informed HARC that due to their live music (offered seven nights week) there have been multiple noise ordinance complaints from residents. Al Cox stated the BAR does not review a project until it has been approved and it is legal. BAR only reviews the design of the building. Cox indicated the modifications could highlight the garden; increasing safety and appreciation. Overall, HARC feels the additions should be more compatible to the surrounding architecture and historic fabric of Old Town.

### **Alexandria Renew - Combined Sewer Outfall Project**

Elizabeth McCall opened the discussion. A letter has been sent to Alexandria Renew regarding their Combined Sewer System Stakeholder Group. Alexandria Archaeology and other organizations have been part of the consultation process up until recently. HARC and the Archaeology Department should be involved with the advising and monitoring of the project. Alexandria Renew responded to the letter stating the stakeholder group is not meant to be HARC's exclusive source of input. HARC and Archaeology will be consulted separately. This does not impede individual members from applying for slots in the stakeholder's group. HARC will continue to monitor the situation.

## **Freedom House Status**

Gretchen Bulova reported on the status of Urban League/Freedom House Museum. The term of the loan from the city expired on November 30, 2018. OHA will continue to support the museum until December of 2019. A follow-up memorandum is in negotiation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation requires that their grant to be used for a business plan moving forward. There are plans to create a sustainable African American Cultural Heritage Organization. Bulova envisions three different paths for Freedom House. Hopefully, the final product will be complete within 6-8 months. The building has multiple easements. Alexandria City has already put significant financial resources into the building; they have a vested interest in the site/museum. Mayor Silberberg reminded HARC that Urban League's mission is to support educational programs and to create opportunities for the African American youth. They're also stewards of the historic building. An assessment has been completed. The building needs about 3 million dollars of renovations over the next ten years.

## **OHA Report**

OHA report given by Gretchen Bulova. The budget process has been submitted. The City Manager has made historic preservation initiatives a priority.

Goals for 2019:

- 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day, June 1<sup>st</sup>. Partnership with Caen, Sister City and Visit Alexandria. There will be programming on the waterfront.
- All museum signage is uniform. Upgrades have already been made to The Lyceum.
- More wayfinding signs.
- Building preservation is a top priority; studies will be performed.
- Deal with HVAC issues in the department.
- Building renovations.
- Partnership opportunities; reaching out to community partners. For example, NOVA is helping with Freedom House Museum; creating an introductory video.

## **Standing Sub-Committee Reports**

### **OHA and Planning Support**

The sub-committee met on December 10, 2018. Present were Linda Lovell, Laura Lieberman, and Steve Stuart. The binder being prepared for new members was reviewed. The sub-committee thanked all HARC members who helped review the contents. Additionally, concerns that may arise in 2019 were discussed (e.g., summer closure of the King Street Metro and its effect on the OHA museums and historic sites). The sub-committee suggested that HARC invite Visit Alexandria (a member of HARC, but with no current representative) to address any preparations they are making for this summer's closure. Although Carlyle House and the Torpedo Factory do not fall under the OHA and Planning Support sub-committee, HARC should discuss the future of both in the early meetings of 2019. Next meeting will be held on January 14, 2019 at Misha's Coffeehouse. Note: Misha's will soon move to a new location on Union Street.

## **Commissioner Updates**

John Dumsick – Carlyle House

- Halloween Programming – outstanding, high visitation.
- Largest sector of growth in 2018 has been with younger members. Younger people have been attending events.

- Scottish Walk Open House – visitation could have been better; probably due to bad weather.
- Currently undergoing re-accreditation with the American Alliance of Museums. They will visit mid-March.

Maddy McCoy informed HARC that she has completed her enslaved persons research at Carlyle House. Tickets for Black History Month's – Enslaved Tours are now on sale.

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- Candle Light Tour's visitation was unusually low. Linda Lovell noted that there has been a steady drop in attendance over the years.
- Reminded HARC to review the orientation packet and submit changes.

Bill Hendrickson – Planning District 2

Smithsonian's American History Museum has hired a new director. The chief executive of the California Historical Society, Anthea M. Hartig is a historic preservationist. HARC should make contact; possibly invite Hartig to speak on the preservation challenges in Alexandria.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA Staff to the Commission  
Approved January 15, 2019