



Alexandria Waterfront

Small Area Plan | June 11, 2011

The 10 Changes to the Plan

- **Added hotel/restaurant policy**
- **No Waterfront Park building**
- **Restaurant square footage**
- **Boutique hotels**
- **Hotel parking ratio**
- **Pier design flexibility**
- **Stronger history text**
- **Rivergate/Oronoco Bay Parks**
- **Sheetmetal Workers Building**
- **Cost and revenue updated**

Planning & Zoning

Page updated Jun 3 2011 6:09 p.m.

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27 Comments | Last Comment: June 1, 2011 - 11:50 PM

Waterfront Small Area Plan

Alexandria City Council will hold a work session on Saturday, June 11, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss the City's Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan. The Plan provides a framework for the future of the waterfront that reflects the City's heritage and enhances the waterfront as a distinctive destination.

The Department of Planning and Zoning is pleased to inform the public that staff responses to City Council Questions from its May 14, 2011 Waterfront Small Area Plan Public Hearing are available. [Download the materials.](#)

Core Documents

These three "Core Documents" form the current version of the Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan now before the City Council.

- [Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan Released February 25, 2011](#) *(The separate chapters of the plan may be accessed below)*
- [Supplemental material to the draft plan March 2011](#)
- [Guide to Recommended Changes for the Waterfront Small Area Plan May 6, 2011](#)

Most Visited Waterfront Plan Web Links



"What's New in Alexandria," featuring the Waterfront Draft Small Area Plan.

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- **Council Questions & Answers**
 - **Parking**
 - **Flooding**
 - **Restaurant & Hotel Policy**
 - **Parks & Open Space**
 - **History & Art**
 - **Implementation**
 - **Current Zoning, Proposed Zoning & Community Benefits**

- **Plan Alternatives**
 - **Planning Commission Recommendation**
 - **Alternative 1: Park & Cultural Emphasis**
 - **Alternative 2: Current Zoning, No SUP**
 - **Alternative 3: Current Zoning, with SUP**

- **Approvable now: 640,000 square feet**

| Site | Currently Allowed (sf) | FAR | Proposed (sf) | FAR | Change |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|
| Robinson Terminal North | 195,296 | 1.38 | 238,816 | 1.69 | 43,520 |
| Robinson Terminal South | 327,393 | 2.0 | 380,529 | 2.32 | 53,136 |
| Cummings – Turner Block | 124,760 | 2.0 | 187,140 | 3.0 | 62,380 |
| Totals | 647,449 | | 806,485 | | 159,036 |

- **housing: 400,000 sf in more than 250 units**
- **plus commercial: 240,000 sf (office, retail, restaurant)**
- **No limit on restaurants**

Current Zoning



+



Saul Center

1 ½ Porto Vecchios

+



2 Chart Houses

- **No new revenue:**
 - for construction of flood control
 - to construct Point Lumley park
 - for bulkhead repair and shoreline
 - for history center or art walk
- **Can't require restoration of, access to, historic buildings**
- **No direction on reuse of Beachcomber**
- **No new pleasure boat marina**
- **No permanent berth for a ship of character**
- **No specific waterfront development standards**
- **No new hotel/restaurant policy**
- **No increase in ability to clean up after storms**

- **Approvable now: 640,000 square feet**

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- **FAR limits aren't enough control over Waterfront development**



Harborside is a 1.2 FAR



Abingdon Row is a 1.2 FAR



The Prescott is a 1.2 FAR



The Lorien Hotel is a 2.5 FAR



Chatham Square is a 2.3 FAR



The Saul Center is a 2.5 FAR



Strand Building: effective 3.5 FAR

The Waterfront Plan calls for the 3 development sites to:

- **Construct and maintain major new parks on site**
- **Contribute to off-site improvements such as parks and buildings for recreation to showcase Alexandria's history and culture**
- **Implement the Waterfront History Plan, including preservation and restoration of all historic buildings**
- **Implement the Art Walk**
- **Provide exceptional site and building design**
- **Improve the environment, including a restored shoreline**

The Waterfront Plan strengthens the development review process to ensure that plan goals are met.

- *Development goals and guidelines* that would be added to W-1 zone: land uses, parking, architecture, site design, streetscape, public spaces, historic preservation, public art.
- *A hotel/restaurant/commercial uses policy* to ensure that the SUP process addresses all neighborhood impacts: traffic, parking, noise, loading, trash, and cumulative impacts.

With each small area plan, the City has exacted more of the value created by additional density:

- **Developer contributions in small area plans:**
 - **Braddock: up to \$9/sf**
 - **Landmark/Van Dorn: up to \$20/sf**
 - **North Potomac Yard: over \$28/sf**

Current & Proposed Zoning: Heights

- Heights over 30 feet require an SUP

| Block | Current Zoning Heights | Proposed Zoning Heights |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Robinson Terminal North | 30, 45, and 55 feet | 30, 45, and 66 feet |
| Robinson Terminal South | 50 feet | 50 feet |
| Cummings/Turner | 50 feet | 50 feet |



***Planned height modification
(55 feet to 66 feet with SUP)***



**Planning Commission
Recommendation**



Alternative 1: Parks and Museums



**Alternative 2: Current Zoning without
SUP**



**Alternative 3: Current Zoning with
SUP**

Planning Commission Recommendation



- **Concept:** private development compatible with active and public waterfront; high expectations for contributions to public amenities
- **Level of design control:** high
- **Level of amenity expectation:** high, detailed
- **Level of private sector contribution:** highest
- **Land uses:** hotel (40%), residential (40%), other (20%).
Active ground floor uses in key locations.
- **Max densities:** RTN: 1.69; RTS: 2.32; C/T: 3.0
- **Heights:** RTS and C/T: 50 feet; RTN: 30-45-66 feet
- **Architecture:** Inspired by 18th/19th Century Alexandria waterfront

- **Cost of Plan: \$51.0 million**
 - \$43m: plan elements
 - \$6.5m: flood control
- **What's changed:**
 - \$5.5m: Windmill Hill Park
 - -\$2m: Shorter piers
 - \$0.25m: Public art*

- **Tax revenues: \$3.8 million/yr**
- **What's changed:**
 - Eliminated Waterfront Park building
 - Reduced restaurant expectation to 55,000 sf
 - Reduced hotel rooms to 450 (3x150)

- **Revenues exceed costs in year 25**

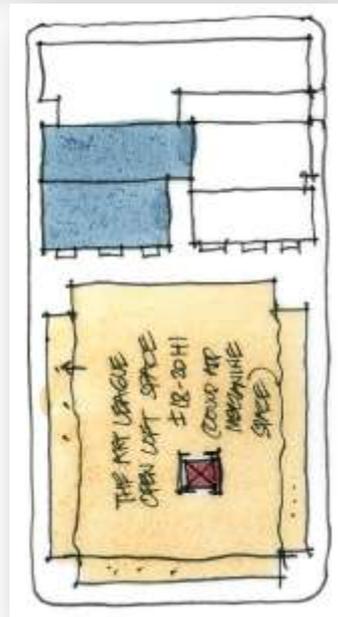
* requested by Arts Commission after Planning Commission hearing

Alt 1: Parks and Museums



**Robinson
Terminal
North**

**Cummings/
Turner**



**Robinson
Terminal
South**

- **Concept:** Parkland and civic/cultural uses
- **Level of design control:** high
- **Level of amenity expectation:** flexible
- **Level of private sector contribution:** none
- **Land uses:** 4.75 acres parkland; 170,000 sf cultural institutions
- **Max densities:** RTN: 1.38; RTS: 2.0; C/T: 2.0
- **Heights:** RTS and C/T: 50 feet; RTN: 55 feet

- **Cost of Plan: \$220 million**
 - \$43m: plan elements
 - \$6.5m: flood control
 - \$150m: added parks, etc.
- **What's added:**
 - \$55m: new parks
 - \$20m: history center
 - \$53m: performing arts center
 - \$22m: private cultural inst.

- **Tax revenues: \$164,000/yr**
- **What's included:**
 - Beachcomber
 - Property tax on private cultural institutions

- **Revenues insufficient to support costs**

Alt 2: Current Zoning, no SUP



- **Concept:** low density option under current zoning
- **Level of design control:** low
- **Level of amenity expectation:** low
- **Level of private sector contribution:** low
- **Land uses:** Townhouses or mixed use
- **Densities:** RTN & RTS: 1.0; C/T: 1.25
- **Heights:** 30 feet

- **Cost of Plan: \$51.0 million**
 - \$43m: plan elements
 - \$6.5m: flood control
- Same as Planning Commission recommendation

- **Tax revenues: \$977,000/yr**
- **What's included:**
 - Sales and meals tax on small amount of retail/restaurant
 - Property tax on private development

- **Revenues insufficient to support costs**

Alt 3: Current Zoning with SUP



- **Concept:** maximize density with current zoning
- **Level of design control:** medium
- **Level of amenity expectation:** medium
- **Level of private sector contribution:** limited
- **Land uses:** Taller townhouses or mixed use with retail/restaurant
- **Densities:** RTN: 1.38; RTS and C/T: 2.0
- **Heights:** 50 feet

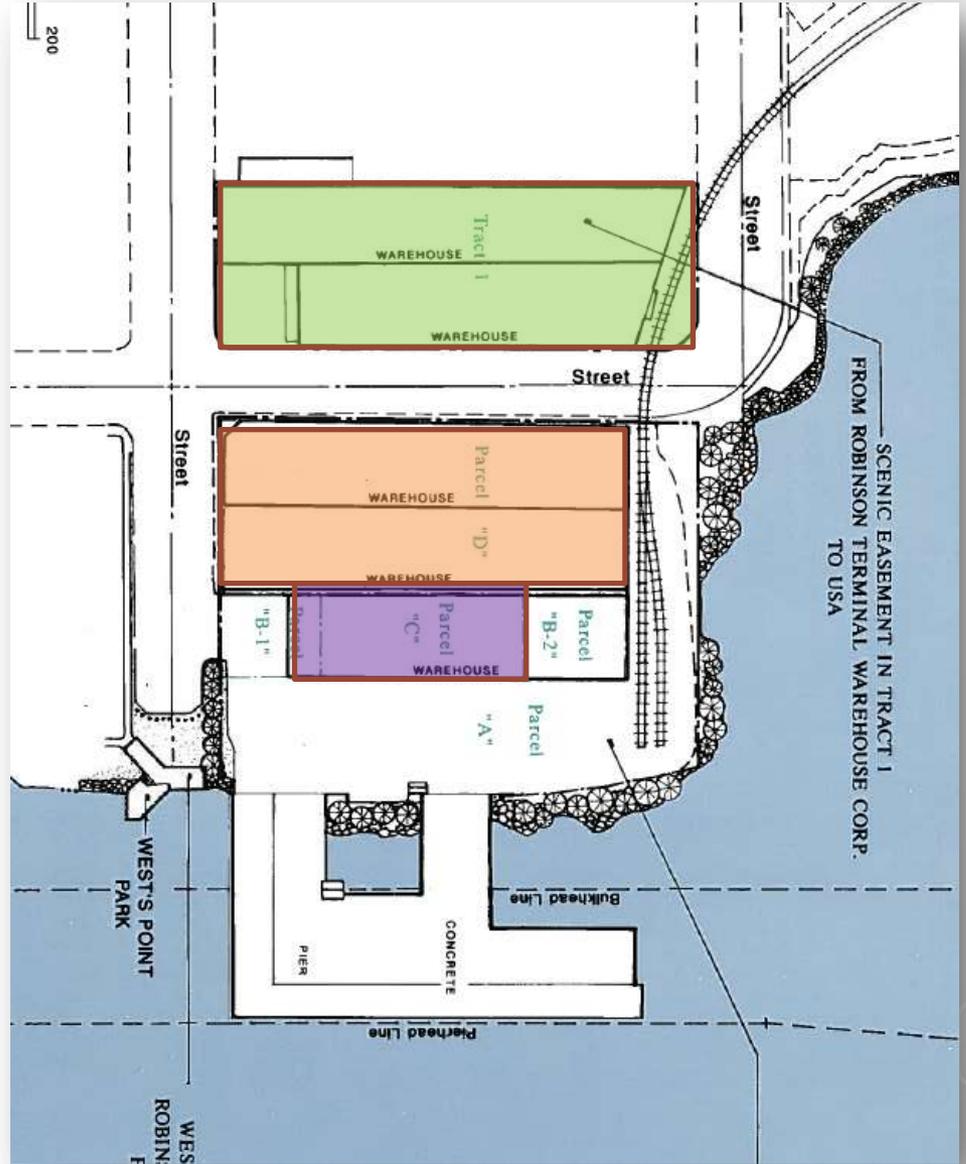
- **Cost of Plan: \$51.0 million**
 - \$43m: plan elements
 - \$6.5m: flood control
- Same as Planning Commission recommendation

- **Tax revenues: \$1.5 million/yr**
- **What's included:**
 - Sales and meals tax on small amount of retail/restaurant
 - Property tax on private development

- **Revenues insufficient to support costs**

Alternatives by Site

Robinson Terminal North



Robinson Terminal North



Planning Commission recommendation

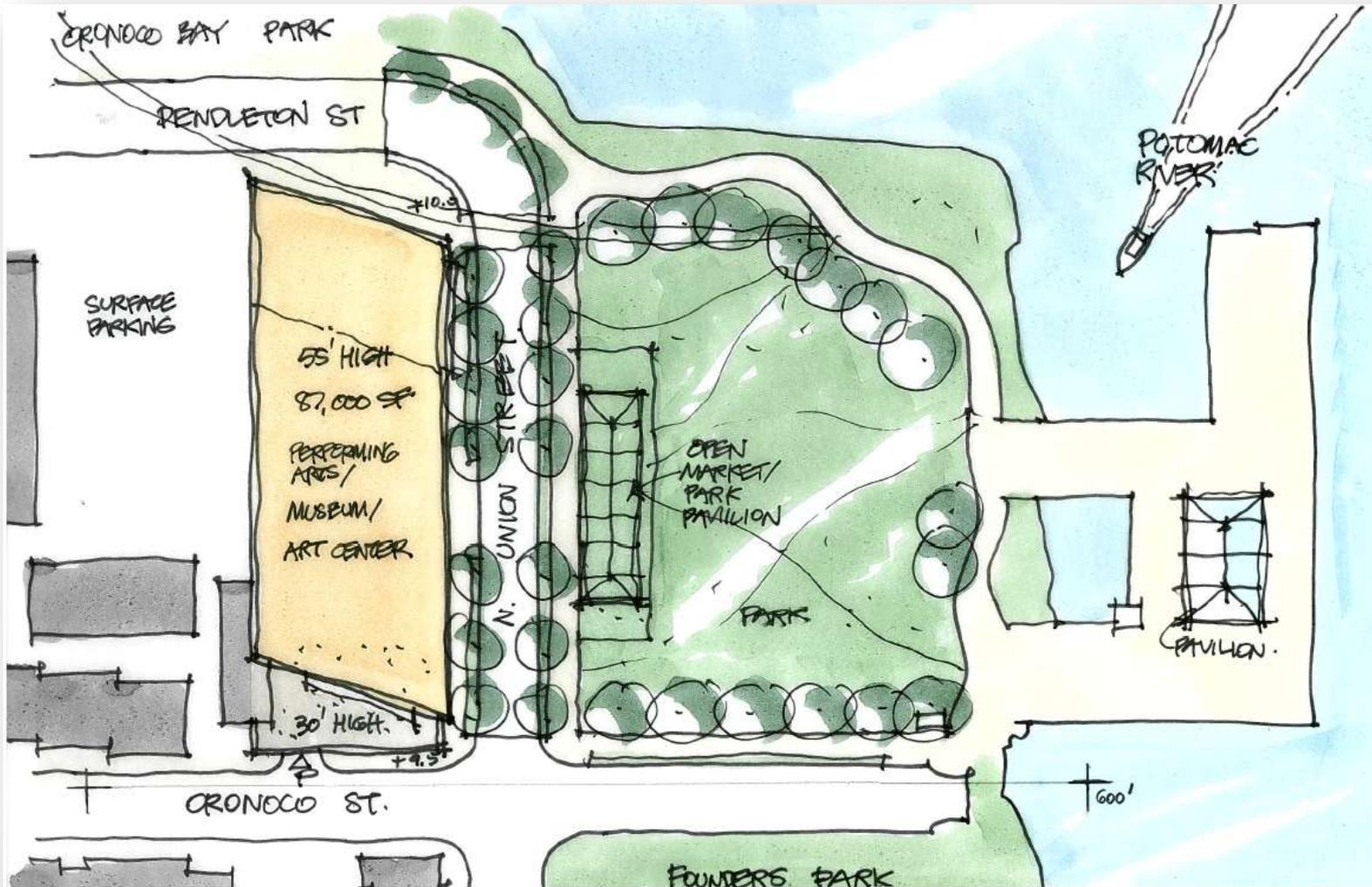
Features:

- 150 (or less) room hotel east of Union
- 131 housing units west of Union
- Parking on site, below grade
- Extensive investment in public space, connecting parks, streetscape, shoreline, history, and public art



Planning Commission recommendation

Robinson Terminal North

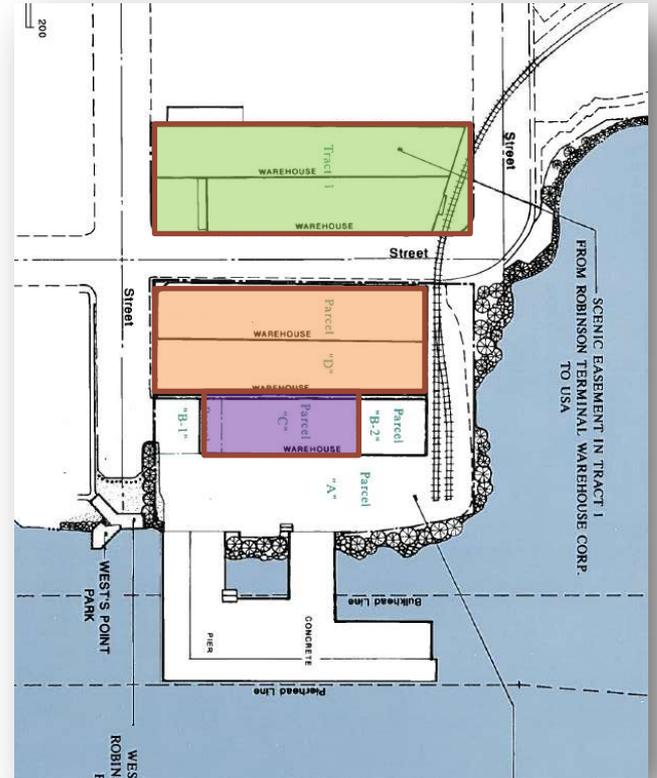
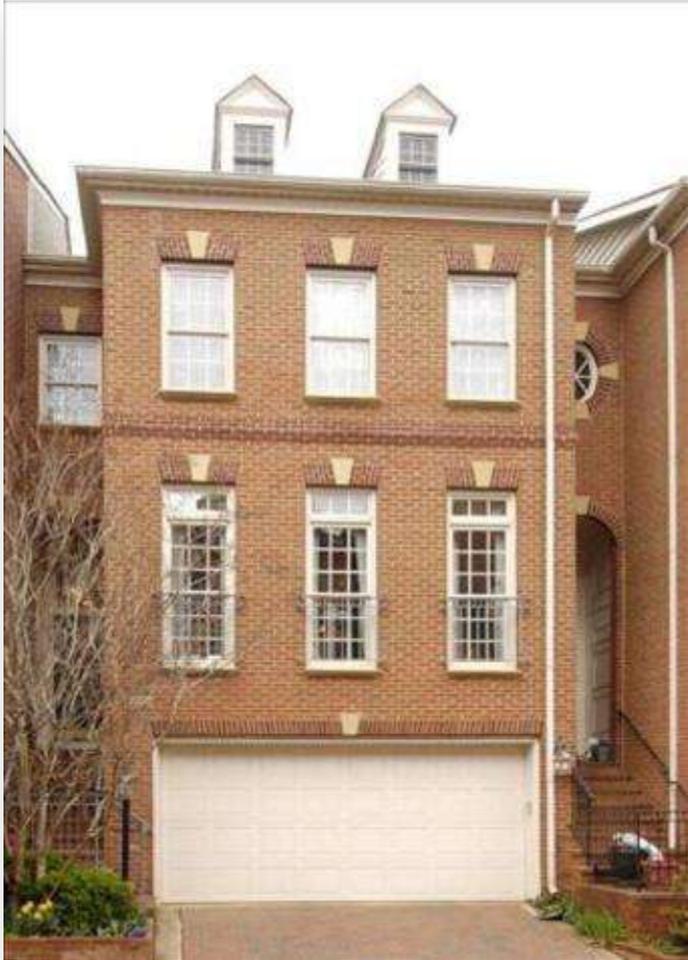


Alt 1: Parks and museums

Features:

- Purchase land from Robinson Terminal: \$14m*
- Demolish structures: \$500K
- Rehabilitate shoreline, construct passive park on east parcel, stabilize pier: \$3.5 million
- Performing arts center or museum on west parcel
 - Interstitial parking
 - 87,000 sf (2.0 FAR): \$46m
 - 32,640 sf (.75 FAR): \$19m
- Additional cost over Plan: \$37m - \$63m

Robinson Terminal North



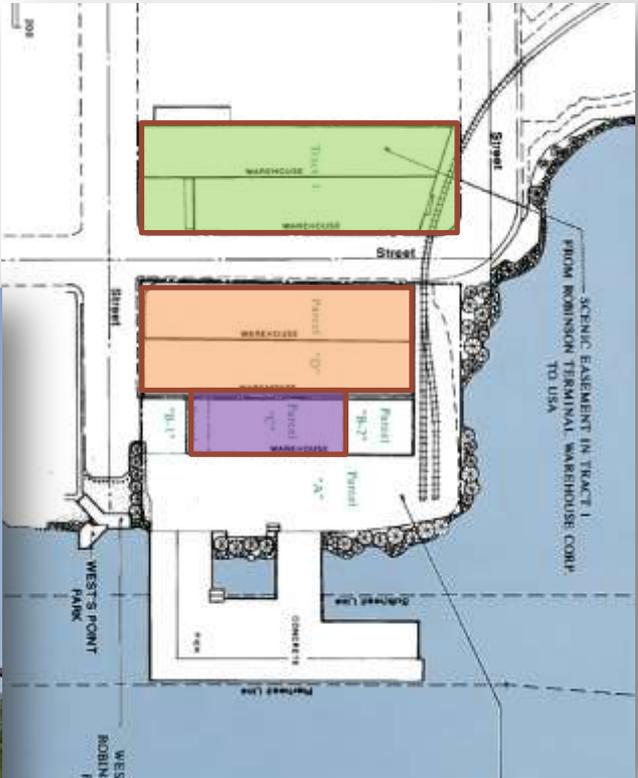
Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Features:

- 1.0 FAR
- 30 foot height limit
- 3 story garage townhouses
- Dedication of minimum shoreline pathway
- Pathway, shoreline not required
- Future of pier uncertain
 - Too expensive to improve
 - Not compatible with residential
 - Not likely to be available for ships, etc.
- Not subject to BAR review

Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Robinson Terminal North



Alt 3: Current zoning with SUP

Features:

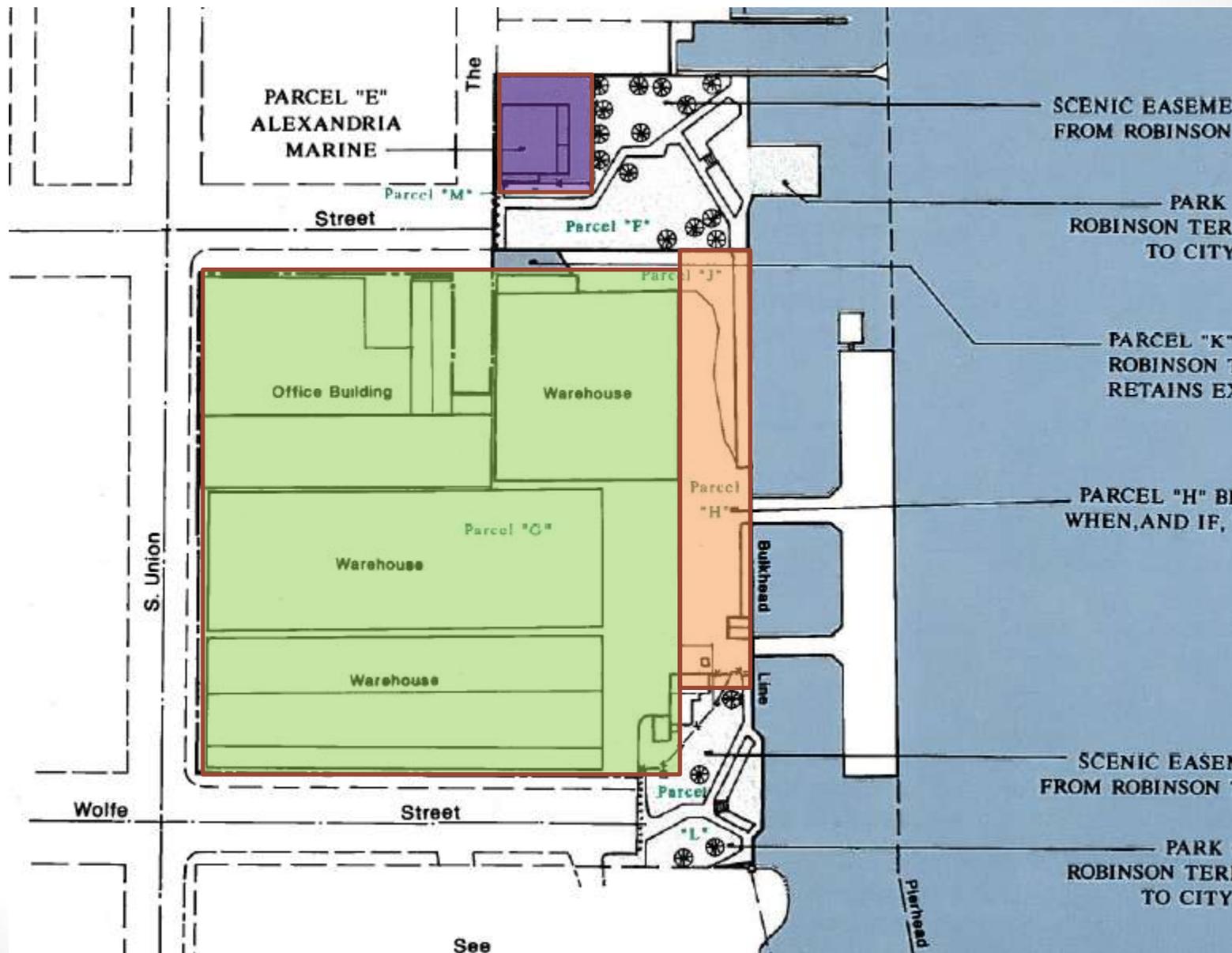
- **2.0 FAR**
- **30, 45, and 55 foot height limits**
- **Mixed use with retail or 3-5 story garage townhouses**
- **SUP process would likely result in higher level of investment in pathway, shoreline, streetscape**
- **Future of pier uncertain**
 - **Expensive to improve**
 - **Not compatible with residential**
 - **Not likely to be available for ships, etc.**
- **Not subject to BAR review**

Alt 2: Current zoning, with SUP

Robinson Terminal South



Robinson Terminal South



Robinson Terminal South



Planning Commission recommendation

Features:

- 150 (or less) room hotel facing park and water
- 180 housing units facing Union and Wolfe
- Ground floor retail facing park and Duke
- Parking on site, below grade
- “Porous” design adding public streets, alleys
- Extensive investment in public spaces, connecting parks, streetscape, shoreline, history, and public art; marina



Planning Commission recommendation

Robinson Terminal South



Alt 1: Parks and museums

Robinson Terminal South

Features:

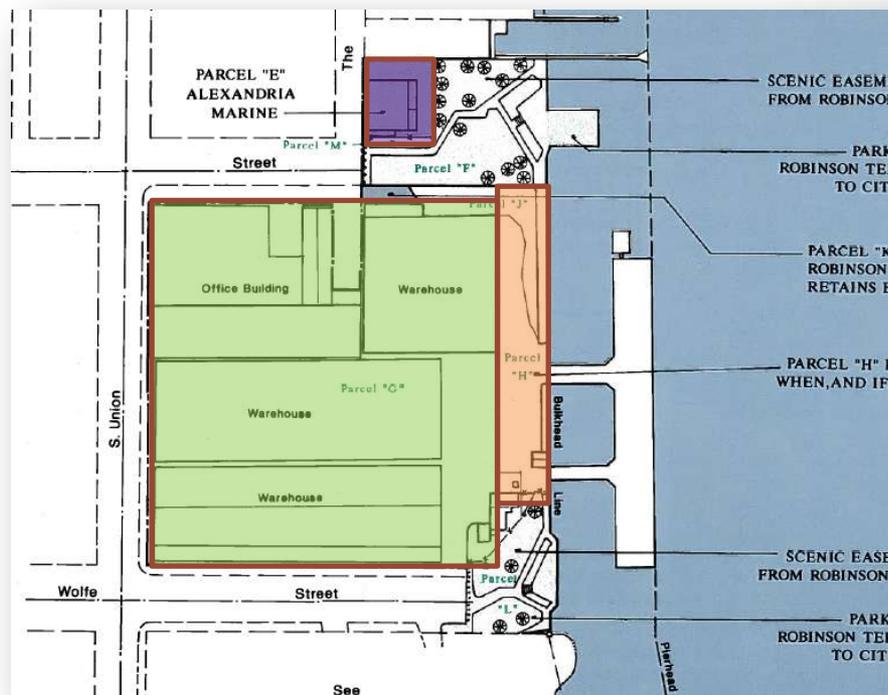
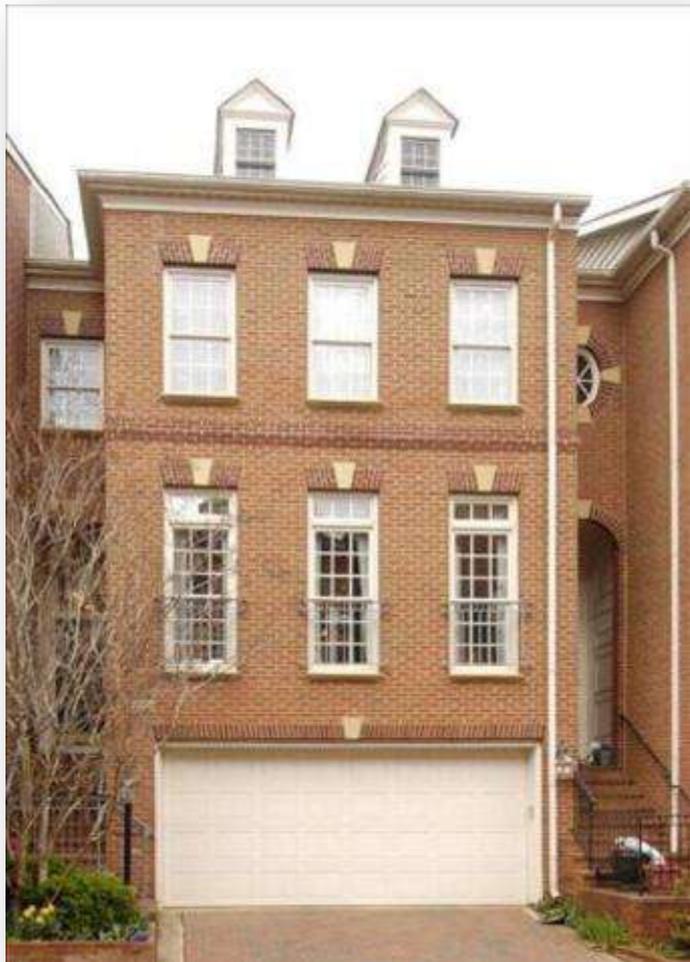
- Purchase land from Robinson Terminal: \$17m*
- Demolish structures: \$500K
- Rehabilitate shoreline, construct passive park on entire parcel, stabilize pier: \$3.6m
- Restore 2 Duke Street: \$3.6m
- Additional cost over Plan: \$24.7m
- Marina not included in cost estimate



Alt 1: Parks and museums

* Assessed value

Robinson Terminal South



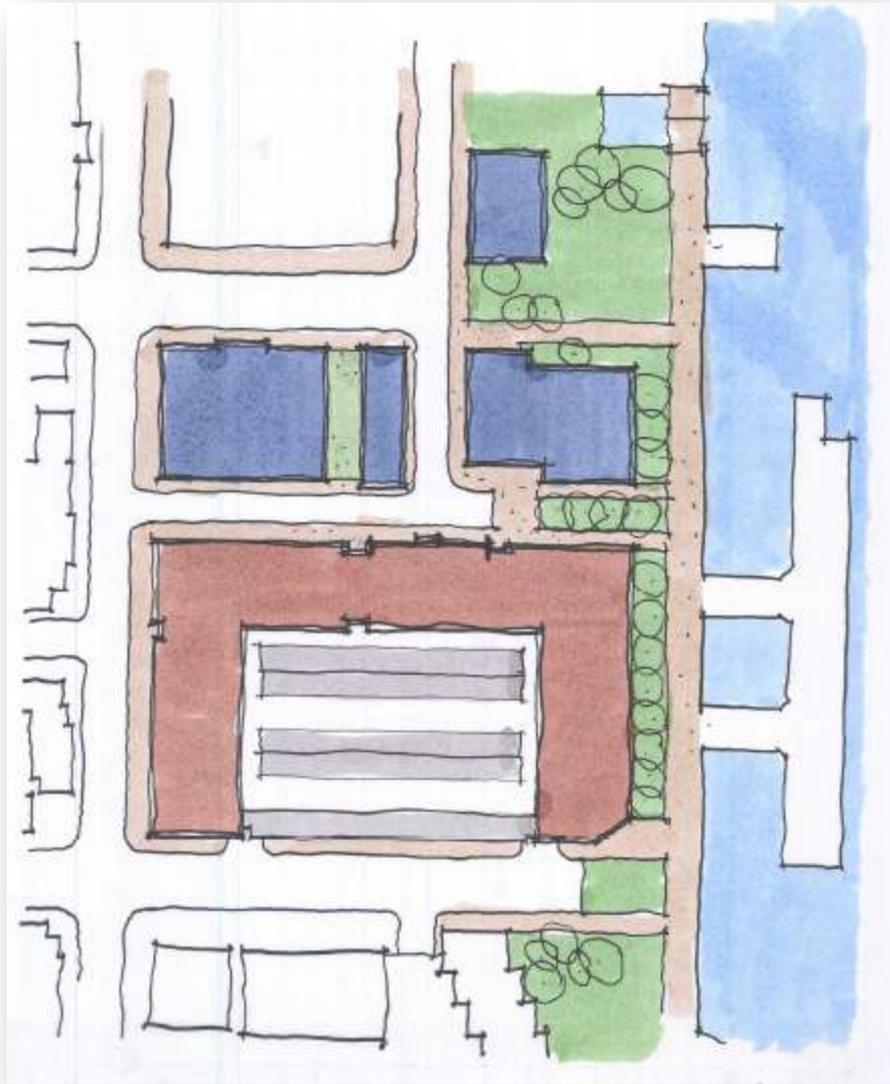
Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Features:

- 1.0 FAR
- 30 foot height limit
- 3 story garage townhouses or mixed use with retail
- Dedication of minimum shoreline pathway
- Pathway, shoreline not required
- Future of pier uncertain
 - Too expensive to improve
 - Not compatible with residential
 - Not likely to be available for ships, etc.
- Subject to BAR review

Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Robinson Terminal South



Alt 3: Current zoning with SUP

Features:

- Up to 2.0 FAR, 50 foot height
- Multi-family wrap plus office and retail
- 175 units, 87,000 sf commercial, incl. restaurant
- SUP process would likely result in higher level of investment in pathway, shoreline, streetscape
- Future of pier uncertain
 - Expensive to improve
 - Not compatible with residential
 - Not likely to be available for ships, etc.
- Subject to BAR review

Alt 2: Current zoning with SUP

Cummings/Turner block



Cummings/Turner block



Planning Commission recommendation

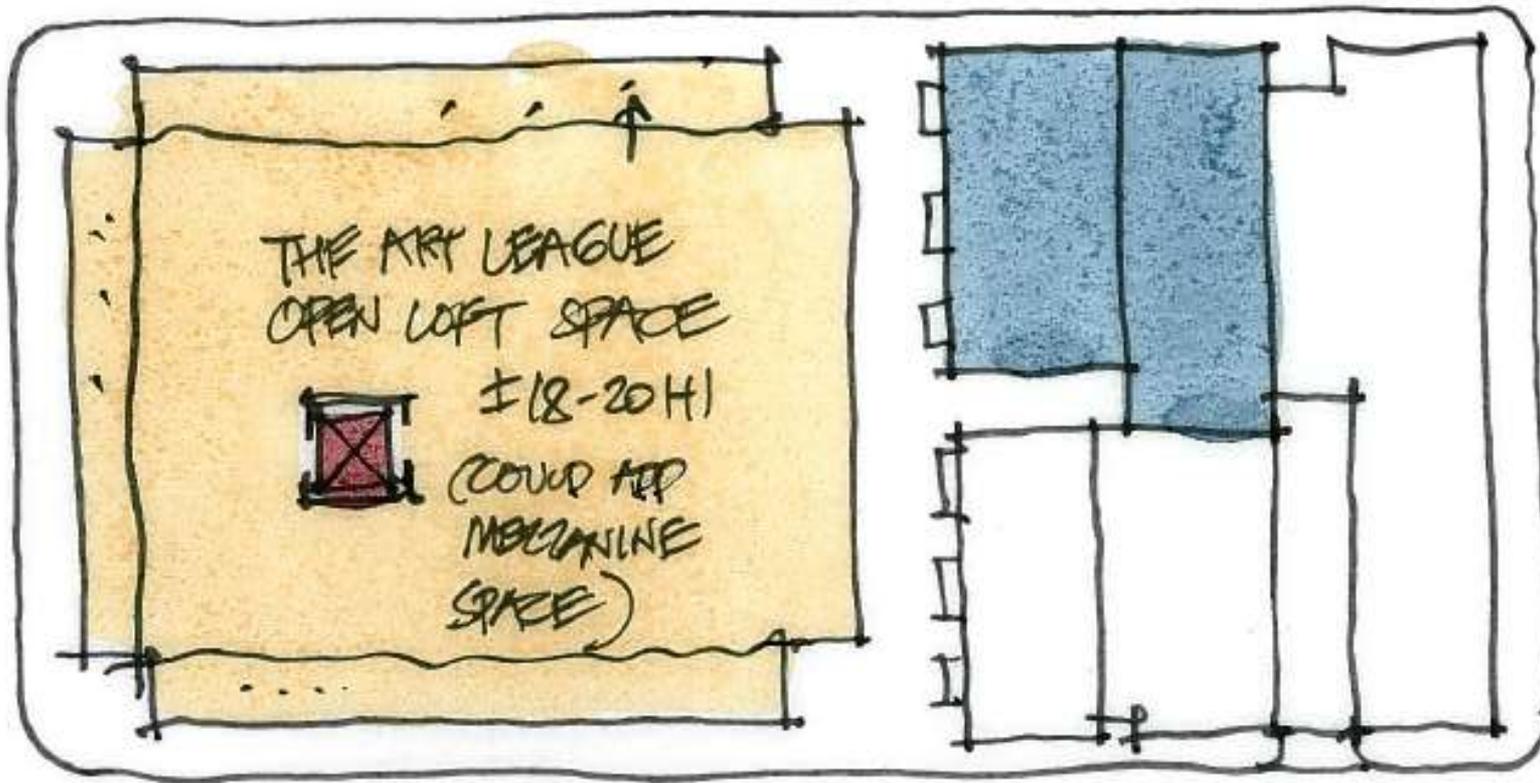
Features:

- Hotel on one or two parcels
- Parking on site, below grade
- Restoration of historic buildings
- Adaptive reuse, potential cultural use, esp ground floor
- Contributions to the completion of Point Lumley Park
- Reopen alley, streetscape improvements



Planning Commission recommendation

S. Union Street



The Strand

Features:

- Purchase land and historic structures from Cummings and Turner families: \$10m*
- Demolish non-historic structures: \$350K
- Restore historic buildings as history center, archaeology museum, etc: \$11m
- Construct combination Seaport Foundation/Maritime Museum: \$11m
- Construct Art League building: \$10m
- Additional cost over Plan: \$42m

* Assessed value

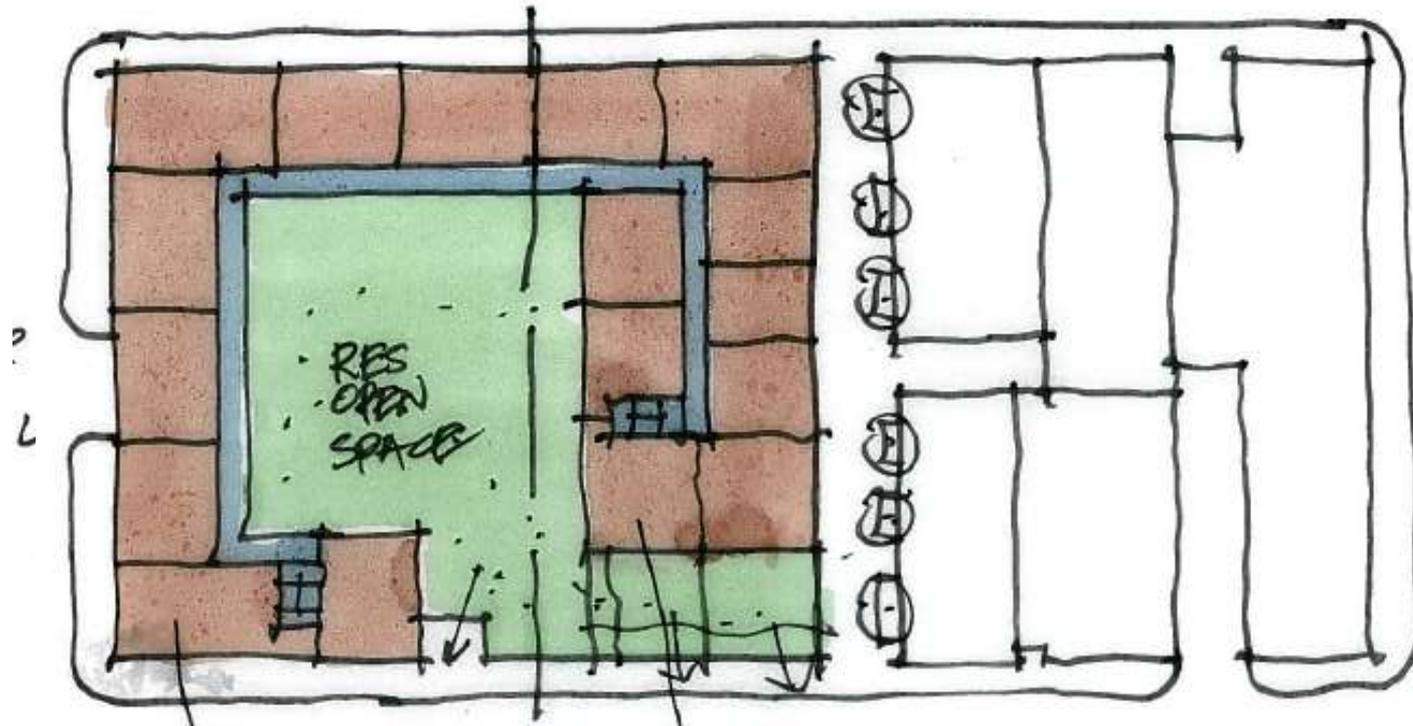
Cummings/Turner block



Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Cummings/Turner block

S. Union Street



The Strand

Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

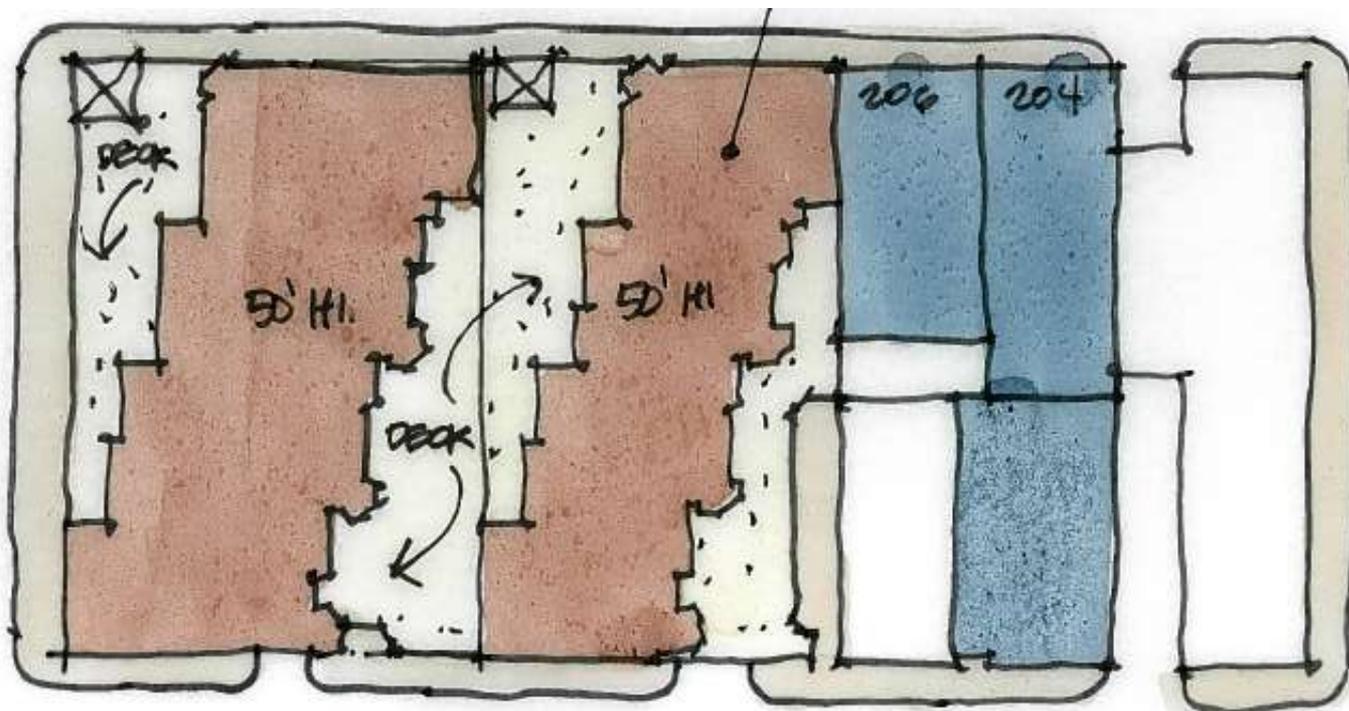
Features:

- **1.25 FAR**
- **30 foot height limit**
- **3 story mixed use**
- **Historic structures to remain as is**
- **No contribution to Point Lumley Park**
- **Incompatible with “working waterfront”**
- **Subject to BAR review**

Alt 2: Current zoning, no SUP

Cummings/Turner block

S. Union Street



The Strand

Alt 3: Current zoning with SUP

Features:

- Up to 2.0 FAR, 50 foot height
- “Village on the Strand” concept
- Residential over retail & restaurant
- Structured parking
- Historic structures would remain as is
- SUP process would likely result in higher level of investment site and streetscape
- Subject to BAR review

Alt 2: Current zoning with SUP

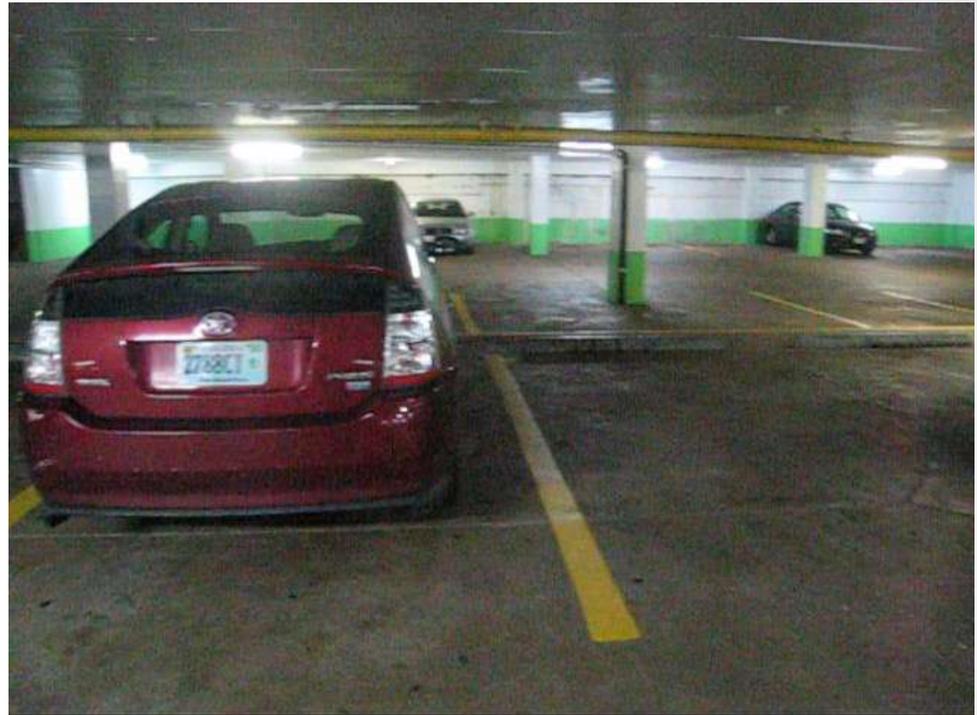
- **Proposed plan: some additional density, greater design control and developer contributions**
- **Parks and museums: Would double to quadruple plan cost; all at public expense**
- **Current zoning: limited design controls and limited opportunity for public amenities**

- **Council Questions & Answers**
 - **Parking**
 - **Flooding**
 - **Restaurant & Hotel Policy**
 - **Parks & Open Space**
 - **History & Art**
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Parking: Capacity Update

The Old Town Parking study found 604 garage parking spaces available on Friday afternoons , the time of peak parking demand.

*Torpedo Factory
Condo Garage
(Colonial)*



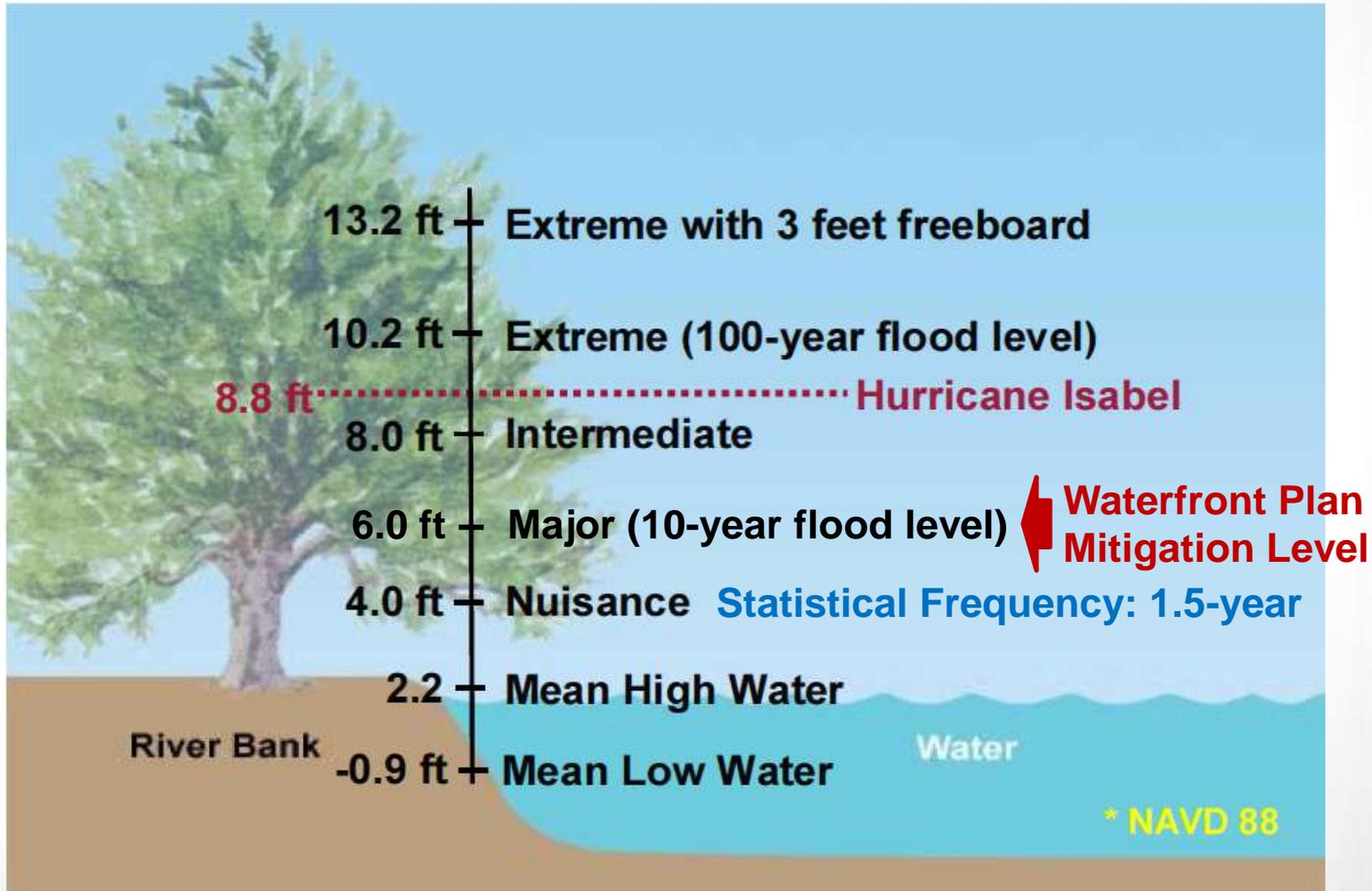
CURRENT UPDATE

| DAY | TIME | % FULL | SPACES AVAIL |
|-------------|-----------|--------|--------------|
| Friday 5/27 | afternoon | 65% | 445 |
| Friday 6/3 | evening | 56% | 554 |
| Tuesday 6/7 | morning | 17% | 1,055 |

- **Waterfront parking work group to recommend actions to:**
 - **Protect residential parking**
 - **Put parkers into garages**
 - **Trigger steps that increase garage capacity**
Examples:
 - **Garage use reaches 85%**
 - **New uses are approved, opened or built**
 - **Surveys show lack of residential parking**
 - **Strand parking lot closed to become park**

- **Major Flooding Mitigation to Elevation 6.0 from Duke Street to Queen Street**
- **Street and Drainage Reconstruction at King/Strand/Union Streets**

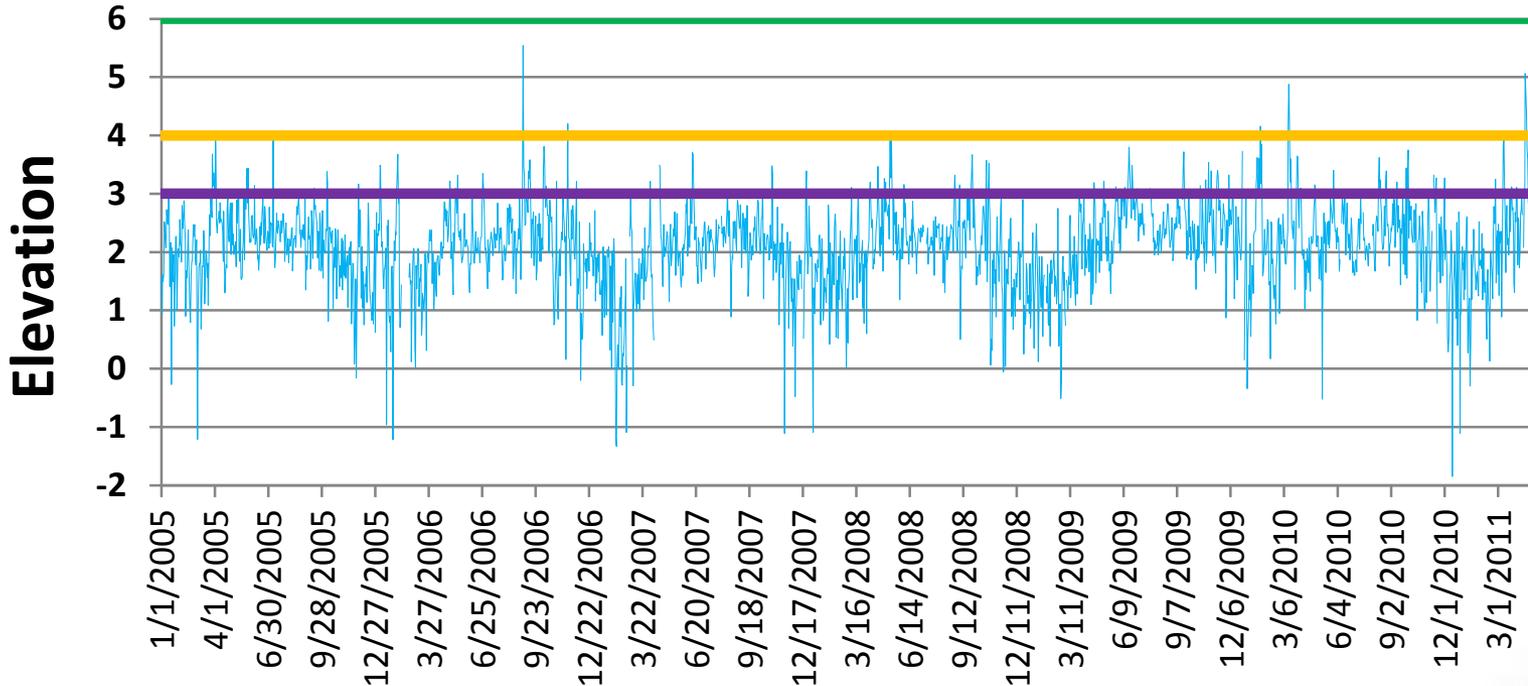
Flood Levels considered in the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Study



Waterfront Nuisance Flooding

Daily High Tides @ Cameron St USGS Gauge

- High Tide
- Linear (Nuisance Flood @ 4') Occurrences above Elevation 4.0 = 14
- Linear (10-YR Flood @ 6')
- Linear (Nuisance Flood @ 3') Occurrences above Elevation 3.0 = 224

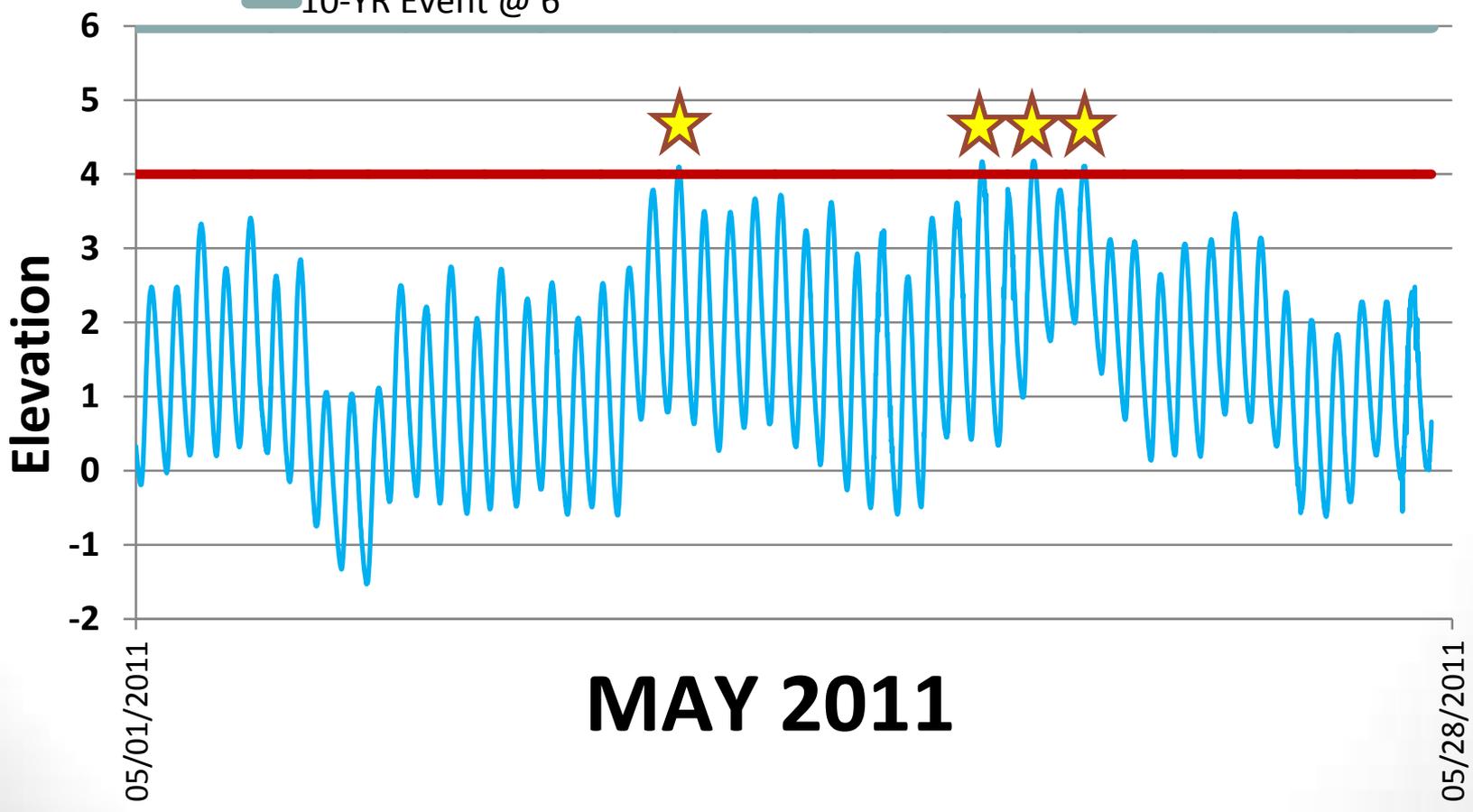


JAN 2005 - APR 2011

Waterfront Nuisance Flooding

Tidal Elevation @ Cameron St USGS Gauge

- ELEV (FT,NAVD88)
- Nuisance Flood @ 4' Occurrences above Elevation 4.0 = 4
- 10-YR Event @ 6'



Waterfront Nuisance Flooding @ Elev. 4.0

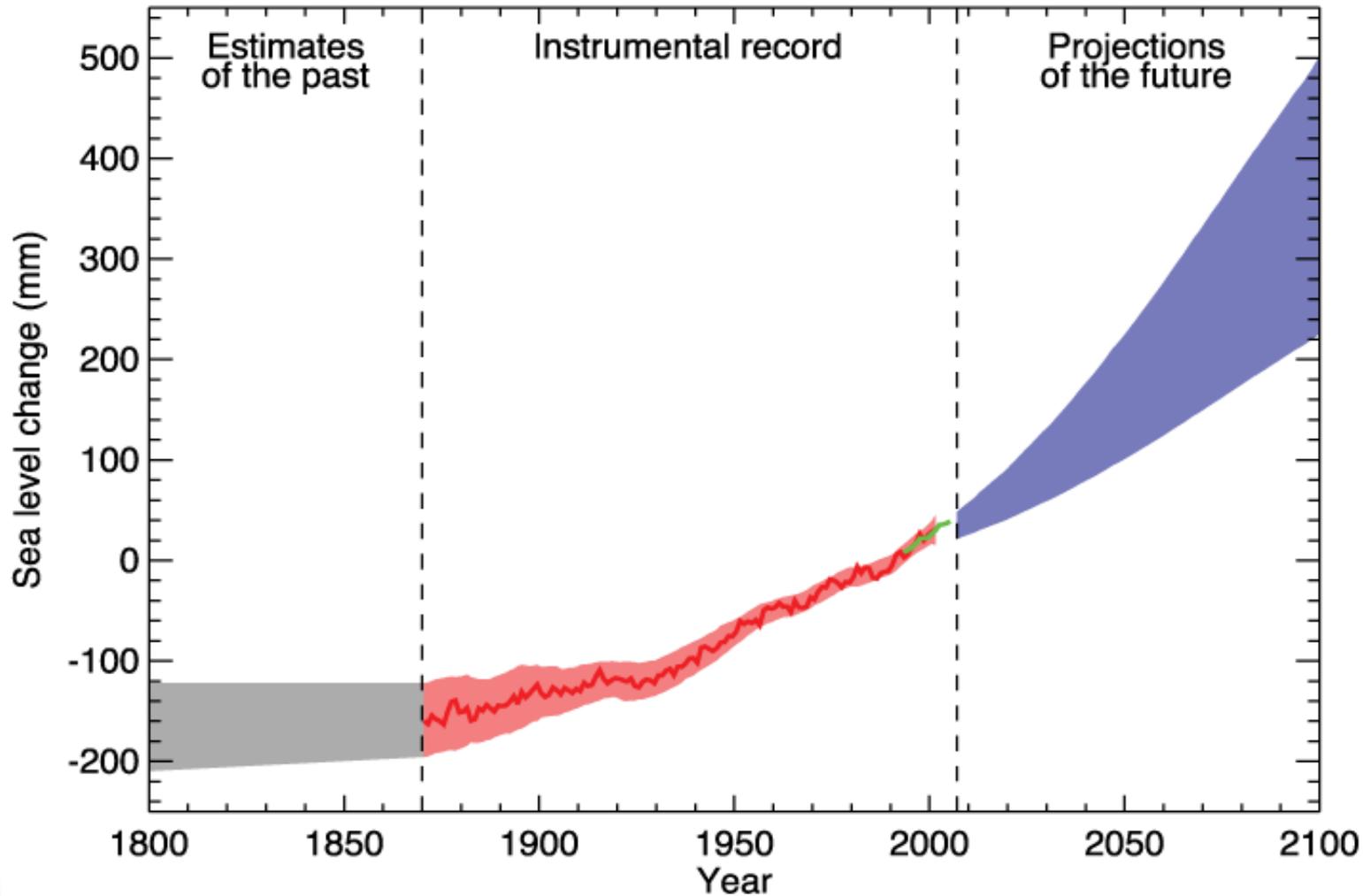


Waterfront Nuisance Flooding @ Elev. 4.0

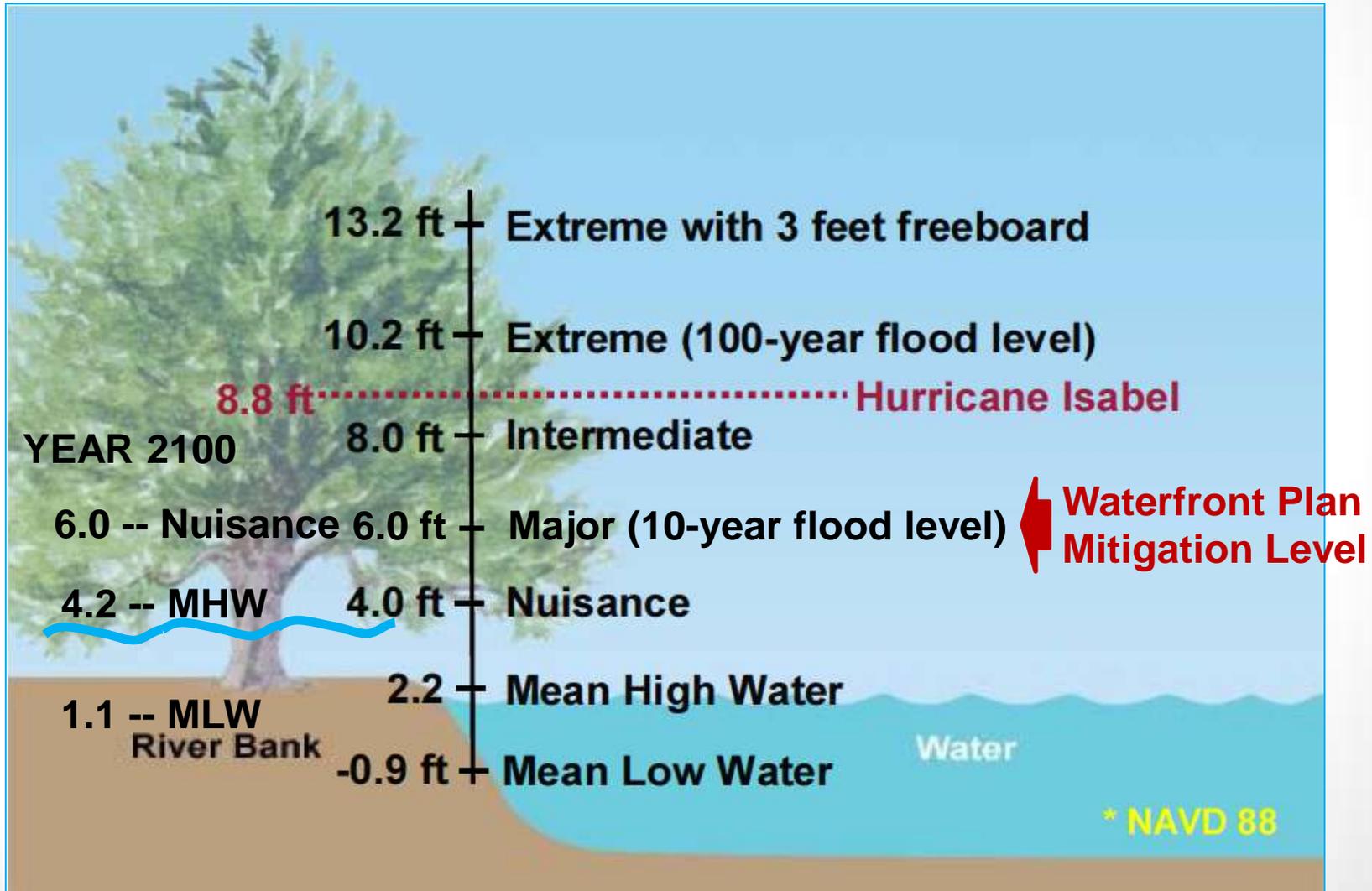


The Strand
May 19, 2011

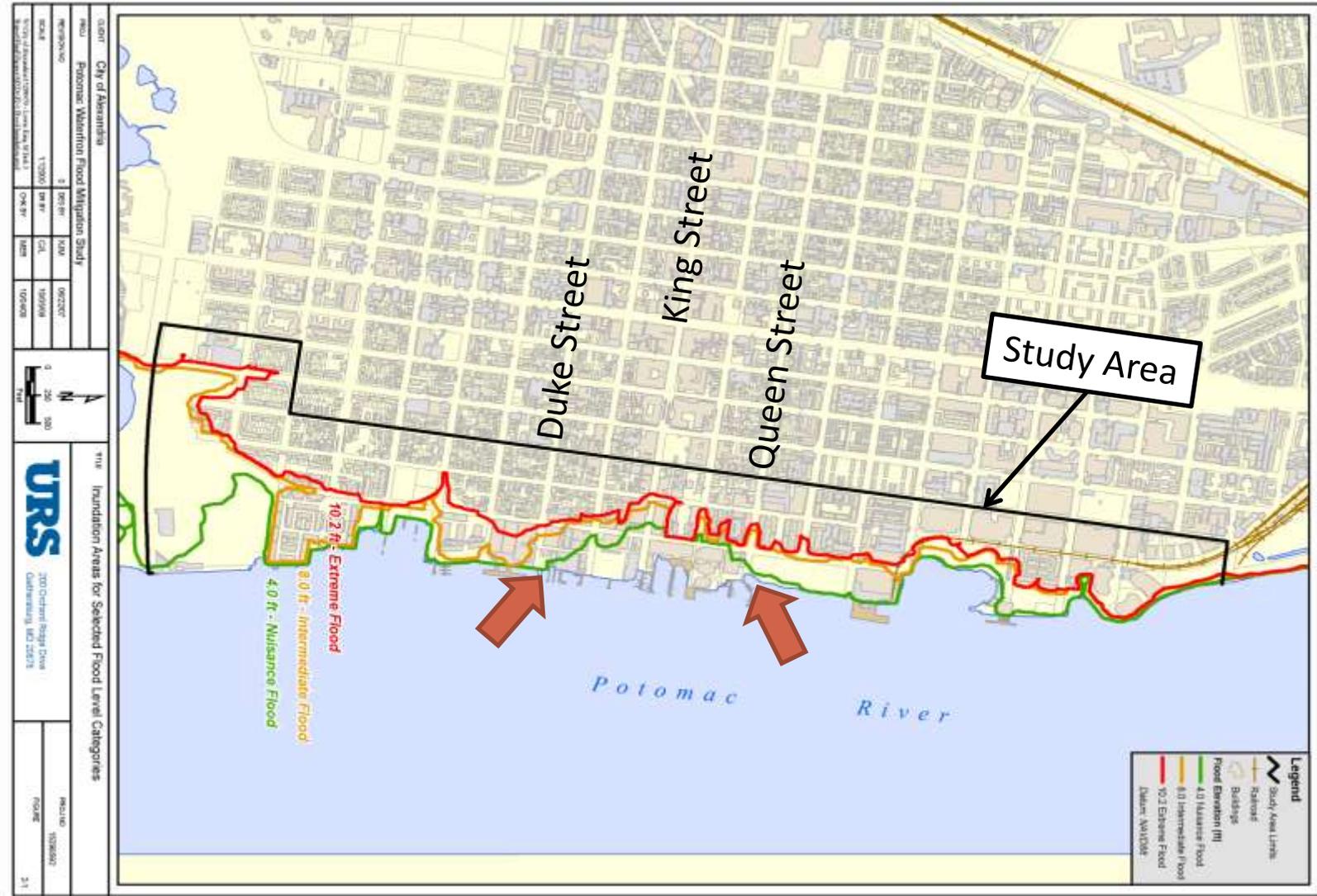
Waterfront Rising Tides



Waterfront Rising Tides



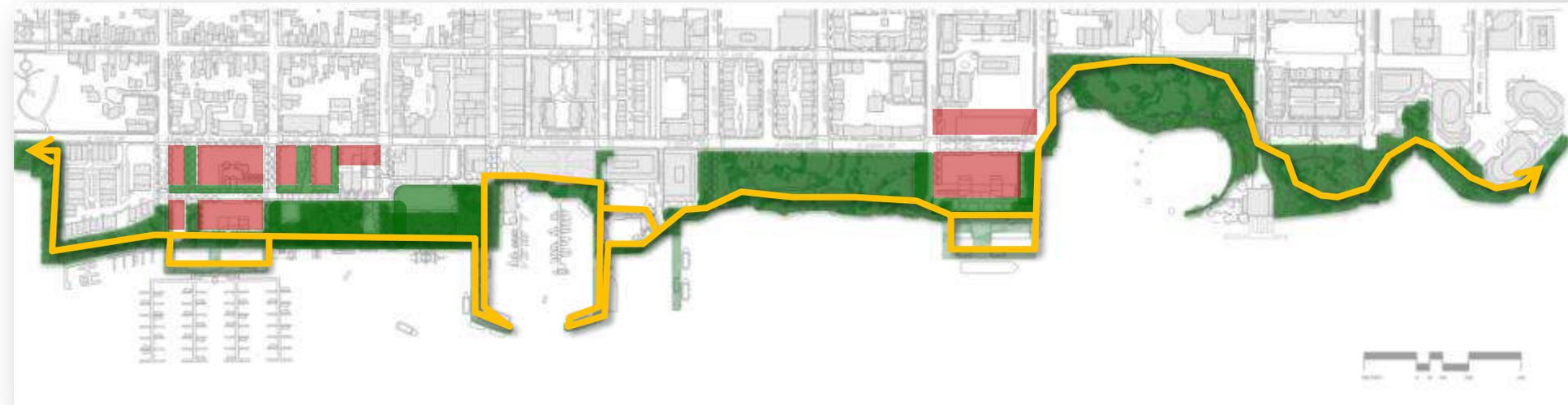
Flood Mitigation: Area of Nuisance Flooding



Flood Mitigation:



The primary focus of the Plan: completing and enhancing Alexandria's waterfront linear park system.



History and Art



Working Seaport



Gateway



Witness to War



Foundations



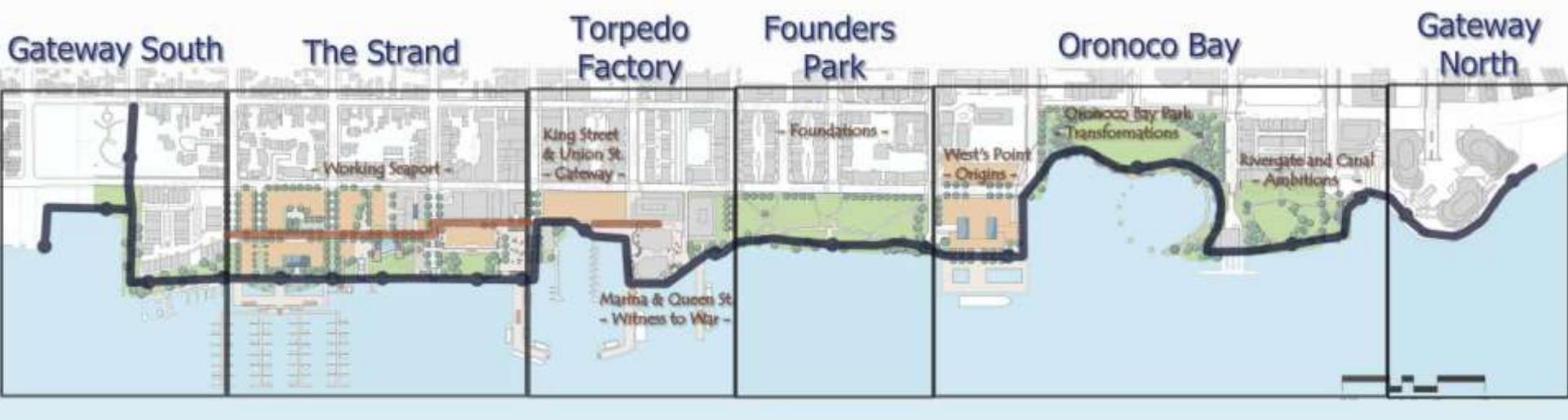
Origins



Transformations



Ambitions



- **Clarify that additional parking for restaurants and hotel patrons and employees may be by contract with nearby garages, thus utilizing existing garage parking as supported by the Waterfront Plan.**
- **Add the “boutique” hotel definition to the Policy.**
- **Emphasize the need for parking and transit subsidies for restaurant and hotel employees.**
- **Emphasize the desire to have hotel parking garages remain open to the general public.**

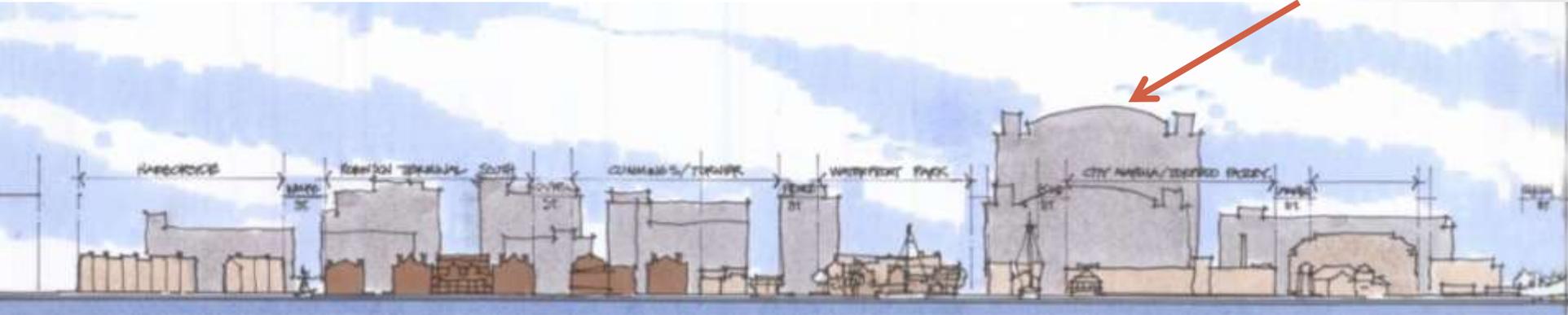
Establish public advisory groups to champion, guide and prioritize:

- **Overall plan implementation**
- **Parking**
- **History and art**
- **Flood mitigation design**
- **Park design**
- **Museum feasibility studies**

In coordination with existing boards and commissions

Concluding thought: comparing skylines

National Harbor



Alexandria Waterfront

