

Summary Minutes

Alexandria Waterfront Committee Marina Subcommittee Meeting

March 11, 2010
Lee Center, Conference Room #2

Members: Doug Gosnell
Nathan Macek
Peter Pennington

City Staff: Laura Seidler, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities
James Spengler, RPCA
Nancy Williams, Department of Planning and Zoning

Guests: Charlotte Hall, Potomac Riverboat Company
Roger Waud, North Old Town Independent Civic Association

Welcome and Introductions

Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

City Marina Allocation of Transient and Leased Slips

The Subcommittee discussed the RPCA memo to City Council regarding the allocation of transient slips at the Alexandria City Marina. Spengler said that the decision to change the allocation of transient and leased slips was made to keep the Marina full and to maximize revenue. Over time, the Marina has transitioned from predominantly serving transient boaters to primarily serving leased slip holders. The Marina has fully leased its available slips. However, it is turning away transient boats not because of capacity limits but because some boats seeking to use the Marina are too large for its facilities. RPCA has considered developing a place for additional transients as part of the Waterfront Plan.

Under the new allocation plan, there was a net change of 9 slips from transient to lease, which will leave about 13 transient docking locations open, including several locations that cannot be occupied overnight.

Gosnell suggested sending a letter to area boat clubs publicizing the number of transient slips available for 2010. The letter would also describe the services available at the Marina and procedures for reserving and docking at the Alexandria City Marina. The letter would also mention that RPCA has recommended that the Waterfront Plan include additional slips for larger watercraft in the long-term. Spengler offered to have RPCA staff develop a letter and send it on behalf of the City.

Management of Marina during and following Snow Emergency

The Subcommittee discussed the following Marina snow management issues:

- Access to vessels docked at the Marina in the event of an emergency: Seidler noted that City staff monitored vessels docked at the Marina and intervened in two cases in which boats were threatened with sinking due to snowfall.
- Emergency water access to the Marina: This was mitigated by advance notice by the City to the Coast Guard that the Marina would be closed.
- Weight of snow on the Marina's Trex (plastic) decking: City engineers and the Fire Department determined that the Marina decking was not seriously threatened by the weight of the snow. Roofs at other city facilities were in imminent danger of collapse and were cleared by National Guard.
- Timely clearing of snow from Marina: Hall reported that TES had informed the Potomac Riverboat Company that it could not clear the Marina in time for a Sunday event scheduled to depart from the Marina following the Wednesday storm. PRBC had to clear the facility itself.

The Subcommittee discussed the use of the term "the Marina is closed," which may leave the impression that restaurants are closed or charter boats are inaccessible, which may not be the case. Seidler noted that the Marina was simply closed to boating traffic but may have been reinterpreted by a City E-News announcement that the Marina was closed in general.

Spengler suggested putting in writing any suggestions for after-action review of the snow storm, which is being led for the City by Department of Transportation and Environmental Services Director Rich Baier.

Spengler noted that management of snow removal is a TES responsibility, and RPCA has responsibilities for particular locations during snow emergency. The City Manager is trying to centralize prioritization of snow removal. During a normal snow event, there's a snow command set up on Business Center Drive and TES sets priorities. In emergency, a more centralized command structure is applied. Pennington asked who is considering the Marina, since TES is concerned with streets and sidewalks.

Seidler noted that factors in snow removal include the number of staff available to clear snow. Always clear with minimum of two staff available.

Gosnell suggested that the Subcommittee recommend to the full Committee that the Marina's needs be prioritized along with roads and other infrastructure throughout the City. Priorities, in rank order, include emergency access, commercial and institutional access, boat access, and visitor/pedestrian access. The Subcommittee resolved to forward this recommendation to the full Committee for consideration at its March meeting.

Review of Marina Night and Marina Vision Statement and Briefing Paper

The Subcommittee revisited the draft Marina Vision Statement and Briefing Paper that was accepted by the Committee in advance of the Marina Night Waterfront Plan topical meeting in January. Macek asked whether the Subcommittee recommended that the

full Committee finalize the draft version as an official document or whether there were recommend changes.

Pennington said that the document needed to address access to and parking at the Marina. The Subcommittee resolved to recommend to the full Committee that it incorporate a policy statement regarding access to the Waterfront into the Marina vision statement and then finalize its approval of the document.