I. **Call to Order:** Chair Jennifer Atkins called the meeting to order at 7 p.m., a quorum being present.

II. **Presentations:**

a. **Interim Fitzgerald Square Park (IFS):** Tony Gammon (DPI) and Jack Browand (RPCA) presented the update.


Gammon reviewed the design for the City's Interim Fitzgerald Square (IFS) project that DPI and RPCA have been working on. City Council approved $975,000 in the FY2017 budget for the project after an extensive civic engagement process run by Gammon and Browand. Construction of the IFS is expected to begin in January 2018, after the Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) vacates its clubhouse at 1 King Street.
The City is building an Interim Fitzgerald Square (IFS) to activate the foot of King Street because the permanent Fitzgerald Square envisioned in the Waterfront Plan will not be completed until 2026, after the flood mitigation project.

The IFS will include City-owned properties at 1 and 2 King Street and King Street Park, about one acre of land. IFS work done to date includes soil boring, an archaeological documentary study, data collection, and the site plan sketch.

To keep construction costs down, existing surfaces will be converted into active open space with as little modification as possible and synthetic turf will be put over the existing asphalt parking lot to create green space.

Gammon said that when the IFS riverfront walkway is completed it will be the first time in almost 100 years that the public will have unimpeded access to this part of the river.

**Next steps:** The Waterfront Commission will be briefed on February 21, 2017. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) will review the IFS design on March 15, 2017. The Planning Commission will review the IFS site plan and SUP request after the BAR approves it and City Council will consider the IFS SUP after the Planning Commission approves it.

**Commission Discussion:**

- Q: Will hydrilla grass be a problem here?
- A: Browand said hydrilla grass is not a big problem because of the boating activity.
- Q: What type of synthetic turf will be used?
- A: Gammon said DPI and RPCA have not yet decided how to create green space over the asphalt. Browand noted the IFS area will continue to flood since it will be built before the flood mitigation project.

**b. Old Town Business Improvement District (BID)** - Stephanie Landrum, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP) and David Remington (AEDP) presented the briefing

See presentation posted at:

See full BID details, including 15-page BID proposal, posted at:
Website: www.OldTownBid.com

**Background** - Browand said City Council funded AEDP to develop a proposal for an Old Town Business Improvement District (BID) after Council received two separate recommendations for creating an Old Town BID. In 2016 the Waterfront Commission recommended a Waterfront BID be created after studying five potential governance models and a group of small businesses and property owners in the Waterfront, King Street and Washington Street areas created a separate recommendation. In response, City
Council included a $25,000 grant in the FY2017 budget for AEDP to develop a single proposal for an Old Town BID that covers the Waterfront area.

- **Purpose** - A BID provides a higher level of services within a geographic area than a jurisdiction can afford to provide. The proposed Old Town BID services would enhance City services not replace them and a City-BID Memorandum of Understanding would be used to coordinate City and BID services. Services could include public space and parks management, maintenance, transportation, streetscape improvements, and a clean streets team. An Old Town BID could also help curate the mix of special events since most Old Town special events are put on by volunteer groups responsible only for their own events.

- **Timing** - Landrum said AEDP's goal is to present the BID proposal to Council in May 2017 after civic outreach is completed.

- **BID's non-residential funding** - Landrum emphasized there would be no residential fee to fund the proposed Old Town BID. It would be funded through a special assessment approved by City Council levied only on businesses and commercial properties within its geographical boundaries. The proposed Old Town BID assessment would be 10 cents per $100 of assessed value. If approved, Old Town BID revenues would be used only to fund Old Town BID services.

- **Policies governing open space** - Policy set by the City will continue to govern how public spaces can be used.

- **BIDs are common** - Remington said all of the neighborhoods that Old Town competes with for talent and customers are governed by BIDs or professional management associations that also provide enhanced services such as marketing, branding and public space management (e.g. National Harbor, Bethesda Row, Georgetown, and DC's Yards Park.)


- **Proposed terms of existence** – City Council would pass an ordinance creating a BID for a 5-year term that Council would need to renew.

- **Next steps** - Remington said a 4 p.m. public meeting is set for March 15, 2017 at the Lyceum. Notice of the BID proposal will be sent to every business and property owner within the proposed district.

**Commission Discussion:**

- **Q**: How soon can the Old Town BID be implemented?
  
  **A**: Landrum said if City Council approves a BID in May 2017, a BID tax could not be levied until 2018. The first payment would be due in June 2018. The BID could organize itself during the second half of 2017 after Council approves establishing a service district.

- **Q**: How could it be ensured that BID services will enhance existing City services and not replace them?
  
  **A**: A City-BID MOU would establish a baseline level for City services
Q: Would the BID's authority be similar to that of the BAR's over residential properties?
A: Landrum said a BID will only affect commercial properties. The City will continue to have the authority to set policy and taxes.

A: Tiwari said the BID's annual work plan will have to be approved by City Council.

Marina Outdoor Private Dining Area - Jack Browand presented the briefing.

See presentation posted at:

Background: Browand reported that ARP Waterfront LLP, owners of Vola's Dockside Grill & Hi-Tide Lounge at the City Marina, want to renew their three-year lease with the City for the private outdoor dining area on the Marina's decking. The restaurant's owners have changed since the original lease was signed. The new lease expands the size of the outdoor dining area and increases seating from 54 to 114 seats. The City is increasing the rent to market rate. ARP will ensure there is 24/7 pedestrian access to the public right-of-way outside the dining area.

Advantages for the City - RPCA supports the lease renewal. It will generate significant new revenue for the City and activate an area of the dock that is generally unused.

Next steps- Browand said the modified SUP request will go to Planning Commission March 7 and the SUP request and proposed new lease will then go to City Council.

Commission Discussion:
Q. What type of signage will be used for the public space outside the dining area?
A: Browand said signage will be developed to make clear the public right-of-way.
Q: Will public benches be removed?
A: No.

2017-2026 Open Space Plan Implementation Strategy - Laura Durham (RPCA) and Elizabeth Lardner (Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects) presented the information.

See Updated Implementation Strategy briefing posted at:

See the full "2017 Updated Implementation Strategy: Plan for Action 2017-2026" posted at:

Commissioners congratulated Laura Durham for her recent promotion to Recreation Services Division Chief. Browand noted that Durham's briefing on the Open Space
Implementation Strategy would be one of her last official duties with RPCA's Park Planning Division.

- Durham said the strategy updates RPCA’s 2004 Implementation Strategy for the Open Space Plan Master Plan adopted in 2003. She said RPCA worked for over two years with an inter-departmental team to update the Strategy after RPCA's 10-year review of the Open Space Plan in 2013 recommended an updated implementation strategy that reflects changing circumstances. Each of the 15 Open Space goals has a strategy and goal.

Next steps: Durham said informational briefings on the updated Implementation Strategy will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council in March 2017.

- **Goals** - Although this will be difficult to achieve going forward, the overarching goal is to keep the ratio of 7.3 acres of public open space per 1,000 residents, a goal in both the Open Space Master Plan and the Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation.
- **Successes** - Durham noted 14 major public open space successes since 2002-2003, including protecting and providing open space in redevelopment plans, acquiring properties with the Open Space Fund and creating a responsive 10-year Capital Improvement Plan. Over 100 acres of open space have been protected.
- **Mapped City open space** - Durham said a major feature of the Updated Implementation Strategy is the comprehensive open space mapping for RPCA done by Elizabeth Lardner (Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects). The mapping identifies for the first time all types and sizes of open space, with acreage calculations. Durham noted four park and open space types that RPCA has created to use for protecting public open space: citywide, neighborhood, pocket parks and natural resource areas.
- **Challenges ahead** - Durham said that maintaining the 7.3 ratio through 2045 it will be critical to ensure that protected open space provided or promised in Small Area Plans (SAPs) is implemented because Small Area Plan open space accounts for more than 13 percent of the City's open space. She said that after 2045, even if all the planned public open space is implemented, the City may need to reconsider the 7.3 ratio as the City's population grows. Browand said RPCA will continue to need Commissioners' help as RPCA continues to work to ensure that open space planned for each Small Area Plan is implemented. The work of Commissioners currently on Small Area Plan task forces is very important.

Commission discussion:

- **Q**: How does the City's 7.3 ratio of public open space acres per 1,000 residents compare to other jurisdictions?
- **A**: Durham said Arlington County's ratio is slightly less than Alexandria's 7.3 ratio. She noted the City's approved Open Space Master Plan and Implementation Strategy has been very important to RPCA's successes in protecting open space.
- **A**: Lardner said the City's 7.3 ratio is common for jurisdictions with populations comparable to the City's but the City is more densely populated than similar jurisdictions. She said it will be important to consider what types of public open spaces have the most helpful impacts.
• Q: How are Small Area Plans (SAP’s) that have not yet been completed, such as Old Town North, factored in?
• A: Durham said the report includes open space in SAPs approved through 2016. Old Town North SAP is not included.

• Q: Is there a connection between the Open Space Plan and the actions related to the Chesapeake Bay watershed?
• A: Durham said one of the strategies recommended is to consider how solutions providing enhanced or new protected open space might be incorporated into plans to address the City's combined sewer and stormwater management challenges.

e. Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) - Rod Simmons, Natural Resources Specialist; presented the briefing.


Background:
Deputy Director Tiwari said the Natural Resources Management Plan is a tool for implementing the Open Space Master Plan, specifically Goal 4: "Protect and Expand Stream Valleys and other Environmentally Sensitive Areas." Interagency coordination is being conducted.

• Simmons said Director Spengler and Deputy Director Tiwari actively pushed for the City to be one of the few jurisdictions with a Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP).

• The main goal of the NRMP is to use a science-based approach to preserve the City's native landscape and biodiversity. He noted this goal is identified as a priority need by residents during RPCA Needs Assessment surveys. The NRMP stresses a "do no harm" approach.

• Tentative Timeline - The timeline for City Council approving the NRMP is: (1) January-March 2017: Interagency review; (2) February-May 2017: commissions and public comments; (3) By June 2017: P&RC public hearing and action; (4).City Council action.

Commission Discussion:
• RPCA was commended for creating the NRMP
• Q: How will the problem of maintenance in jurisdictional dead zones such as Backlick Run will be addressed?
• A: Simmons said the City is considering how to improve this.

• Q: Are there ways to encourage private owners whose land abuts public open space to create conservation easements?
• A: Simmons said he advises residents interested in this.
• A: Tiwari said the City also partners with the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust.

• Q: How does the City's 'no net loss' policy' work?
• A: Simmons said the goal is to avoid actions that change a landscape's natural character. For example, a concrete water fountain should not be added to a natural area.
• A: Tiwari said that when there are manmade elements in natural areas, e.g. utilities, that the City needs to repair or replace them, the goal is to minimize the impact on the landscape.

III. Public Comments – non-agenda items. None.

IV. Items for Action
a. 2017-2026 Open Space Implementation Strategy (II.c)
Motion: Brune moved and McPherson seconded that the Commission endorse the Open Space Implementation Strategy. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Additional actions:
Interim Fitzgerald Square Project
Motion: Baum moved and Brune seconded that the Chair write a letter affirming the Commission's continued support for the Interim Fitzgerald Square project. The Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Coleman recused herself.

Marina Outdoor Dining Lease
Commissioners indicated their informal support for the lease without taking a formal action.

b. Approval of Minutes:
November 17, 2016: O’Connell moved and McPherson seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

December 15, 2016: O’Connell moved and Brune seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

c. Civic Awards Recommendation:
Nomination details at pages 2-7 in P&RC meeting package at: https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/PRCCOMBINEDREPORTSFEB162017.pdf

Brune presented the nominations and reviewed nominees’ accomplishments. He served as chair of the Civic Awards sub-committee; Coleman and Poulin also served on the committee. Nominations were as follows:
• Corporate Neighbor Award: Mike Detomo (Cole & Denny Architects) and Amie Evans (Land Planning & Design Associates) for working with Del Ray community volunteers on a conceptual rendering for the proposed spray park and the Nancy Dunning Memorial Garden at Mt. Vernon and Commonwealth Avenues.
• Group, Club, or Organization Award: Rebuilding Together Alexandria (Fannie Mae Employees) for work revitalizing Taney Avenue Park, a collaboration with Rebuilding Together Alexandria, RPCA and RunningBrooke.
• **Citizen (individual) Award:** Anne Saul - Chinquapin Community Garden Advisory Board.  
  **Motion:** O'Connell moved and Baum seconded that the nominations be approved. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.  
• Browand said City Council will present the awards at its March 14, 2017 meeting.

V. **Project Updates:**

a. **Cameron Run Park Planning Process** - Browand presented the update.  
   **Project timeline is posted to:**  
   **Cameron Run Planning Process web page:**  
• Browand said meetings with Cameron Run Park stakeholders have begun. Michael Baker International are the consultants working on the project.  
• **Next Steps: February- June 2017.** The first public workshop is planned at Beatley Library on Thursday, March 2 at 7 p.m. A second large public workshop is planned for May 2017. The **March 2 workshop** will include information that sets reasonable public expectations for potential park features options so the workshop discussion is realistic. Individual stakeholder meetings, drop-in events and social media events are also planned.  
• **Additional events include:** (1) March 16, 2017: P&RC meeting (2) April: update to P&RC. (3) April 11: update to City Council; (4) May 2017: large public workshop; (5) May 2017: P&RC update and public hearing (ideally). (6) at City Council's June 17, 2017 meeting present recommendations for potential next steps so that Council can give RPCA guidance on option to develop further.  
• Browand noted the City's current lease with NOVA Parks has five years remaining.  

**Commission discussion:**

• **Q:** Are there are specific constraints related to how the site can be used.  
• **A:** Browand said there are a variety of constraints to factor in, depending upon the different options. For example, financial considerations and mitigating actions needed for a particular option are considerations.  
• **Q:** McPherson said stakeholders must be given sufficient advance notice to prepare for meetings and workshops.  
• **A:** Browand said staff is contacting stakeholders about the meetings.  

b. **Warwick Pool:**  
Browand reported the contract has been awarded and actions are moving ahead. He said the goal is to have the new pool operational by June 2017. Commissioners were delighted with the news.
c. **Windmill Hill Park Shoreline:**

Browand said construction bids are due February 22, 2017 for the work reshaping and rebuilding the entire shoreline. Browand said work should begin in April 2017.

VI. **Director’s Report - FY18 Budget and CIP:**

- Jack Browand presented the Director's report in Director Spengler's absence. The City Manager will present the proposed FY2018 operating budget to Council at its February 21, 2017 meeting. There will be some significant proposed changes to the FY2018-27 CIP and almost all proposed RPCA fee increases were accepted. Browand said RPCA will provide budget information to commissions and stakeholders after that.
- The City's first public budget hearing will be Monday March 13, 2017 at City Hall and a number of informational public meetings will be held before the March 13 meeting. Council is expected to approve the FY2018 budget by May 4, 2017.

VII. **Division Updates: Recreation Services; Park Operations; Park Planning, CIP & Marina. See Division reports posted at:**


There were no questions about the division updates.

**Park Planning, Design & Capital Development** - Browand said the City will be testing new "smart" solar-powered trash cans/trash compactors along the Waterfront to minimize the number of trash cans and amount of trash being collected in City parks.

VIII. **Commissioners' Reports:**

- **Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group:** Atkins said the Advisory Group meetings have been going well, and that Open Space will be discussed at the next meeting, in late February. There have been no reductions to the planned open space. The developer is working to tie their own open spaces into the linear park and recognizes the importance of activating the area.
- **PK Move:** Brune reported that the PK Move program will be holding a fundraiser in the near future.
- **Commission membership:** Atkins reported that one student application has been received for a place on the Commission. Browand said it should be considered at Council's March 14 meeting.
- The Chair welcomed new Commissioner **Matthew Walsh** to his first meeting.

IX. **Adjournment:** Commission adjourned at 9 p.m.

X. **Next Meeting:** March 16, 2017