

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA  
Park and Recreation Commission**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, March 17, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Mt. Vernon Recreation Center**  
**2701 Commonwealth Avenue**

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**Commission Members:** Chairperson, Judy Guse-Noritake, Henry Brooks, Rich Brune, William Cromley, Ripley Forbes, Stephen (Clark) Mercer. **Absent:** Bob Moir, Jeffrey Murphy, Anthony Zamora, and Mollie Timmons.

**RPCA Staff:** Director, James B. Spengler, William Chesley, Jack Browand, Ron Kagawa, Laura Durham, Robin DeShields. **Absent:** Roger Blakeley.

**Guests:** Nancy Williams, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning, Pam Cressey-OHA, and Sharon Annear.

- I. Call to Order by Chair:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.
- II. Approval of Summary Minutes from January 20, and February 17, 2011.** January 20, 2011: Ripley Forbes motioned to approve the minutes; Richard Brune seconded the motion. All were in favor, the minutes were approved. February 17, 2011-deferred to April.
- III. Draft Waterfront Plan SAP - Released for Public Comments** – Public Hearing April 5, 2011.  
Nancy William, Principal Planner addressed additional questions/comments from the P&RC, on the Draft Waterfront SAP, which was released for public comment in February. The Plan will go before the Planning Commission on April 5, 7:30 p.m., City Hall, and on May 3. The Chair will write a letter summarizing the P&RC's comments, and will attend meetings.
  - **Henry Brooks:** He has lived in Alexandria for over 40 years, 25 of them in Old Town. The objections to the plan from the Old Town Civic Association may not accurately reflect the views of families in the area with children in public schools. He supports unrestricted access along the waterfront, and having increased small-scale recreation activities.  
**Additional comments:** 1. Robinson Terminal S., the City should not invest in more boat slips (estimates cost of \$18k per slip/per year). Expenses do not equal revenue; the City is losing money currently (public marina). He supports 85% of the Waterfront SAP; however, the City needs a financial plan for the Waterfront, and a plan for all parks in the City. RPCA is doing the best they can with allocated budget for parks, each time there is a budget gap, City cuts park funding. Further steps should be taken regarding the Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) parking lot. Only 20% of the ODBC members live in the City most live in Fairfax and Arlington Counties. The Chair said the City should take all steps legally available to them to address the ODBC issue.
  - 2. The City Council approved a plan in 2002 to upgrade Windmill Hill Park, and has done few of the approved improvements. Maintenance at park is deteriorated, problematic. This needs to be brought to City Council's attention in Chair's letter.
- **William Cromley:** the recent Waterfront Committee meeting was productive; there are many competing parties interested in the waterfront development. Some people want the waterfront developed as all parkland, with no commercial activity; while others favor commercial development and approval of the Waterfront SAP to pay for it. Some members of the Committee, himself included, think that a measured, well designed and master-planned increase in commercial development would add vibrancy to the waterfront that is currently lacking. Some people are concerned with potential tourist increase.

He supports the Waterfront SAP; he stated the waterfront is underutilized and not living up to its potential financially, because it is not master planned. Much of the waterfront is owned by non-public corporations, and will be developed regardless of the Plan, many people unaware of this. Regarding the ODBC parking lot, he doesn't believe in eminent domain. The Plan should go forward in order to give some direction to development along the waterfront. Commission's concerns are: that there is no loss of open space, connectivity, and having a maintenance facility along the waterfront. There should also be more access, and use of the waterfront by all City residents, not just those who live near the waterfront. Reasonable objections should be addressed, but should not hinder going forward with the plan: parking resolutions and mechanisms to direct patrons to garages and designated parking areas are needed; issue of D.C. ownership of pier head, etc. Nancy Williams, Principal Planner, P & Z said the issue regarding the D.C. pier head line, will still need to go through the regulatory process.

- **Clark Mercer:** spoke about the need to improve communication in some residential areas throughout the City regarding the waterfront planning process. He stated that often, the same groups of people attend meetings; they do not represent the entire community view. The Waterfront SAP is a major project; the City should take steps to increase communication and participation of people living beyond Old Town, i.e., those living in the West End, and possibly hold more public hearings in other neighborhoods. Throughout this process, it has been said that the waterfront belongs to everyone. The Chair and Mr. Mercer discussed drafting a letter to the Editor of the local newspapers, and the Washington Post to make the views of this Commission about the Waterfront SAP plan more widely distributed.
- **Action Item:** The Chair said that after the P&RC develops its formal comments on the Draft Waterfront (SAP) for Planning Commission, she and Mr. Mercer will discuss possibly drafting the letter(s) to the editors of papers in order to communicate status of waterfront plan.
- **Nancy Williams, Planning and Zoning -** stated that there will be two Planning Commission meetings held, one April 5, and another May 3. The Plan will then go to City Council. The public comment period will remain open for now.
- **Ripley Forbes:** commented that his main concern is the marina; aesthetically he opposes it, additionally, the City is facing a very large financial expense. (Mr. Cromley said that it's ironic to take a parking lot away from the waterfront, but put a boat parking lot in its place. Suggest having a designated sailboat and private boat areas.)
- **Richard Brune:** Agrees with most of the Waterfront plan. He believes since the Beach Comer building is vacant, and there are no plans (or money) to fix it up within the next few years, it should be torn down (property was purchased with open space funds). If OHA wants to preserve building-they should reimburse the Open Space fund and take all responsibility for the property maintenance and security.
- **Chair Judy Guse-Noritake:**
  1. **Maintenance area needed for operations -** Entity charged with managing the waterfront needs to have the ability and resources to do a good job.
  2. **Off-leash dog area at Founders Park -** there is increasing concern about the location of this dog park, as an inappropriate use for area. Some members of the Founders Park community want it relocated. The Chair recently met with a group of dog owners from the neighborhood who use and support the dog park; the consensus was to look for a solution that would look for an alternative and hopefully larger location in the area. She will comment in her letter that as part of the Waterfront SAP, a collective effort should be made to look for a solution to this issue.
  3. **Issue concerning property purchased with Open Space Funds-** Chair-The goal is to maintain open space and public access along the waterfront, and that there be no net loss of open space, and/or in-kind replacement of any lost open space. Regarding the Old Beach Comer property, when building was purchased, the plan was to tear it down to create open space; however building was later determined as salvageable. The WF Plan designates

building for possible conversion to restaurant use. The Chair is skeptical a restaurant is economically feasible if market-rate rent is required for this waterfront property. She stated that building should be rented for not less than its fair-market-value. If the community decides the building will be used commercially, there needs to be a set timeframe for its development; building should not sit empty as a placeholder for 8-10 years.

- Commissioner Cromley asked Laura Durham, Open Space Planner, if the parcel purchased on Henry St. with open space funds is producing any income. Ms. Durham said the property is not producing a significant amount of income; however, this is a different scenario, as the building had existing tenants.
- In response to this and a question from, audience regarding possible short-term lease of the building, the Chair restated that the Beach Comer building is vacant; unusable in its current condition, and is not ADA compliant.
- **Action Item:** The Chair's letter will state that the P&RC has grave concerns about how open space funds were used on the waterfront, and what may become of open space parcels.

4. Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot: William Cromley; the parking lot that has served the ODBC on the waterfront, should it remain, will fundamentally compromise this or any waterfront plan looking to future use. Cromley said to be clear, he is against eminent domain and seizing, however keeping a parking lot at the end of King Street is not good for the City in the long run.

5. Inclusion of small-scale recreational activities along the waterfront. As previously mentioned, the P&RC would like to see a series of small-scale recreational activities: e.g., chess tables, horseshoes, etc. along the waterfront; similar to what P&Z staff observed when they took a trip to New York City and toured parks. The Chair discussed with the Arts Commission, that many of these functions along the waterfront can be artful, and also historical.

The Chair stated that many of tonight's comments about the Waterfront SAP, have already have been discussed, except for the recent marina concerns. She asked if there was a consensus regarding the economic, aesthetics of including additional private boat slips, run and managed by the City along the waterfront. Mr. Cromley clarified that he is not against commercial maritime uses along the marina. History should not be stagnant- should be more of a living waterfront.

Director Spengler said that his understanding of the Plan is that the new slips for private leaseholders shown in front of Robinson Terminal S. will only be built if there is private capital for development. Nancy Williams, P&Z- commented that when Planning and Zoning looked at the marina and did a study for pleasure boats, the study showed that the marina needed to have above 100 boats slips to be economically viable. The P&RC has emphasized that there be separation of pleasure and commercial boats. This is when they separated out the two marinas (commercial at existing marina area and private/pleasure at Robinson Terminal S. location). Pleasure boats will be financially feasible if done by a private company; this is the preferred option, but not the only option. The goal is to create a marina that can be financially sound.

Commissioner Brune- asked if the City, has considered the development taking place in Maryland, at National Harbor, and how large it will be.

Nancy Williams, P&Z - said that a market analysis was done for the marina; that shows there is a capacity for pleasure boat slips in Alexandria. Regarding the Commission's previous comments; Ms. Williams stated that Planning and Zoning has tools in place to ensure that development along the waterfront is harmonious with the surrounding area. These include: height regulations/BAR design guidelines. Additionally the Waterfront SAP also includes some guidelines; and each site would have to go through a SUP Process. Regarding parking concerns; people now understand that there are sufficient parking spaces in Old Town. What is needed is enhanced communication, through technology and way finding.

**Action Item:** The Chair will draft a letter, stating that the P&RC is overall pleased, with the draft Waterfront SAP, and that it will be a great asset to the City. She will also include the Commission's desire to see certain caveats/conditions included in the Plan, as discussed and noted at this and previous meetings and correspondence.

The Chair thanked Nancy Williams, Principal Planner for attending the meeting. Ms. Williams thanked the P&RC for their leadership and comments on the Draft Waterfront SAP; she said that the comments will be taken into account.

**IV. Ft. Ward Park and Museum Stakeholders Advisory Group Report and Recommendations:**

- Richard Brune, Ripley Forbes and Bob Moir (absent), served on the Advisory Group. (**For info. go to <http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=29638>**)  
The Chair said that the P&RC needs to develop a consensus regarding the recommendations. City Council will hold a work session on Tuesday, March 22 at 5:30 p.m., City Hall. The Chair will speak, and will also draft a letter prior to the meeting.
- Director James Spengler asked Commissioners to review the recommendations, and costs estimates (**See table: Ad Hoc Ft. Ward Advisory Group recommendations.**) He said many recommendations have no costs, while a number of other recommendations are already being done. General Services will provide an estimate for rehabilitation of the park restroom next week (estimated cost ¼ million.) Total cost estimate for one-time expenses is \$2 million; annual recurring costs are \$78,987. Laura Durham said these estimates are in addition, to current operational/management costs. Mr. Spengler - both cost estimates (one-time and ongoing) are not reflected in the City's FY2012 budget. The Chair said a letter has already been written requesting immediate funding for FY2012 for remainder of the subsurface investigation.
- **Discussion:** The Chair and Commissioners held a lengthy discussion about the Ft. Ward Park Ad Hoc Group's report and recommendations. The Chair suggested that rather than having an individual master plan for Ft. Ward Park, that a consensus be reached that the City move forward with a master plan for all parks in the City and that Ft. Ward would comprise a stand-alone chapter. The main purpose of this is to help identify and evaluate the intensity of uses in certain parks in the City, and to help educate the community, that as uses are moved from certain parks they will move to other neighborhoods.
- **The Chair** said that over the last few years, as work has been planned and prioritized, staff has discussed doing a comprehensive master plan for large parks in City. She does not recommend doing individual master plans, due to a lack of resources, e.g. when the federal government does land use plans, they are required to be updated every 10-12 years, finding resources to do this in the city on a recurring basis will be difficult. Additionally, if individual park master plans are done, intensity of uses may just move from park to park as seen when the Ft. Ward picnic uses were reduced. Many of those large picnics moved to other neighborhoods by necessity, causing concerns in those locations. Alexandria only a handful of parks large enough to accommodate these larger events. A master plan for the large parks should include: Ft. Ward, Ben Brenman, Four Mile Run, Chinquapin, and possibly others (Brooks-Oronoco Bay). This should be done in conjunction with results of the updated Needs Assessment now underway; each park would have a chapter, with appendix of uses, to help allocate resources. Ft. Ward should be done as part of a larger plan.
- **Ripley Forbes** - felt strongly that the master plan for Ft. Ward Park should be made a priority as suggested in the Advisory Groups' report, he said that Ft. Ward is unique and special because of its historical prospective, overuse, and graves recently discovered there. Mr. Forbes stated the City does not have money to do a larger master plan. While, he does not object to doing a large master plan for all parks (estimated cost ½ million), there is substantial interest in completing a master plan for Ft. Ward (\$150,000). The recommendations from Advisory Group and related studies excluded the soccer fields.
- **William Cromley**- we should support the recommendations of the Advisory Group. He suggested using the Ft. Ward Advisory report and recommendations as a model to show City Council and residents what can be done when these types of studies are undertaken, and how a master plan for all parks would prove beneficial in other parks in the City as well as Ft. Ward. In addition, he said that the preamble for a master plan for parks should state the City of Alexandria does not have any more land left, therefore we need to increase use at large parks. Adding lighting to increase field capacity is a perfect example- it doubles field use.
- **The Chair** said that in deference to Mr. Forbes strong feelings about not delaying a master plan for Ft. Ward, she would include in her letter that there was support on both sides.

- **Clark Mercer**- He sees both sides. Mr. Forbes point of soccer fields not included. Doing planning for parks ad hoc is problematic. Need to look at holistically and citywide.
- **The Chair** said when she spoke with Bob Moir (absent). He agreed that Ft. Ward is a special place; however, it needs to be planned in context with the other parks.
- **Brune**- he agrees with the Chair that it's a combined effort, and he with agrees with Ripley Forbes that Ft. Ward due to its uniqueness should have a master plan. Do Master Plan for Ft. Ward, under umbrella of whole master plan for City, or do first.
- **The Chair** said she disagrees with doing Ft. Ward first- all should be done together. Although majority of work is done for Ft. Ward this Commission will still need to have a public hearing and community discussion and that should be done together with the other relevant Commissions.
- **Ripley Forbes**- He understands, but does not necessarily agree with citywide-master plan for large parks. He contends that Ft. Ward is different from other parks. He has two-page letter of comments (from Tom Fulton) and will submit for record. He doesn't want the City to have an excuse to do nothing until it can find funding for a comprehensive multi-park plan master plan for all City Parks (that has mostly to do with fields and lights). There were grave injustices done at this park and to the African American community that just recently came to light. This park is special historically and should be recognized-as stated in the report. Threshold issue- If we cannot do anything until a master plan is done for City; this is a prescription for delay. Go with report and let City Council make the decision.
- **Chair**- she will say the need is eminent at Ft. Ward as well as in other parks.
- **Moving ahead in the interim**: Mr. Forbes, Brune, the Chair and staff discussed that there are many recommendations that can be done, in the interim until a master plan is completed for Ft. Ward. The Chair said that in the last year, some improvements have been made without master plan. Mr. Brune said the improvements done already are acknowledged in the report.
- The Chair asked if a consensus has been reached. **Action Item**- After much discussion, a consensus was reached to see what items could be moved forward in the interim until a master plan is done for Ft. Ward.
- **Standing committee for Ft. Ward Park: Discussion:**
- **Richard Brune** said that overall, the recommendations are good. Regarding suggestion of creating a group to oversee Ft. Ward Park; he stated there is already a "Friends of Ft. Ward" group, and many other groups in existence, that will now be more vocal.
- Director Spengler commented the Friends' group is primarily focused on the Civil War history/ museum.
- Chair, there are standing commissions including P&RC; neighborhood groups, Oakland Baptist church, etc. involved who can and should work together to focus on the management.
- **Ripley Forbes**- his general opinion is that the P&RC should endorse the Ft. Ward Advisory Group's recommendations that were developed over a thirteen-month period. Regarding a special advisory group for Ft. Ward, he feels the P&RC should not take a position, but let the recommendations stand on their own merits, and let City Council decide what action to take. The Department of Recreation recommends- no position. The P&RC should not be the oversight group. Don't say no to the separate group, say it is unnecessary for City Council to formally establish, but private efforts should be encouraged and supported.
- **William Cromley**- he is not familiar enough to make decision, Ft. Ward is different-partly due to the focus on it.
- **Richard Brune**- There has been much discussion about the deplorable conditions of Oakland Baptist Cemetery. The park and graves at the cemetery have been there for over 60 years, with little effort from the families and decedents to maintain the site.

- **Chair-** as part of Retreat held March 09; we recommended ramping up “Friends of Groups” in the City. The current group is focused on history; another group if formed, could focus on cultural aspects; raising funds- do things that a 501C3 group can do. Should the P&RC encourage a friends group that has a broader viewpoint as part of the solution?
- **Action Item:** Chair, will state that while additional focus of groups that may have an interest at Ft. Ward is important as park moves forward, the consensus of the P&RC is that it is unnecessary for the City Council to formally establish a group; however, private efforts should be encouraged.
- **Mr. Spengler, Director,** RPCA said a combined staff memo will be finished tomorrow recommending to Council, that a stand-alone Ft. Ward group not be formed, due to governance issues and existing groups overlapping and conflicting with each other. More understanding is needed on what the scope of governance responsibilities is for each group. Tom Fulton, Chair Ft. Ward Advisory Group, recommends in his letter that a group is formed to oversee the implementation of recommendations. Mr. Spengler feels this is not needed and that it’s a duplicate effort. Yearly presentations to Council on progress would be better. If a citizens group is formed, it should go towards doing emerging master planning for the long-term phases. Having sufficient staff to attend frequent meetings is also a concern.
- **Chair-** it is the P&RC overall sense that the P&RC offers support for the work and recommendations in the report. Whatever tasks can proceed with no cost to the City or private contributions should be looked at.

V. **Next Steps for Creation of an Adult Sports Advisory Group** - Follow-up from February. Ripley Forbes said a preliminary meeting was held. The Chair said she has spoken with Mac Slover, RPCA Youth Sports about doing outreach to different age groups, women, etc., she asked members interested in being involved with the group to let her know.

VI. **Follow-up on Public Hearing on the Four Mile Run Park Expansion Concept Plan, 4109 – 4125 Mount Vernon Avenue:** The Chair asked if there was any discussion and for a vote- there was no further discussion. **Action Item-** Richard Brune motioned to endorse the Four Mile Run Park Expansion Plan. Ripley Forbes seconded the motion. All were in favor- the motion passed.

VII. **Vote on Officers for Coming Year (Follow-up from February):** This is a follow-up item from February-no quorum. The Chair asked if there were any additions to the slate of officers- there were none. **Action Item:** Ripley Forbes motioned to approve the slate of officers as nominated. William Cromley seconded the motion. All were in favor. Nominated approved officers: Judy Guse-Noritake, Chair; Bob Moir, Vice Chair; and Richard Brune, Secretary.

VIII. **Division Updates:** To View Full Staff Reports go to [www.alexandria.gov/Recreation/Commission](http://www.alexandria.gov/Recreation/Commission) reports.

- A. **Recreation Programs and Services Update** - William Chesley- See Staff Report
  - Additional discussion: Mac Slover, Director Youth Sports asked him to mention:
    - 1. Alexandria Little Baseball history made, Friday, April 1 at Ben Bren Baseball Field when they hosted the inaugural little league game under the lights at 6:30 p.m. Event was a tribute to all those who supported the City’s field upgrade project which brought lights to the little league field for the first time. Many people and officials were on hand to support the event.
    - 2. Little League game, April 9, at Simpson Stadium.
- B. **Operations & Park Planning Monthly Report** – Roger Blakeley (absent). See Staff Report – no questions or comments.
- C. **Office of the Arts Update** –See Staff Report by Alisa Carrel.
- D. **Park Planning Updates-** Ron Kagawa – See Staff Reports
  - i. **Divisional Updates-** no comments.
  - ii. **Citizen Request Process** -See Staff Report- new process developed to accept citizen’s requests for capital projects: establish priorities for budget. Twice a year RPCA will accept applications for work. The P&RC will be asked to review projects by Planning District. Large projects will go to City

Council first for approval. Director Spengler said all CIP projects will be brought before the P&RC for comment and review to for help determine priorities. Note: corrections to dates Pg. 2- Submission Deadlines (change from Nov. to Oct.), Review Cadence Dates (change date from Dec. to Nov.)

- iii. **Aquatics Master Plan-See Staff Report-** Aquatics master plan being reviewed by three firms: Kimberly-Horn/Cousilman-Hunsaker and Brailsford & Dunlavey. Will look at current City aquatic facilities and what City needs and future investments are in order for the City to be competitive. Staff and consultants will look at other similar jurisdictions to benchmark. It will be a two-phase process. Consultants will meet with staff and user groups the last week of March.
  - iv. **Needs Assessment-** Laura Durham report that the RPCA staff is working with a consultant firm Leisure Vision on a final draft survey (See Staff Report and draft survey.) The survey will be mailed to 3000 city residents in April. Results will be benchmarked with last report (2002), other jurisdictions, and certain national standards. Discussion: Ripley Forbes- said many of the survey questions are not actionable. He made several suggestions: 1. that questions be sharpened and better defined; 2. that demographics information be moved to beginning of survey, to capture information early, and 3. that staff defines recreation programs up-front, as some people are unfamiliar with the City's recreation programs. Stephen Mercer-commented that some questions have multiple parts (30), takes longer than 10-20 minutes, may cause survey fatigue. Chair Noritake-said she has sent some comments to Dana Wedeles, and that a question should be added on development of new swimming pools. Ms. Durham collected completed surveys, and directed members to send further comments to her or Ms. Wedeles. Ms. Durham said that comments will be taken into consideration, however questions may not be changed, based on previous experience of consultant Leisure Vision on how best to get responses to questions.
- E. **Marketing, Public Relations & Special Events-** See Staff Report- Jack Browand noted two date corrections to his report: Kelly Cares Race is April 16; Project Discovery Walk is April 23.

**IX. Director's Report-** James Spengler: - See Director's Report.

A. **FY12 Budget and CIP process review:**

- Budget Memo- three questions: 1. Athletic Fields- once Witter and Hammond fields are completed- RPCA will be four fields short of meeting current demand. There is a 6-year gap of no new fields or field conversions and that will exist for some time with the current budget situation. Potomac Yard has natural turf installed, 2. Staff was asked whether the Sheriff can provide an additional crew to assist with tree watering. The Sheriff's Office can only staff one crew and cannot expand service, 3. What was the cost of the Ft. Ward recommendations? They are shown in the report discussed at this meeting.
- B. **Jones Point Park Update:** - See Staff Report. Jack Browand reported construction activities continue on schedule. The majority of large invasive plant removal has been completed. On March 26, there will be a JPP Community Liaison Group site visit and tour, Commissioner Brooks will attend. The next scheduled JPP Liaison group meeting is Tuesday, May 17, 7 p.m. at Lee Center.

**X. Retreat Action Items:** No Action.

- A. Next Steps on Draft Bylaws.
- B. **Other items for discussion-** the Chair commented that the P&RC has completed quite a few items from the March 2009 Retreat Action List. Mr. Cromley said more needs to be done on ACPS, RPCA school/recreation center coordination issue – See Item XI-H.

**XI. Reports from Commissioners (verbal updates):**

- A. **Youth Policy Commission** – Clark Mercer – the YPC has been disbanded, and a new larger youth group formed. Mr. Mercer will serve on the newly formed youth group.
- B. **Waterfront Committee** – William Cromley. As mentioned, the last meeting was very productive; the committee is in the process of making a formal recommendation on the Waterfront SAP.
- C. **Youth Sports Committee** – Jeffrey Murphy (absent). Mr. Spengler reported that a meeting will be held April 12<sup>th</sup> at Francis Hammond School. Issue being discussed has policy implications for future projects. Questions being asked: are there any conditions that can be put in place to satisfy community concerns. Staff is concerned, that if conditions are put in place, it will be more difficult to manage or make changes in the future. The Chair encouraged P&RC members who support artificial turf and lights to attend the meeting.

The ACPS and school board wants this project to go forward and there is some push-back from community. In response to concerns about adult use of field, Mr. Kagawa said there is perception, that some adults groups may bring undesirable people into the neighborhood. Mr. Mercer disagreed with these perceptions, and said that some bias may exist. Mr. Chesley, Deputy Director RPCA said some concerns deal with illegal use of fields, these concerns are being addressed.

- D. Four Mile Run – (Ripley Forbes). The Chair reported on the Joint Task Force meeting- there was a review from the technical engineers; construction sequencing was discussed. On April 2- there will be a walking tour members are invited.
- E. Charles Houston Memorial Project – William Cromley- April 2 is presentation by the four artists.
- F. Freedman’s Cemetery- Bob Moir (absent). Chair said project is moving along.
- G. Beauregard Corridor – David Dexter’s term has ended. The Chair has asked him to continue as the liaison to the P&RC. They will meet with Cathy Puskar and JBG tomorrow. John Sullivan will replace Mr. Dexter on the P&RC from District III.
- H. ACPS & Capital Improvements- Henry Brooks’ term has ended; this will be his last meeting. Judy Noritake reported- more focus needed on the schools. She currently attends all joint Council and ACPS meetings, and would welcome others attending meetings to lend support to issues. She has also been meeting monthly with John Komoroske, Chair of the Planning Commission and Yvonne Folkerts, Chair of the School Board. At a recent meeting, there was discussion about joint planning between ACPS and RPCA for new facilities. The City Manager said if they decide to do this, the City should hire one architectural team. Councilman Rob Krupicka has been supportive of collaboration on school issues. P&RC and RPCA should continue to stay on top of issues. The new schools sequence was discussed; Jefferson Houston, Patrick Henry, Cora Kelly and one yet to be named. Councilman Krupicka has pushed for Cora Kelly that there needs to be further discussion before plans are done because so many-disparate plans are in flux near this location.
  - Update Dental Clinics at school issue- no further action at this time.
  - Brooks- reported that RPCA held a dance for all ages last Friday. Mercer mentioned that he started this event when he was at T.C. Williams, H.S.
- I. Jones Point Park Liaison Group- Judy Noritake- see Director’s report Item IX-B.
- J. Other.

**XII.** Agenda items for April meeting and location: Next meeting is April 21.  
Agenda items- Waterfront Plan Public Hearing, April 5, and Hammond School fields issue.

Henry Brooks announced he will be stepping down from the P&RC. The Chair, members and staff thanked Mr. Brooks for his service.

**XIII.** List of Upcoming Public Meetings- a list was distributed at the meeting.

**XIV.** Adjournment: 9:20 p.m.

Ad Hoc Fort Ward Advisory Group Recommendations

Lead Department	Funding Source	Advisory Group Recommendation	Cost Estimate – one time expense	Cost estimate notes/Unit	Annual Cost Estimates	Annual cost estimate unit
GS	CIP	Rehabilitate restrooms		*estimate by 3/21		
No authority	op	Police speeding				
OHA	CIP	Signage and protection program for graves		Included in interpretive plan		
OHA	OP	Cultural Resource Inventory Phase II (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)	\$75,000	Funded		
OHA	OP	Cultural Resource Inventory Phase III(as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)	\$120,000	Minimum estimate only *Refer to Memo		
OHA	OP	Interpretation of Cultural and Historic Resources	\$239,000	81,000 funded by grants		
OHA	OP	Cemetery on National Registry				
OHA	OP	Joint outreach (RPCA/OHA)			\$30,000	minimum
OHA	OP	Completion of historical research and compilation of history report (necessary to begin Fort Ward Master Plan)	\$20,000	Funded		
RPCA	CIP	Vegetation Management Plan (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)		One week RPCA staff time		
RPCA	CIP	Relocate playground	\$215,000			
RPCA	CIP	Tree replacement				
RPCA	CIP	Restore soccer field/park gate	\$10,000			
RPCA	CIP	Plants on east boundary	\$6,125			
RPCA	CIP	Install gate arm on ring road	13,000			
RPCA	CIP	New entry booth	\$50,000			
RPCA	OP	Regular tree care plan	\$60,000	(based on existing inventory :2x240 hours @ \$125/hour)	\$10,500	for 30 trees per year
RPCA	OP	Large tree removal (storm damagae, etc.)				

Ad Hoc Fort Ward Advisory Group Recommendations

Lead Department	Funding Source	Advisory Group Recommendation	Cost Estimate – one time expense	Cost estimate notes/Unit	Annual Cost Estimates	Annual cost estimate unit
RPCA	op	Best Practices for turf management		Staff time to develop plan		Staff time for monitoring
RPCA	op	Dog park signage				
RPCA	OP	Dog park relocation				
RPCA	OP	Clear deadfall from wooded area			\$6,900	
RPCA	op	Strengthen picnic rules				
RPCA	op	Memorial Tree program				
RPCA	OP	New tree maintenance program			\$3,095	
RPCA	op	Review mowing plan				
RPCA	op	Monitor invasives				
RPCA	op	Plant plan for wildlife (as section of master plan)				
RPCA	OP	Mowing plan for public review		Staff time		
RPCA	OP	Monitor new gate arm			\$12,420	
RPCA	op	Maintain increased weekend staffing				
RPCA/GS	CIP	Assessment of storage area and any related changes				
RPCA/OHA	CIP	Natural Resource Inventory (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)		One week RPCA staff time		
RPCA/OHA	CIP	Historic/Cultural Interpretive Plan (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)	\$10,000	Ongoing		Staff time
RPCA/OHA	CIP	Historically appropriate park signage	\$4,800			
RPCA/OHA	OP	Increase volunteer program + volunteer coordinator 1/2 FTE			\$2,512	
RPCA/OHA	op	Complete MOU for public review		Staff time		

Ad Hoc Fort Ward Advisory Group Recommendations

Lead Department	Funding Source	Advisory Group Recommendation	Cost Estimate – one time expense	Cost estimate notes/Unit	Annual Cost Estimates	Annual cost estimate unit
RPCA/OHA	OP	Historic turf management			\$13,560	
RPCA/OHA	op	Train RPCA staff on history				Staff time
RPCA/OHA	op	Electronic communications				
RPCA/OHA/TES	CIP	Community Input Plan (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)		Staff/Management time		
RPCA/OHA/TES	CIP	Joint Management Plan (as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)		Staff/Management time		
RPCA/OHA/TES	CIP	Decommission maintenance yard	\$220,000	145,000 for work plus 75,000 for cultural resource mitigation/monitoring		
RPCA/OHA/TES	CIP	Master Plan for Fort Ward Park and Museum Area	\$150,000	minimum		
RPCA/OHA/TES	op	Citizens Advisory Group		Staff/Management time		24 hours staff time/month
RPCA/OHA/TES	op	Monthly interdepartmental mtgs				
RPCA/OHA/TES	op	Regular joint reports to Council				
RPCA/OHA/TES	op	Employee performance review				
RPCA/TES	CIP	Install Raingardens		Plant materials + 1-3% cost of materials for labor x size		
RPCA/TES	CIP	Natural walkway	\$25,000	trail + 8 benches		
RPCA/TES	CIP	Permeable hardscape	\$24,000			
RPCA/TES	CIP	Parking plan				
RPCA/Volunteers?	op	Survey birds in park		Staff time		

Ad Hoc Fort Ward Advisory Group Recommendations

Lead Department	Funding Source	Advisory Group Recommendation	Cost Estimate – one time expense	Cost estimate notes/Unit	Annual Cost Estimates	Annual cost estimate unit
TES	CIP	Stormwater Plan ( as section of Fort Ward Master Plan)	\$655,000	Plan and study only is 85,000. 500,000 for implementation with OHA 7 5,000 estimate for related cultural resource mitigation. *Refer to Memo		
TES	CIP	Roadway loop resurfacing	116,000			
TES	OP	Remove concrete from stream				
TES	op	Improve/repairs to roadway loop				
TES	op	Install water breaks				
TES	op	Regular inlet maintenance				
TES/GS	CIP	Rain barrels				
	CIP	Replace cemetery fence	\$40,000			
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,052,925</b>		<b>\$78,987</b>	

**Parks Commission Consideration of Recommendations about  
City Management at Fort Ward Park**

**Statement by**

**Tom Fulton**

**Thursday, March 17, 2011**

First of all, thank you for allowing me to say a few words about this important issue. The Commission is to be thanked for appointing Bob Moir, Ripley Forbes and Rich Brune to the Advisory Group during its consideration of City management issues at Fort Ward. Their contribution to the effort was considerable and much appreciated. I would also like to thank the Chair, Judy Noritaki, for her recommendation to the City that ground penetrating radar be employed to learn more about the historic and cultural resources that abound at Fort Ward. This effort has proved to be extraordinarily useful.

First off let me say I've seen the cost estimates by the city of complying with the Recommendations laid out by the Advisory Group and I would disagree with many of them. I think that sensible individuals can work out a process to work out many of the concerns without breaking the bank. My goal has been to urge the city to adopt the Recommendations and then begin working in a positive way to address the problems identified.

Area citizens had been expressing concerns about city decisions at Fort Ward for months before the city council formed by resolution a citizens group to provide it recommendations about management at Fort Ward. Problems such as city work trucks parked near and on marked and unmarked graves in a so-called maintenance yard had led to ad hoc citizen meetings and attracted considerable press attention.

After a year of consideration the Advisory Group has sent to the City and City Council its recommendations. It is those recommendations that you are being asked to consider tonight.

Much has been accomplished in the past two years. The Parks Department has, for instance, revamped its picnic permitting process to eliminate instances where an application would indicate a gathering of 35 which would actually result in upwards of 900 people attending. Jim Spengler, of the Parks Department and Lance Mallamo have pledged to work closely together to solve problems that arise as a result of the joint management of the Park.

The archaeological and historic investigation at Fort Ward has led to a new understanding of the African American neighborhood that lived at Fort Ward from the Civil War to its creation as a Park in the 1960's. That community still exists in the Woods Avenue section of Alexandria near T.C. Williams High School. They have formed a non-profit descendants group to further explore and understand the cultural contributions of the Fort Ward community to Alexandria at large.

The City has undertaken an archaeological examination of areas within Fort Ward Park and is rapidly moving ahead with a much greater understanding of the cultural and historical resources of the Park. The last time archaeology was employed at Fort Ward was in 1961 when the Civil War earthen fort was first acquired by the City to prevent its loss to developers. That work led to Alexandria making perhaps one of the most significant contributions to the American Civil War Centennial.

Fort Ward preserves for all Americans the best example of the Forts built by the Union to protect Washington during the Civil War.

Now, fifty years later, the City is once again using archaeology to understand events at Fort Ward just in time for the Sesquicentennial, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War. Now, the focus is not on the generals and their battles but rather on the common man whose life was so up-turned by the events of the Civil War. It was the work at Fort Ward that the National Trust for Historic Preservation cited when designating Alexandria one of its "Desirable Destinations for 2011." Alexandria is the only city with such a designation in Virginia.

Much has been done. And the City is to be commended for taking action. But much remains to be done at Fort Ward. The archaeology needs to be finished. A storm water runoff mitigation plan needs to be devised and implemented and a Park Master Plan needs to be developed for Fort Ward that emphasizes Citizen input.

On Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at 5:30 PM, the Alexandria City Council has scheduled a Council work session to consider the Advisory Groups recommendations. Deputy City Manager Mark Jinks has asked Jim Spengler, Lance Mallamo and the Advisory Group to be prepared to speak before that City Council Work Session.

Fort Ward is not a Park where citizens today can have picnics but might in the future be given up for development. It is rather a place where history resides in virtually every square foot. Those of us here tonight have an obligation to protect Fort Ward not only for our benefit and enjoyment, but to ensure that it is preserved for our children and their children, now and into the future. We must commit to work to restore Fort Ward Park to the cultural jewel it is for now and into the future.

Thank you.