

**Summary Minutes - DRAFT**  
**ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Tuesday, June 17, 2014**  
**City Hall**  
**Sister Cities Conference Room**

**Commission Members**

***Present***

Dennis Auld, Citizen Park Planning District II  
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission  
Howard Bergman, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)  
John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.  
Arthur Fox, east of Washington St. and south of King St.  
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair  
Jacob Hoogland, Alexandria Archeological Commission  
Mari Lou Livingood, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Jody Manor, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)  
Stephen Mutty, Citizen Park Planning District I  
Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council  
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.  
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association  
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.  
Ryan Wojtanowski, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

***Absent:***

Suzanne Bethel, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)  
Morgan Delaney, Historic Alexandria Foundation  
Shirley Downs, Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission  
Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholder

***Vacancy:***

Citizen Park Planning District III

**City Staff:**

Emily Baker, Director, Project Implementation (DPI)  
Tony Gammon, Civil Engineer IV, DPI  
Lt. Don Hayes, Alexandria Police Department (APD)  
James Hixon, Dockmaster, RPCA  
Cheryl Lawrence, RPCA, (for Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Sandra Marks, Acting Deputy Director, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA  
Gary Wagner, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)  
Nancy Williams, Department of Project Implementation (DPI), and Principal Planner, P&Z

**Guests:**

Engin Artemel, resident  
Christine Bernstein, resident  
Brian Buzzell, resident  
Susan Cohen, Public Art Committee  
Bert Ely, Friends of the Waterfront, Old Town Civic Association  
Dene Garbow, Harborside  
Kathryn Papp, resident  
Dan Straub, Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC)

**Welcome and Introductions**

Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. She announced that the Commission will have a busy July.

**Approval of Minutes from May 20, 2014**

Moved by Watters, seconded by Hoogland, to approve the May 20, 2014 summary minutes with technical corrections as needed. Passed by unanimous voice vote.

**Waterfront Walk Debrief**

Lawrence reviewed highlights of the Commission's June 7, 2014 Waterfront Walk that had drawn over 30 participants.

She reported that the trees noticed to be in poor condition near Robinson Terminal South have been marked for replacement.

Lawrence said staff is reviewing the proposals received in response to the Windmill Hill Bulkhead Project RFP, community review of the proposals is expected to begin in fall 2014, and construction is expected to begin in 2015.

Lawrence said responses to the City's RFP for the Marina Wharf Strengthening project for the Torpedo Factory Pier are due by June 26, 2014 and staff expects the contract to be awarded in late July 2014. She said the work will likely take about a week and is not expected to disrupt service at the Marina.

***Discussion***

***Parking spaces near Rivergate kayak launch***

Auld said he had noticed some parking spaces in the area of the kayak launch near Rivergate had been removed, even though the Waterfront Plan as approved by Council recommends adding parking spaces to facilitate access to the kayak launch. Auld said the Commission should consider when it's appropriate for the Commission to receive advance notification of proposals and actions that modify elements of the Waterfront Plan. He said a Rivergate representative had also proposed at the June 14, 2014 Council meeting that the kayak launch itself be removed from the Waterfront Plan.

Smedberg said the Waterfront design that Council approved June 14, 2014 is only conceptual and Council recognizes that during the Waterfront Plan's outreach process significant public support was voiced for having a kayak launch within the core area as a low-impact way to

activate the Waterfront. Van Fleet said the Commission should be advised in advance about when implementation actions are expected.

Baker said staff expects a phasing plan and implementation schedule (phasing/implementation plan) that includes cost estimates to be finished by fall 2014 and available for review and discussion. Baker said staff also intends to identify for the Commission aspects of the phasing/implementation plan about which Commission recommendations will be especially helpful.

Watters said the Commission should continue to be attentive to how proposals to modify Waterfront Plan elements will affect the ability of City residents as a whole to enjoy the Waterfront and not only to those residents who live in a nearby Waterfront neighborhood . She said without such continuing oversight of implementation actions, the Waterfront Plan's City-wide benefits could be "nibbled away at" by small-scale neighborhood opposition to agreed-upon Waterfront Plan elements.

***Commission will review the City's Waterfront from the river.***

Hall said the Commission plans to schedule a summer 2014 boat tour to review the City's Waterfront from the perspective of the river. Livingood suggested representatives from federal and state agencies with Waterfront-related responsibilities, including grants, should be invited to join the boat tour, as well as representatives from corporate entities interested in the Waterfront. Livingood agreed to compile a list of potential organizations to invite, such as the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**Carr Hospitality Hotel Update**

Wagner reported staff has reviewed Carr Hospitality's final two site plans for the hotel it plans for 220 S. Union Street. He said it is hoped that the site plan will be finalized by the end of summer 2014 and it is expected that the two structures will be demolished by year's end. He reported that Carr Hospitality had recently requested approval for demolishing the existing Alexandria Yacht Building so they can use the site for staging during the construction. He said the site would later be converted for use as an interim park until the permanent park planned for the area can be implemented. Wagner said the construction process should to take about 18 months and Point Lumley Park is expected to stay open during construction.

***Discussion***

In response to Commission questions, Wagner said Carr Hospitality has been closely coordinating its hotel design and construction planning with City planning for its flood mitigation and landscape design projects. He said Carr Hospitality has been working directly with the Olin and URS teams and the City's inter-agency coordinating group to ensure Carr's planning is meshed effectively with the City's landscape and flood mitigation plans. Williams said staff has been working to ensure ongoing coordination between planning and implementation of the public and private Waterfront elements.

Resident Kathryn Papp asked if a plan would be developed for how to minimize the impact of moving materials related to the Carr Hospitality hotel's construction and demolition through City

streets. Hall said the question could be considered when the phasing report for Waterfront-related actions, expected to be ready for review in early fall 2014, is discussed since the demolition is not expected to start until late winter 2014.

### **Unit Block Of King Street Update**

#### ***Testing of lower King Street Backflow Valve elements***

Gammon reported that staff is testing the elements installed in May 2014 for the Backflow Valve Project at the foot of King Street to determine why they are not functioning as expected. Papp said that complications can arise when implementing any actions that affect the combined sewer system in Old Town due to backup and drainage system issues. She suggested that William Skraback, of T&ES's Office of Environmental Quality, be consulted about the problem since he is working on how the City will respond to the federal government's mandate regarding the combined sewer system.

#### ***Delay implementing pilot project for pedestrian plaza on King Street Unit Block***

Marks reported that because funding is not available this year to maintain the pedestrian plaza planned for the Unit Block as a pilot project the project is being deferred for a year even though funds are available for its capital costs. She said staff will recommend that maintenance funding be included in the next year's budget. Bergman said the need to delay implementing the plaza a year because the City budget could not accommodate maintenance funding is a reminder that each year there will be fights over how to fund maintenance of Waterfront Plan's elements as they are implemented. In response to Bernstein's question about whether the City has considered creating a public-private partnership to cover the costs of maintaining the Unit Block pedestrian plaza, Marks said FY2015 funds are not available for the City's portion of a public-private partnership to cover maintenance costs.

#### ***Planning for the 100 block of King Street?***

*Note: See May 14, 2014 T&ES memo re lower King Street multi-modal feasibility study posted to the City website.*

Van Fleet said planning for the King Street Unit Block and the 100 block should be coordinated. Marks said the Unit Block pedestrian plaza is only being planned as a pilot project at this point.

Hall asked when the Commission will be updated about planning for the 100 block of King Street. Marks said staff will update the Commission in fall 2014 on the results of community feedback on the feasibility study. She said a public meeting had been held a few weeks earlier and additional public meetings are planned for the summer.

Watters asked if capital costs for the 100 block might need to be deferred. Marks said the current budget includes funding to implement the King Street 100 block pilot.

#### ***Potential parking and circulation impacts***

Ely asked where tour buses would load and unload passengers once the Unit Block and 100 block of King Street were closed. Marks said motor coach parking and circulation will be included when the City updates its baseline parking inventory conducted during development of the Waterfront Plan. She said the parking inventory update is expected to begin in fall 2014.

Bergman said parking and traffic flow are two issues critical to the success of the Waterfront Plan's implementation. He said Commission briefings about implementing individual elements of the Waterfront Plan should include information about a project's potential impact on Old Town parking and traffic flow.

Marks said staff will be carefully consider the comprehensive impacts on Old Town parking and traffic flow as Waterfront Plan elements are implemented and has already collected significant data about this that can be shared with the Commission. Hall said motor coach management is an example of traffic circulation planning that requires a comprehensive approach so policies do not push motor coaches out of one Old Town neighborhood, such as the Waterfront, into another. Van Fleet said the City should ban motor coaches from Old Town and shuttle motor coach passengers into Old Town.

**Agency Reports - none**

**Marina Subcommittee**

Thayer reviewed highlights of the June 12, 2014 Marina Committee meeting. He said the meeting had discussed the upcoming City Marina dredging, the structural strengthening of the Torpedo Factory Wharf and, as recommended by the recent Marina Facility Condition Assessment, the plans to upgrade all the Marina's power pedestals. He said that once the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has approved the plan the RFP can be issued, likely in fall 2014, and work can proceed once a contractor has been chosen.

***Pleasure boat slip holders at Council's June 14, 2014 meeting***

Thayer reported pleasure boat owners who are Marina slip leaseholders had, at the June 14, 2014 Council meeting, voiced their opposition to the Waterfront Plan's intent to remove pleasure boat slips from the Marina. He said Council's consensus was that the Waterfront Commission should examine the issue and develop options to address it. Hall said the Marina Committee's July 10, 2014 meeting will discuss ideas for how to provide pleasure boat slips and develop a Commission recommendation to Council.

***ODBC agreement***

Thayer said the Waterfront Walk had been discussed, especially the Beachcombers site to which the ODBC clubhouse will be relocated per the City-ODBC agreement. He reported the ODBC Board of Governors had approved the City's proposal the previous evening and ODBC membership would vote on it between July 19-21, 2014.

***River debris***

Thayer thanked Mutty for presenting at the Committee meeting an overview of the Waterfront's river debris problem. Thayer said the July 10, 2014 Committee meeting will discuss a possible Commission recommendation to the City about how to study possible options for addressing the debris issue. Livingood offered to invite John Kellett, of the Clearwater Mills company, to discuss with the Commission the "Waterwheel" technology his company has developed for removing trash coming downriver, technology that is used to remove Baltimore Harbor's trash. Livingood also suggested a Commission delegation meet with the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the problem. She distributed an article about Kellett's technology and its use from the June 2014 **Bay Journal** (p. 13) "Water wheel a driving force in removing Baltimore Harbor's trash".

**Note:** The **Bay Journal** article is posted online at:

[http://www.bayjournal.com/article/baltimores\\_got\\_a\\_brand\\_new\\_trash\\_wheel](http://www.bayjournal.com/article/baltimores_got_a_brand_new_trash_wheel)

Hall said Livingood's discussion items should be added to the agenda of one of the Commission's next meetings, likely either the July 10, 2014 Marina Committee meeting, or the July 15 or July 24, 2014 Commission meetings at which the RTN and RTS redevelopment plans will be presented. She said the RTN plans will be briefed at one meeting and RTS at the other meeting, with dates to be confirmed. Auld said he hopes that after the Commission has studied the question it will develop a recommendation to Council for how the City might address river debris cleanup as it does for City parks.

***Plans for new Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) slips***

Auld asked that the Commission be briefed on City options for providing slips to ODBC and asked staff to provide a written review of the process the City needs to follow if it decides it would like to move the pier head, an action requiring federal agencies' approval. The process for working with federal agencies was briefly discussed by Commissioners and staff. Thayer said ODBC has offered to sign any applications that may be needed for requesting agency approval of City actions that affect the pier head since ODBC owns the riparian rights.

Williams said she will provide the Commission Appendix 2 of Waterfront Plan that outlines the process for working with federal agencies.

**Reports From Commissioners**

**Hall** announced that Van Fleet had been elected as the new OTCA president.

**Manor** said the Waterfront Market would host a joint meeting at 5:30 p.m. that day of the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association and the Old Town Business and Professional Association.

**Announcements/Public Comments**

Hall said the Marina Committee will discuss the Pleasure Boat Slip holders report at its July 2014 meeting.

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Lawrence announced that the City's annual Birthday Celebration is set for Oronoco Bay Park on Saturday, July 12, 2014 beginning at 7 p.m. and with fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.