



Alexandria Waterfront Commission

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

1108 Jefferson Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

May 20, 2014

Re: Approval of Olin Design for Waterfront

To: Honorable Mayor and members of City Council
Planning Commission

At the Alexandria Waterfront Commission's meeting on March 18, 2014, the Commission established a subcommittee to review, evaluate, and determine the degree to which the Flood Mitigation and Landscape Schematic Design (Design) being prepared by The Olin Studio adheres to the principles of the Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan (SAP) approved by Council in 2012. Olin, its subcontractors, and URS Corporation are in the process of creating a comprehensive concept design for the public areas covered by the Waterfront Small Area Plan.

Specifically the subcommittee was asked to focus on the goals set in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the SAP. The subcommittee evaluated overall goals of the Design as well as goals specifically related to designated areas from Tide Lock Park in the north to Wolfe Street in the south, with detailed attention to the core area between Duke and Queen Streets. A draft of the subcommittee's position was presented to the full Commission for action at its May 20, 2014 regular meeting. Following is the report from the full Commission:

We believe the Design achieves the overall goals of the Waterfront Small Area plan for uninterrupted public access to the waterfront along the entire length of the geographic area of the SAP. The Olin Design permits achievement of the SAP's goals of weaving art and history into the waterfront in ways that respect and fit Alexandria's past, its present character, and its goals for the future. The Design achieves the SAP's goal of retaining authenticity, creativity and connections to the water, striving for world class design, and permitting more public access and liveliness along the water's edge. We also believe that the planned flood mitigation measures enable the accomplishment of the goal of avoiding 90 percent of current flooding events.

While the Design accommodates all the goals expressed in the SAP, we acknowledge that in keeping with the intended schedule, it is currently only 30 percent complete in some areas and 15 percent in others. More detail will be required in future phases to fully implement the SAP.

Further, the accomplishment of many of the SAP goals that fall within the public domain will depend on funding by the City. A realistic evaluation of the goals will need to include both capital and maintenance cost estimates, which Olin will provide. The SAP implementation is expected to take place over time; hence we emphasize the importance of including a sequencing plan to guide priority

implementation of public improvements that relate to changes brought by private developments allowed for in the SAP. Critical flood mitigation infrastructure is an important factor in the sequencing.

The Design lays out landscape improvements for the public areas of a series of specific geographic sectors along the waterfront (existing large parks outside the core area, for example, and the “rooms” designated in the Plan D core area) also detailed in the SAP. The goals for these geographic areas have been addressed in the Design to the satisfaction of the Commission in terms of environmental and accessibility improvements, inclusion of art and history elements, and better access, animation, and pedestrian flow.

Details not yet fully addressed include the following:

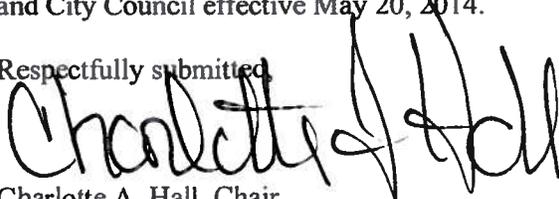
- Vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and water transportation, as well as parking.
- Adhering to and reinforcing the goal of retaining the “working waterfront” aspect of our shoreline, accommodating both commercial and private boating needs with fully functioning piers that are available to their users without disrupting other uses. This includes keeping the Seaport Foundation workshops a functioning part of the waterfront.
- Should the final boat club agreement not provide for construction of new piers at the Beachcomber location, consideration for additional pleasure boat and transient slips should be addressed.
- A critical factor in implementing all parts of the design will be to include plans for governance and management of new facilities and funding for operations and maintenance.

Overall, the Commission believes the Olin and URS Design provides a plan that will accommodate the goals laid out in the City’s Waterfront Small Area Plan as it applies to the public areas and the SAP’s flood mitigation goals.

Should the Mayor or Members of Council wish to explore these conclusions in more detail, the Commission will be glad to accommodate such requests. We attach a worksheet detailing how we evaluated the Design against the Plan.

The Alexandria Waterfront Commission voted to accept the report above and forward it to the Mayor and City Council effective May 20, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte A. Hall, Chair
Alexandria Waterfront Commission

cc: Waterfront Commission