

**Summary Minutes  
Monthly Meeting  
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION  
Tuesday, November 17, 2015  
Sister Cities Conference Room  
City Hall  
301 King St  
7:30 a.m.**

**Commission Members**

***Present***

Charles Ablard, Historic Alexandria  
Dennis Auld, Citizen Park Planning District II  
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission  
Jerry Bennis, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholders  
Howard Bergman, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)  
Suzanne Bethel, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)  
John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.  
Shirley Downs, Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission  
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair  
Jody Manor, Visit Alexandria (formerly Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association)  
Stephen Mutty, Citizen Park Planning District I  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Archaeology Commission  
Kathy Seifert, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
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, Environmental Policy Commission

***Excused:***

Sally Masterson, East of Washington St. and south of King St

***Absent:***

Kathryn Kolbe, Citizen, Park Planning District III

**City Staff**

Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison and Division Chief, Public Relations, Special Events & Waterfront Operations, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Tony Gammon, of Project Implementation (DPI)  
Captain Don Hayes, Alexandria Police Department  
Jim Hixon, Dockmaster, RPCA  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA  
Nancy Williams, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)

**Guests:**

Christine Bernstein, resident  
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Bert Ely, Friends of Alexandria Waterfront  
Doug Gosnell  
Hal Hardaway, resident  
Josh Nadas, National Park Service (NPS)  
Greg Rowles, Sr. V.P., American Real Estate Partners  
Dan Straub, Urban Design Advisory Committee

**Welcome and Introductions**

Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes from October 20, 2015**

Thayer moved and Van Fleet seconded that the October 20, 2015 minutes be approved. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Tide Lock Park Maintenance Update American Real Estate Partners**

*Canal Center Plaza conceptual design presentation posted to:*

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WC17Mov2015CanalCenter.pdf>

Greg Rowles of American Real Estate Partners, the new owners of Canal Center, briefed the Commission on the ongoing and planned improvements for Canal Center Plaza and Tide Lock Park. He said improvements include waterproofing of the lock and garage areas and building-related improvements. He said work on the garage began several months ago and is expected to be completed by spring 2016. Rowles said -demolition of the plaza is expected to begin within a few weeks and is expected to take several months.

***Improvements to the lock***

Rowles said the waterproofing in the replica of the old wooden canal lock once at this location will be replaced and, after its waterproofing has been restored, portions of the lock will once again be able to be filled with water. He said work on the project is expected to be finished by fall 2016.

In response to a question, Rowles said there are no plans for the redevelopment to include residential units.

***Discussion***

***Signage***

In response to Pulliam's question, Rowles said the Tide Lock Park signage will be replaced and have a design consistent with other signage in Tide Lock Park.

***Plantings***

In response to Wojtanowski's question, Rowles said there will be no loss of plantings, including trees. He said the City has fully vetted landscape plan.

***Parking***

In response to Mutty, Rowles said the Canal Center garage has about 1200 parking spaces. In response to Dunn's question, Rowles said the garage is currently about 70-75 percent full on weekdays and is also open on weekends also.

***Design coordination with Waterfront Small Area Plan***

Auld asked if the Canal Center team has been made aware of the Waterfront Plan's design guidelines. Nancy Williams said City staff has met with American Realty to discuss the Waterfront Plan's landscape design and its common elements.

***Waterproofing durability***

In response to Downs' question, Rowles said the waterproofing membrane should have a 30-year warranty and proper maintenance should extend its life further.

***Public Discussion***

In response to Ely's question, Rowles said there are no plans to include a small hotel in the Canal Center redevelopment.

In response to a question, Nancy Williams said the Waterfront Plan includes a recommendation to include a non-motorized boat launch in this general area.

### **Jones Point Park Recreation Plan Update**

NPS information is posted to: [www.parkplanning.nps.gov/jonespoint](http://www.parkplanning.nps.gov/jonespoint)

Josh Nadas, National Park Service (NPS) community planner for George Washington Parkway, reviewed community meetings on the Jones Point Park Recreation Plan (Recreation Plan) held the previous week. Nadas said public comments will continue to be accepted through December 4, 2015 on the NPS website and will be reviewed as part of the NPS draft park plan to be developed. He said NPS plans to complete its draft report by August 2016. Nadas said the Recreation Plan's focus is on the fields north of Wilson Bridge, the fields and lighthouse south of Wilson Bridge, and activating the area under the bridge. He said comments at the public meetings showed an interest in having park amenities such as courts under Wilson Bridge painted for hockey and/or bocce ball, adding more parking to accommodate the additional visitors that new park amenities would attract, and preserving the natural wooded area north of the bridge. Nadas said that, because he is relatively new to this position, he had especially appreciated the time that former Park and Recreation Commission Chair Judy Noritake had spent with him discussing the City's needs for athletic fields.

#### ***Commission comments***

##### ***Historic interpretation***

Wojtanowski suggested incorporating an interpretative path to highlight the site's shipbuilding history. Pulliam commended NPS for the historical interpretation and signage that NPS has incorporated into the park.

##### ***Park activities***

Seifert said planning for the area under the bridge should recognize the area is used informally for boot camp exercise classes, bicycle lessons, and other activities. In response to Ablard's question, Nadas said the potential for improving the fields for soccer use is being explored.

In response to Seifert's question, Nadas said the Seaport Foundation could conduct a permitted community boat building event at this location in the park.

##### ***Public comments***

In response to Hardaway's question, Browand said permitted parking under the bridge can currently be arranged for approved special events. He said how or whether this might be modified in the future remains to be determined.

Ely asked if a docking/parking area is being considered for Jones Point Park as part of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission's discussion of a Potomac River commuter ferry that might include stops in Prince William County, southern Maryland, Alexandria and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. Hall said this is not being considered for Jones Point Park.

In response to Gosnell's question, Nadas said NPS plans to weave into Jones Point National Park three historical themes: the area's shipbuilding history, being the site of the original D.C. boundary stones, and having the Jones Point Lighthouse, one of America's two remaining river lighthouses.

##### ***NPS public comment period***

Hall asked Commissioners to publicize the NPS public comment period for the Jones Point Park Plan that will close December 4, 2015.

### **Private Development Status Report Department of Planning & Zoning**

Browand briefed the status of Waterfront private development sites in the absence of a Planning and Zoning representative. He reported that Robinson Terminal Site's (RTS) third and final site plan is being worked on. He said the RTS demolition is expected to begin after the City approves its final site plan, probably during the first half 2016.

Browand said work on Carr's Indigo Hotel site is ongoing and expected to be completed by mid-2017. He said 210 Strand's building has been demolished and removed and Carr is leasing the site from the City to use for staging during the Indigo Hotel construction. Browand said that the 210 Strand property will be part of the new expanded Point Lumley Park. Thayer said demolition on the Old Dominion Boat Club's new location should begin by early 2016.

Pulliam reported that the excavation on Carr's site at 220 South Union Street had unearthed the 1755 wooden remains of the Carlyle warehouse, a very exciting and unique historical find for the City. Browand said he has invited City Archaeologist Francine Bromberg to brief the Commission on the archeological finds being unearthed along the Waterfront. Watters said that the City's plan to use the warehouse beam, once it is preserved, as a historical display along the Waterfront illustrates the City's commitment to preserving and highlighting its history.

**Commission Liaison Reports**

***Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction***

***Information posted to:*** <http://www.alexandriava.gov/special/waterfront/default.aspx?id=82590>

Bordner, Ad Hoc Monitoring Group chair, reported that it continues its first Monday of the month meetings and its on-site meetings held at the construction site on the third Thursday at 9:30 a.m. Bordner said reported that City Archaeologist Bromberg had briefed the Ad Hoc Monitoring group on the discoveries unearthed during the ongoing excavation at the Carr hotel site a Carr representative had briefed the Working Group on activities at the construction site. He said Carr expects the pile driving to begin during the week of November 16, 2015.

Browand said the City has posted Carr's November 6, 2016 advisory for the neighborhood to: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/special/WaterfrontPlan/info/220SouthUnionStreetUpdate6November2015.pdf>

Bordner said the next meeting, December 7, 2015 at 5:30 p.m., will include a discussion of how the current excavation might impact Waterfront flooding since the City's planned flood mitigation improvements have not yet been put in place.

***Commission discussion***

***Community concerns about plans to truck contaminated soil from Robinson Terminal North (RTN) site***

Bergman said many local residents are confused and concerned about why barges will be used to bring clean soil in to the RTN construction site but trucks will be used to remove the site's excavated contaminated soil. He said many residents are worried that transporting contaminated soil from the RTN site by truck will create unnecessary environmental and health risks to their neighborhood. Wojtanowski said transporting materials by barge rather than truck would increase the contamination risk because barging requires each load of soil to be handled more times.

Bergman, Mutty, Auld and Watters said the City needs to do a better job explaining to residents why removing contaminated soil by truck rather than barge would pose fewer risks to the neighborhood. Resident Christine Bernstein said her recollection of Council's discussion of the RTN development special use permit (DSUP) was that cost to the developer was mentioned as a factor in the decision. She said Founders Park residents were surprised that Robinson Terminal South (RTS) would be removing materials by barge but not RTN.

Smedberg said the issue of the relative risks posed by the different options for transporting contaminated soil continues to be a concern for Council and many residents. He said it would be useful for the Commission to be briefed by Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director of the Office on Environmental Quality, on the risks and tradeoffs the City has to consider when making these decisions. He noted the RTN situation is not unique and the City has had deal with similar issues for sites such as Carlyle, Potomac Yard, and other

places on Route 1. Smedberg noted there are City environmental regulations to be followed in addition to federal and state requirements.

Browand said he will arrange for Skrabak to brief the Commission. Bordner said he would add this topic to the agenda of the December 7, 2015 Ad Hoc Monitoring Group meeting.

There was a Commission consensus that it is important for the City to notify residents in a timely manner on issues related to transporting contaminating material.

***Public discussion***

Hardaway said he expected the discussion of issues related to transporting contaminated materials to continue and information about the locations to which contaminated materials will be trucked should be among the factors considered. Ely, a member of the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group, said he expects the December 7, 2015 discussion of this to be "long and contentious."

***Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group***

Bergman reported that the OTAPS Work Group report would be presented to Council at Council's December 8, 2015 meeting but would not be considered at that meeting. He said staff had compiled a timeline and budget for each of the Work Group's recommendations. Hall said it will be important for Council to set a timeline for implementing the recommendations.

**Waterfront Governance Subcommittee**

In the absence of Subcommittee chair Kolbe, Browand reported that the Governance Subcommittee continues to receive briefings from representatives who work for the five types of governance entities being considered for governing the dynamic reinvented Waterfront planned by the City. He said the governance model to be presented at the Subcommittee's December 1, 2015 meeting will be City management and a City representative will discuss how City agencies currently manage Waterfront related tasks.

Hall invited people to attend and publicize the Subcommittee's meetings.

Bergman said he hopes the Governance Subcommittee does not assume that a change of governance will be needed and will consider the value of the current City-run governance system for the Waterfront. Auld said the Governance Subcommittee is not presuming any particular governance model to be preferable over the others.

***Public attendance at Governance Subcommittee meetings***

Bert Ely, co-chair of the Old Town Civic Association (OTCA), said that when the Subcommittee considers the merits of having a Business Improvement District (BID) govern the Waterfront it should note that the Washington D.C. BID does not have residential members or fee-payers. In response to Ely's suggestion that the views of neighboring civic associations such as the OTCA, Founders Park, and North Old Town Independent Citizens Civic Association (NOTICE) are important to consider, Hall said all the Subcommittee meetings are publicized and open to the public and Commissioners are regularly reminded to publicize all Waterfront-related meetings to their constituencies.

Auld and Watters, members of the Governance Subcommittee, said its mission is to review available governance models because Commissioners are concerned about the potential costs of running and maintaining the new Waterfront as envisioned by the Olin plan. They said the Subcommittee is considering whether a modified form of Waterfront governance might be needed to address this.

**Marina Subcommittee**

Thayer reported that the Marina Feasibility Study, discussed with stakeholders at the subcommittee's October meeting, is expected to be finished by the end of the year. He also reported that current work at the Marina includes utility work, expected to be finished in early 2016, and improvements to the restrooms for boaters that will ensure they are ADA accessible.

***Public Comments***

In response to Gosnell's question, Browand said the Marina's utility upgrade will ensure the new fireboat's requirements are accommodated.

**Agency Updates**

***Old Town North Small Area Plan charrette***

*Note:* <https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=86032>

Browand reported that the Old Town North Small Area Plan (OTN SAP) charrette was meeting every night during the week of November 16-19, 2015 at 44 Canal Center Plaza.

Watters, a member of the Old Town North Advisory Group, reported that the Advisory Group held community meetings before the charrette was begun. She said the work schedule has been intense and the public meetings well-attended. She said the Advisory Group's goal is to create a framework for the OTNSAP by December 2015 and the propositions for the SAP will then all be reviewed for feasibility. Browand said the goal is to finish the process by 2017.

Browand said public inputs on the OTNSAP can be made via the City's website.

**Reports from Commissioners**

***How to ensure consistency in common element materials used for privately and publicly owned public spaces along Waterfront***

Auld said he had followed up on a concern raised by Watters at the October Commission meeting that the City might approve requests from private owners to use materials of an "approximate equivalent" for Waterfront Plan common elements that are inconsistent with the quality of materials the City plans to use in Waterfront public spaces. Auld said the Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) official with whom he had talked pointed out to him that ODBC's concern is that ODBC might use materials in its parking lot, for example, that meet the proposed Olin quality standard and then later see the City downgrade the quality of public space materials it chooses because the City can't afford the higher quality materials originally planned.

Watters said the Commission's concern about whether the City will have enough funding to cover the costs of implementing the Waterfront Plan has been the driving force behind the Governance Subcommittee's work. She said the goal is to determine which governance models are most likely to succeed at generating the revenue needed for Waterfront costs.

Thayer said ODBC has been discussing with the City options for how to avoid the chance that ODBC would spend funds now on its new clubhouse that turn out later on to be unnecessary. He said one idea is to put in a temporary ODBC parking lot until the City decides which materials will be used for public space common elements. Watters said ODBC's desire to meet the Waterfront Plan's quality standard is recognized.

***Seaport Foundation***

Seifert reported that the Seaport Foundation's apprentices and volunteers had repaired the ODBC flag pole and they had very much appreciated ODBC's having invited them to lunch at the ODBC clubhouse as a thank you. Thayer said the repair job was a complicated one and the Seaport Foundation's work was very well done.

**Announcements / Public Comments**

Browand reviewed the City's upcoming holiday events such as the tree lighting, Scottish Christmas Walk and Boat Parade of Lights.

There were no additional public comments.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.