

**Summary Minutes  
Monthly Meeting  
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION  
Tuesday, April 19, 2016  
Sister Cities Conference Room  
City Hall  
301 King Street  
7:30 a.m.**

**Commission Members**

***Present***

Charles Ablard, Historic Alexandria Foundation  
Cheryl Ahearn, Citizen, Park Planning District I  
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)  
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission  
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair  
Kathryn Kolbe, Citizen, Park Planning District III  
Sally Masterson, East of Washington St. and south of King St  
Stephen Mutty, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Archaeology Commission  
David Speck, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)  
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.  
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association  
Ryan Wojtanowski, Environmental Policy Commission

***Excused***

John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.

***Absent***

Jody Manor, VisitAlexandria  
Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council  
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.

***City Staff***

Erin Bevis-Carver, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)  
Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison and Division Chief, Park Planning, Design &  
Capital Development, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Tony Gammon, of Project Implementation (DPI)  
Jim Hixon, Dock Master, RPCA  
Dirk Geratz, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA

**Guests**

Christine Bernstein, resident  
Brian Buzzell, resident  
Bert Ely, Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront  
Skip Graffam, The Olin Studio  
Hal Hardaway, resident  
Stephanie Landrum, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP)

**Welcome and Introductions**

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

**Approval of Minutes from March 15, 2016**

Bergman moved and Van Fleet seconded that the March 15, 2016 minutes be approved. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Waterfront Common Elements Update**

Briefing posted to

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCCommonElements19April2016.pdf>

Skip Graffam presented the lighting and paving materials being considered as common elements for the Waterfront's public and private spaces. He noted the City had moved up its timeline for choosing the common elements to ensure they can be incorporated into the private Waterfront development sites since they moving forward on a faster timeline than the City's public spaces. Gammon said public input on the design options would be collected using AlexEngage and other public outreach. After the public engagement period the designs will be presented to the Board of Architectural Review.

***Design concept***

Graffam discussed the two lighting options for the Waterfront pavilion. He noted they will be a subtle and unifying design element and their poles will be installed at 60-foot intervals to avoid bright lights that will distract the eye. The first design, an urban design, is fully metal and a small scale version of the City's Washington Street lights. The second option is a nautical style, metal with wood poles, that reflects the style used along the City's 19th and 20th century waterfront and incorporates a marine-grade weatherproof wooden pole.

Graffam said Waterfront history would be incorporated along the promenade by using different paving materials to show the 1749 and 1845 City shorelines and border banding as a background for commemorative historical inscriptions, dates, and other historical text.

***Commission Discussion***

***Promenade lighting***

***Cost***

In response to Bergman's question, Graffam said the purchase, maintenance and replacement costs are comparable for both lighting designs. Both will be low maintenance, use LED lights and use standard items the manufacturer is unlikely to discontinue.

***Durability***

Wojtanowski said he thought the design of the maritime option and its wood pole should make the lamps more durable than the urban design's all-metal components.

***Commissioners' lighting preferences***

Wojtanowski, Pulliam, Mutty and Dunn preferred the nautical design alternative. Baum preferred the urban design to the maritime design. Mutty, Masterson and Kolbe preferred using a Gadsby light for the Waterfront promenade.

Graffam said the Old Town Gadsby street lights will be continued down to where the streets will join the Waterfront promenade but using Gadsby lights along the Waterfront would be historically incorrect since in early Alexandria they were used as street lights but not along the Waterfront. He said using Gadsby lights along the Waterfront would also have the disadvantage of their light being more visible, creating "blobs of light" along the waterfront.

***Public comments***

***Seawall and promenade***

In response to Bert Ely's question, Graffam said the promenade would be incorporated into the seawall to be built as part of the flood mitigation plan.

***Ford's Landing and Harborside***

In response to Brian Buzzell's question, Gammon said there is no plan to require Ford's Landing or Harborside to use the common elements lighting style.

***Historical accuracy***

Bernstein said she prefers the maritime lighting style for its historical connection to the City's Waterfront.

***Lights and nests***

In response to Mel Garbow's question, Graffam said both lighting designs would be comparably resistant to nesting.

***Public engagement***

[https://engage.alexandriava.gov/portals/191/Forum\\_537/Issue\\_3597/survey\\_responses/new?cookies=required](https://engage.alexandriava.gov/portals/191/Forum_537/Issue_3597/survey_responses/new?cookies=required)

Hall asked Commissioners to encourage their constituents and others to visit the AlexEngage Common Elements survey and submit comments

**Commission Liaison Reports**

***a. Motorcoach Task Force***

Mutty reported the sites being considered for motor coach parking were posted on-line the day before. He said the next City Task Force meeting is planned for the end of May.

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

Browand reported work on the Carr hotel is moving forward and Robinson Terminal site demolition might begin by June 2016. He said it is not yet know when demolition and construction will begin on Old Dominion Boat Club's new clubhouse.

Browand said the Ad Hoc Work Group has supported the proposal passed by Council the previous Saturday that changes haul route violations from a criminal to civil violation. He said this change would make it easier to prosecute violations. Masterson reported she had seen a number of construction trucks violating the requirement to cover their contents with a tarp to keep contents from escaping. Browand said staff responds to violations when they are seen and encouraged people to report violations to the City, including the license plate numbers of violators.

**Waterfront Governance Subcommittee**

Kolbe, subcommittee chair, reported that the two Subcommittee meetings held since the Commission's March 15, 2016 meeting focused on residents' thoughts about the Improvement District concept and a discussion of the Subcommittee's next steps.

***Outreach to business community***

Kolbe said a meeting with commercial property owners is being arranged to hear their thoughts about a Business Improvement District (BID). Hall said the business-related meeting will be generally publicized and also specifically reach out to organizations such as the Old Town Business and Professional Association, the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the Old Town Boutique District, and non-profits. Landrum (AEDP) noted the business owners she has talked to informally have been generally positive about the Improvement District concept.

Kolbe said a special Waterfront Commission meeting would be scheduled to discuss issues about which more information is needed and the Commission's next steps.

***Commission Discussion***

Auld said it would be important to understand how a potential King Street business improvement district might relate to planning for the possibility of a Waterfront Community Improvement District.

Commissioners agreed there are a number of issues related to the Commission's consideration of an Improvement District that they would like to discuss further, including more details of its potential mission, services, revenues and expenses.

***Data showing the likely funding shortfall for Waterfront expenses***

Kolbe said City staff had advised the Subcommittee that unless a dedicated funding source is created for Waterfront-related expenses, there would be a funding shortfall in coming years. She said the advantage of the City creating an Improvement District funded by a tax paid by commercial property owners is that a dedicated funding stream can be created from Waterfront-related revenues.

Cohen said it would be helpful to review an estimate of the likely RPCA budget that would be available for specific Waterfront-related expenses in coming years to show the predicted shortfalls under the current form of Waterfront governance. Baum said it needs to be recognized that RPCA's budget continues to be cut each year.

Commissioners had differing opinions about whether the predicted shortfall could only be addressed by creating a new Waterfront governance model or whether the problem might be addressed by the Commission increasing its advocacy during the City's budget process to support City funding for Waterfront-related operations.

***Additional considerations***

Dunn said he thought the need to consider a new governance plan reflects the success of the Waterfront Plan. He highlighted several considerations: (a) Some increased capital costs that will need to be covered in addition to the projected maintenance costs; (b) BIDs do not usually cover capital costs; (c) no direct BID tax on residents is being discussed, and (d) a BID had not been proposed to take over and operate the parks.

Mutty and Thayer said hearing the business community's thoughts should be a priority since the viability of an Improvement District depends upon business' support for it.

Speck said creating a dedicated long-term Waterfront revenue source is the only way for the City to move away from relying on property taxes as the sole revenue source.

**Marina Subcommittee**

Browand reviewed highlights of the City's annual orientation for the Marina's pleasure boat leaseholders, held in April. The orientation covered security advice and a review of Marina rules and regulations. Leaseholders were encouraged to report any suspicious activities to Marina staff and the Alexandria Police Department and staff. Browand said two upcoming work actions affecting the Marina were reviewed, the utility upgrade and the northern seawall stabilization.

Bennis said leaseholders appreciate the City's services and the improvements made to the Marina area. He said leaseholders have raised only one issue with staff, whether there might be a low-cost simple measure that could be taken to deter unauthorized after-hours access to the piers.

**Staff Reports**

***a. City of Alexandria Combined Sewer System Draft Plan – Long-Term Control Plan - T&ES Briefing posted to***

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCCombinedSewer19Apr2016.pdf>

Erin Bevis-Carver, a civil engineer with T&ES, briefed the Commission on the City's proposed plan for substantially reducing combined sewer discharges by 2035. She said development of the plan began in 2013 and staff had worked with a variety of stakeholder groups during the process, including an Ad Hoc CSS Stakeholder Plan Group appointed by the City Manager. She said the City needs a new plan because new regulations require overflow discharges to be reduced. The City will submit its proposal to the state in August 2016. She reviewed the proposal's overall strategy, including a complementary green infrastructure recommendation to be implemented

Citywide that includes changing impervious surfaces to pervious and increasing the tree canopy in Old Town. She noted City DSUPs require storm water to be separated from sewer lines where feasible. She said the outfall located next to Robinson Terminal North is not covered by the proposal, but T&ES will be looking for opportunities to reduce the overflow in this area and will be coordinating with the North Old Town Small Area Plan implementation to identify additional opportunities.

***Cost***

She said the project's preliminary capital spending estimate is \$125-200 million, without building infrastructure for the outfall near RTN. The costs will be funded through sanitary sewer rates.

***Upcoming public events and outreach***

Bevis-Carver said a public meeting was scheduled for April 21 and a May 14 public hearing by Council had been proposed. She said public feedback is being collected by AlexEngage and via <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Sewers>

***Commission discussion***

Wojtanowski noted that Old Town North is trying to be set up as an eco-district.

***b. Waterfront Plan Implementation Update - DPI***

***Gadsby lights***

Gammon reported that a mock-up of the proposed replacement style for street lights in the Gadsby District was been installed on Royal Street, near the southwest corner of City Hall and asked Commissioners to encourage people to visit AlexEngage to provide their thoughts on it. He said the next step would be to install a test block of the new Gadsby light poles in Old Town. He said the CIP budget includes funds to replace the Gadsby fixtures.

***Interim Fitzgerald Square***

Gammon reported that the Interim Fitzgerald Square concept has been refined and DPI's upcoming presentations include one to the Old Town Civic Association in May, an update to Council at its May 24 meeting, and then a presentation to the BAR.

***Common elements***

Gammon encouraged people to submit public comments about the Common Elements using the AlexEngage website.

***Flood mitigation***

Gammon said data collection continues and soil samples collection will start in May.

***c. Hokule'a Sailing Canoe Alexandria Visit***

***Schematic diagram posted to***

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/Hokulea.pdf>

Browand reported that Hokule'a, a Hawaiian sailing canoe on a round-the-world voyage, would arrive Sunday, May 15, 2016 for a three-day visit to the City. He said the Hokule'a's voyages are part of a celebration of Hawaiian culture that has been ongoing since the 1970s. Browand said

the vessel would moor initially at Waterfront Park for a day of events sponsored by the Seaport Foundation and the City. It will then be moored at the Marina from May 15-18. Mutty said the Seaport Foundation is planning an educational program on Tuesday May 17.

Browand noted the Marina's new public restrooms are now in service and, if needed, additional restroom facilities will be brought to serve visitors to the Hokule'a.

**FY 2017 Commission Officer Nominations**

Hall nominated Kolbe to serve as Chair and Thayer to serve as Vice Chair for one-year terms beginning on July 1, 2016 Baum seconded the motion. She noted she would continue to serve on the Commission after her term as Chair ends. The nominations were accepted and a Commission vote scheduled at the May meeting. Hall said additional nominations could be submitted to her prior to the May 2016 meeting.

**June 2016 Waterfront Walk Date**

The Commission scheduled its annual Waterfront Walk for Saturday June 4, 2016 at 9 a.m. Participants will meet at Windmill Hill Park and walk north to Oronoco Bay Park.

**Reports from Commissioners**

Mutty reported the Seaport Foundation's Wine on the Water fundraiser will be held on Saturday May 21, 2016, from 6-8 PM, at 211 N. Union Street's back terrace.

Speck reminded Commissioners that Spring2Action was the following day.

Bergman asked for a Commission briefing on Visit Alexandria's MGM Readiness Task Force draft report.

Browand announced that Wojtanowski had been appointed the City's new Poet Laureate. Wojtanowski shared an excerpt of his poem, "Grandfather to the Deed".

**Adjournment**

At 9:35 a.m., Hall moved and Bergman seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved.