

MINUTES - DRAFT
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Tuesday, May 21, 2019
Monthly Meeting
Sister Cities Conference Room
City Hall
7:30 a.m.

Commission Members

Present:

Charles Ablard, Historic Alexandria Foundation
Cheryl Ahearn, Citizen, Park Planning District I
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
Eldon Boes, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC)
Rich Brune, Citizen, Park Planning District III
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Beth Gross, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)
Charlotte Hall, Representative, VisitAlexandria
Trae Lamond, Representative, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)
Nate Macek, Alexandria Planning Commission
Kleber (Skid) Masterson, Citizen, east of Washington St. and south of King St
Danielle Romanetti, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, representative
Kathy Seifert, Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Stephen Thayer, Citizen, east of Washington St. and north of King St., and Chair
Christa Watters, Citizen, east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.

Excused:

John Bordner, Citizen, west of Washington St
Mark Ludlow, Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)
Mohamed E. "Mo" Seifeldein, Member, Alexandria City Council
Robert Cvejanovich, Old Town Civic Association (OTCA)

Vacant positions:

Citizen, Park Planning District II
Representative, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholders

City Staff

Jamie M. Bridgeman, Captain, Alexandria Police Department (APD)
Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison, and Division Chief, Park Planning, Design & Capital
Development, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)
Lydia Durand, Department of Planning and Implementation (DPI)
Anthony (Tony) Gammon, Acting Director, DPI
Dirk Geratz, Principal Planner, Planning And Zoning (P&Z)
Jim Hixon, Dockmaster, RPCA
Catherine Miliaris, P&Z
Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, RPCA, Office of the Arts.

Guests

Christine Bernstein, resident
Jaimie Bridgeman – Alexandria Police Department (APD)
Justin Carl, Program Advisor, RiverRENEW
Bruce Catts, Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC)
Doug Chapin, RiverRENEW
Tom Church resident
Jack Conner, ODBC
Bert Ely, Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront/ Old Town Civic Association
Caitlin Feehan, Alex RENEW
Hal Hardaway, resident
Bill Hillner, resident, and RiverRenew Stakeholders Advisory Group (SAG) member
Al Kalvatis, Ford's Landing.
Sheeva Noshirvan, AlexRENEW
Claire Sassin, Tall Ship Providence Foundation
Scott Shaw, Tall Ship Providence Foundation
Elissa Staley, VisitAlexandria

Welcome and Introductions – Steve Thayer, Chair

Thayer called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. Thayer called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and welcomed new Commissioner Danielle Romanetti, representative of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

April 16, 2019 Minutes - Action Item

Macek proposed and Hall seconded that the January 15, 2019 minutes be approved. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote

Election of FY 2020 Commission Officers: Chair & Vice Chair – Action Item

Hall chaired Commissioners’ consideration of nominations. Masterson nominated and Brune seconded Steve Thayer as Chair and Nate Macek as Vice Chair. No additional nominations were proposed. The nominations were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Presentations and Information

DOCKLESS MOBILITY UPDATE - Hillary Orr, T&ES

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCDocklessMobility21May2019.pdf>

The City’s one-year pilot project for dockless scooters launched in December 2018. Christine Mayer, the City’s Complete Streets program manager, also manages the Dockless Mobility pilot project.

- Problems identified by T&ES so far include users riding on sidewalks, users parking scooters in inappropriate locations, and vendors gathering and staging scooters at the end of the day in inappropriate locations. The City is updating its vendor MOUs.
- Staff has recently submitted recommendations to Council covering safety, enforcement and education related to the pilot project and is looking at how other cities have effectively regulated scooters.

- Virginia’s code will need to be updated so localities can effectively regulate this new technology.
- Staff is working on a Quick Visitors Guide with rules for dockless mobility.

Commission Discussion - Scooters

Issues raised included:

- **Safety:** (1) A Founders Park Community Association member survey identified safety and visual clutter as key scooter-related concerns; (2) Is scooter use by children posing safety concerns? (3) Riders often ride in traffic without headlights.
- **Impacts on the City:** (1) Are scooters replacing cars or pedestrians? (2) If scooters are replacing walking, is data being collected on how scooter use is impacting the City's electricity consumption? (3) How is scooter use impacting King Street, including the Trolley? (4) Cost codes should be used to identify the City’s incremental costs related to the scooter program. (E.g. T&ES and APD staff time). These costs should be incorporated into fees the City charges scooter companies to operate in the City. (5) City needs to designate and publicize locations where scooters should – and should not – be parked.
- **Equitable Access:** (1) The City should avoid requiring a driver’s license to operate scooters so that scooters are an affordable transport alternative for lower income residents who might not have driver’s licenses.
- **Regulation:** (1) Denver was identified as a city that effectively regulates its scooter use. (2) The City should identify and publicize which scooter operators are respecting City rules during the pilot project. (3) How have other jurisdictions limited scooters use after testing them out.

Follow-up: Thayer emphasized to staff the Commission’s continuing interest in the data that T&ES is collecting on the pilot program.

RIVERRENEW PROJECT - Caitlin Feehan, Justin Carl (RiverRENEW staff)

Details of the construction plan and site options are posted at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCRiverRenew21May2019.pdf>

- **Overview** - Freehan reviewed RiverRENEW’s outfall site options, the project’s Environmental Assessment and their upcoming DSUP review process. RiverRENEW is working through its DSUP process at the same time it is working with the National Park Service (NPS) on the environmental assessment since the construction of the project’s tunnel system will require at least four-and-a-half years and needs to be completed by 2025. NPS is expected to issue its environmental assessment by the end of June 2019. Materials will be removed through the tunnels and be deposited directly at the RiverRenew plant.
- **Construction timeline** - December 2020 through 2025.
- **Upcoming permit-related meetings** – (a) Public comment and community listening sessions: likely the week of June 20; (b) Tunnel system DSUP: June 25 Planning Commission and July 9 City Council public hearing; (c) Tunnel pumping station DSUP: September 3 Planning Commission meeting and September 14 City Council hearing.
- **Highlights of Outfall 1’s two site options (diversion facility):** (1) Oronoco Bay East (fully on public space) or (2) Robinson Terminal North (RTN) site (requiring the private site owner’s cooperation). Community participants at the December 2018 meeting preferred the

RTN option. The proposed facility design for the RTN site would not affect RTN's development options.

- **Site choice** - RiverRENEW hopes a site for Outfall 1 is chosen by July 12.
- **Outfall 1 haul routes** (details at the link above). The proposed route follows Pendleton, Patrick and Henry streets. Peak use would be one truck every 9 minutes.
- **Founders Park test pit** - Browand said a test pit would be drilled in Founder's Park near West's Point near the dog park and volleyball. Drilling will start in June and should take about two weeks. RiverRENEW will notify neighbors in advance.

Commission Discussion – RiverRENEW

Issues of concern:

- Whether tunneling work would create vibrations. (A: No.)
- How construction at the Outfall 2 (Jones Point Park) site will affect access to the St. Mary's drop-off on South Royal Street, to the Jones Point Community Gardens, and to southern Old Town. A: Carl said the location will be as far from the community as possible.
- The need to use tarps on trucks using the haul routes.

Public comments

- Bill Hillner, a resident and SAG member, opposed removing toxic soil from the RTN site by hauling it through residential neighborhoods. He favors removing it by river barge from the Robinson Landing site excavation. He also urged the City to arrange for RTN soil testing for PCBs and/or benzene. Baum opposed barging the soil since any spilled soil that hit the river could not be cleaned up.
- Bert Ely asked if haul routes would come to the cemetery and whether any portion of the route would pass under graves? (A: No.)

KING STREET PEDESTRIAN PLAZA

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

Overview – Macek reviewed Mayor Wilson and Councilman Chapman's May 14, 2019 memo to Council proposing that the City revisit the idea of creating a pedestrian plaza on the 100 and 200 blocks of King Street now that programming has been expanded by the Interim Waterfront Park and the King Street Initiative. He noted the City had, in 2006, tested a pilot program for a pedestrian plaza on King Street's 100 block but no further action.

Action - Macek proposed and Watters seconded that the Waterfront Commission send a letter to Council supporting the Wilson/Chapman proposal to study creating a King Street pedestrian plaza without endorsing it, so that the study can be incorporated into the City's Interdepartmental Work Program that will be adopted within the next couple weeks.

- The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

City Updates

PUBLIC SAFETY - Jamie M. Bridgeman, Captain, APD

- **APD safety actions** – Bridgeman reviewed data for the area within a block of the Waterfront, e.g. traffic stops, parking tickets, and drunk and disorderly arrests. He noted current City signs do not specify where scooters can be ridden. Browand said the Code only covers skateboards, roller skates and bicycles and staff is working to figure out how to regulate scooter use.
- **Seasonal Waterfront APD patrols** - Two extra APD officers are, as of May, walking King Street on Friday and Saturday evenings near Waterfront Park.
- **Pedestrian plaza** - Bridgeman noted he had been an officer during the 2006 pilot project and could share his experiences regarding the enforcement that was needed to implement the changeover from vehicles to pedestrians.

COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATES – Jack Browand

- **Interim Waterfront Park** - The only Waterfront common elements remaining to be installed are Gadsby lights. Additional elements related to safety are planned.
- **Windmill Hill Park** - The northern pier solicitation is on temporary hold while RPCA and DPI consider how to either create debris barriers or make it easier for debris to pass through without being captured. The FY2020 City budget includes \$50,000 for targeted debris removal. The goose deterrent poles will probably be ready to be removed by fall 2019 and when they are removed it will help mitigate shoreline debris build-up in this area.
- **RPCA Reorganization** - Browand’s responsibilities have been expanded to include maintenance activities along the King Street corridor, from the Waterfront to the train tracks as well as for all the Waterfront parks. An architect and horticulturalist are being added to his staff team.
- **Waterfront Walk** – Participants in the Commission’s June 8 walk will meet at the foot of Pendleton Street near Robinson Terminal North (RTN) and walk south along the Waterfront.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES - Catherine Miliaris (P & Z)

- **Robinson Landing (formerly Robinson Terminal South)**- Construction continues.
- **Watermark Condominiums (211 Strand Street)** - Construction continues. The sales office is expected to open within weeks
- **Old Town North projects** – The Crowne Plaza pre-construction meeting was that evening. Staff is reviewing final site plans for the old Royal Street bus garage site and a concept plan for Trans-Potomac Plaza.
- **10 Duke Street** – Renovation plans for the historic warehouse at Robinson Landing will be considered at the June 19 BAR meeting.
- **Special Use Permits (SUPs) - posted online:** Planning Commission will consider an amended SUP for Charthouse loudspeakers for music at its June 4 meeting and an SUP application for ODBC piers at its June 25 meeting.
- **Upcoming Council Meetings** - June 11 and 25 legislative meetings; July 9 public hearing.

Liaison Reports

AD HOC MONITORING GROUP ON WATERFRONT CONSTRUCTION

Information posted to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/special/waterfront/default.aspx?id=86800>

- Hall said there was nothing new to report. The biggest challenge has been parking during construction,

RIVER RENEW SUBCOMMITTEE – Commissioners Masterson and Watters –

<https://riverrenew.com/sag/>

A meeting summary for the May 1, 2019 Stakeholders Advisory Group (SAG) is posted at:

<https://riverrenew.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/mm-2019-0501-Meeting-Minutes-SAG-Meeting-03-FINAL.pdf>

Commissioner Announcements and Reports

- Gross (FPCA) thanked RPCA’s Suzanne Bouchard (RPCA) for her help with FPCA’s plantings in Founders Park
- Seifert (Alexandria Seaport Foundation/ASF) thanked the City for its support after the recent fire and reported that ASF’s annual Wine on the Water is scheduled for June 1. She distributed the ASF’s new logo.
- Hall (VisitAlexandria) King Street plaza - encouraged the City to reach out to businesses along both King Street and the Waterfront for inputs into planning for the proposed King Street pedestrian plaza.
- Hall (Tall Ship Providence) – Hall reported that the Providence is expected to arrive in June in the City. Two pre-opening cruises are planned for July 4. The ribbon cutting is July 5th. Seifert noted that four Alexandria Seaport Foundation apprentices have been working on the ship in Maine.
- Lamond reported that Old Town and Del Ray businesses would be playing a charity softball game later that day.
- Watters encouraged Commissioners to publicize the June 8 Waterfront Walk - so people can see first-hand the scope of the Commission’s responsibilities.

Adjournment

Thayer adjourned the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.