

**ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
FY 2008 ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2007 - JUNE 30, 2008**

INTRODUCTION

The Alexandria Waterfront Committee is an advisory body to the City Council and to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. It was established by City Council on April 25, 1989, based on the recommendation of the Alexandria Waterfront Task Force, which was appointed by Council on June 29, 1988, to study commercial uses of the waterfront.

The function of the Committee is to study issues relating to the Alexandria Waterfront, and to make recommendations to City Council, the City Manager, and appropriate City departments.

The Alexandria Waterfront Committee meets every month between September and June. The Chairperson may call special meetings. The Committee=s meetings are public, and notification of meetings is circulated to newspapers by the City=s Office of Citizen Assistance and posted on the City=s website. Summary Minutes of its meetings, and briefings presented at those meetings, are posted to the City website=s RPCA page.

LIST OF MEMBERS

The Alexandria Waterfront Committee is composed of 15 members. Each member represents a particular neighborhood, community, or City committee.

MEMBERS SERVING DURING FISCAL YEAR FY 2008:

Councilman Paul Smedberg, City Council Representative
Susan Pettey, Chair - Old Town Civic Association, Representative
Engin Artemel - Citizen, East of Washington St., North of Pendelton St.
Jay Atkinson – Citizen, East of Washington St., North of King St.
Henry Brooks - Parks and Recreation Commission, Representative
Mel Fortney – Citizen, East of Washington St., South of King St.
Michael Geissenger – Chamber of Commerce, Representative
Doug Gosnell - Pleasure Boat Lease Holder, Representative
Charles Hamel - Founders Park Community Association, Representative
Nathan Macek – Citizen, West of Washington St.
Pete Peterson – Alexandria Archaeological Commission, Representative
Peter Pennington - Environmental Policy Commission, Representative
Willem Polak - Old Town Business Association, Representative
John Renner – Alexandria Convention and Visitors’ Association, Representative
Robert Taylor - Alexandria Seaport Foundation, Representative

CITY STAFF

Kirk Kincannon, Director - Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Roger Blakeley, Deputy Director - Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES OF THE WATERFRONT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alexandria Waterfront Committee members highlighted the following during FY 2008:

- **Waterfront Study – The Need To Move Ahead After Repeated Delays.** At the year's outset, City staff predicted the study's start within six months. In response to reports of further delays, the Committee conveyed to City Council its frustration about repeated delays, noting that further delays would result in piecemeal development, and significant negative impacts upon City residents and tax base. The potential for Robinson Terminal development to move ahead in the absence of an updated Waterfront Plan was flagged. Committee Members worked with their respective organizations to convey concerns about the study delay's impact to City Council. By April, City Council had directed P&Z to make the study a top priority.
- **Facilitating Liaison Between The City And Public Stakeholders Affected By Waterfront-Related Activities** –The Chamber of Commerce and Old Town Civic Association briefed the Committee on their respective Waterfront visions. The Preservation Perspective on Waterfront Planning was also distributed to the Committee. The Committee discussed with staff issues raised by residents, businesses and other organizations such as the Alexandria Convention and Tourist Association and Arts Commission, and received public comments at each meeting
- **Waterfront And Marina Security** - The Committee was regularly briefed by RPCA, General Services, National Park Service, Police and others responsible for the security and safety of the Marina, Waterfront, and nearby neighborhoods. The Committee was pleased by improvements such as RPCA's planned installation of Marina gates, as well as their design, and continued to work with staff to direct attention to problems identified by residents, businesses and other stakeholders.
- **Waterfront Maintenance And Improvements** – The Committee discussed with staff planned and implemented improvements. Members proposed small Waterfront problems that RPCA could address prior to the Waterfront Study.
- **National Harbor-Related Actions** – The Committee monitored and made recommendations to the City's National Harbor Collaborative Working Group as it developed and implemented citywide improvements in preparation for National Harbor's spring 2008 opening. As a Collaborative member, Committee Chair Susan Pettey acted as liaison between the Committee and the Collaborative.
- **A Visitor-Friendly Waterfront** - The Committee worked with staff to insure attention to improved signage, information, lighting, public transportation to and from the Waterfront, and having Water Taxi schedules that facilitated National Harbor-related visitor and tourist traffic without creating burdens to residents.
- **Parking** - In light of the Waterfront Study's delayed start, Committee members urged the City to move ahead separately on a transportation and parking plan. P&Z briefed the Committee on its King Street parking study and options being developed.

- **Flood Mitigation** - The Committee was briefed by Environmental Services on its Land Flood Prediction Modeling Project.
- **Environmental Issues Needing Attention** - The Committee submitted to the Environmental Policy Commission Waterfront-related issues to include in the City's Environmental Action Plan; and informally urged staff to include environmental issues within the scope of the pending Waterfront Study.
- **Protecting Wildlife Habitat** – The Committee worked with staff to insure dredging plans and other actions protected and preserved wildlife habitat, and recommended including actions to protect habitat in the City Environmental Action Plan.
- **Windmill Hill Park Redevelopment** - The Committee continued to monitor its redevelopment.
- **Proposed Hunting Towers/Terrace Development** – Committee monitored actions and urged that public access to the waterfront be included in any development plan
- **Waterfront Walk** - In June 2008, the Waterfront Committee held its annual waterfront walk, starting at Canal Center and ending at Fords Landing. Members noted the many improvements implemented by the City over the past year.
- **Effective September 2008, Ended Committee Communications With Members Via Mail.** To improve efficiency and reduce costs, e-communication will be used.

FUTURE EFFORTS

As part of its continued efforts to ensure that the City provides a safe, clean, and attractive environment for boaters, citizens, businesses and visitors to Alexandria's waterfront, the Committee will: (1) continue to advocate the prompt start-up of the Waterfront Study; (2) continue to work with staff to identify opportunities to enhance Waterfront and Old Town livability and visitor-friendliness via parking and transportation planning, public art, public access to the Waterfront, maintenance of our Waterfront parks, continued attention to safety and security, and other measures; (3) continue to monitor flood mitigation planning and actions; (4) continue to monitor National Harbor's impact on visitors, and land and water traffic; and (5) continue to look for opportunities for the City to incorporate environmental and wildlife habitat planning into the Environmental Action Plan, Waterfront Study, and development.

The Committee welcomes citizens to its meetings, which are held at 7:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St.