

Summary Minutes

Alexandria Waterfront Committee Meeting May 18, 2010

Lee Center Gold Room

Members: Engin Artemel
Jay Atkinson
William Cromley
Nathan Macek
Peter Pennington
Pete Peterson
John Renner
Paul Smedberg
Robert Taylor
Van Van Fleet

City Staff: Roger Blakeley, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)
Lt. Len Fouch, Police Department
Yon Lambert, Transportation & Environmental Services (TES)
Rodney Masser, Fire Department
Karl Moritz, Department of Planning and Zoning
Barbara Ross, P&Z
Andrea Wilkinson, TES
Nancy Williams, P&Z

Guests: Henry Brooks
Susan Cohen
Harry Harrington
Joanne Platt
Daniel Straub
Michael Wenk

Welcome and Introductions

Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Pennington, second by Taylor to approve the April minutes as drafted.
Motion carried on a voice vote.

Report from Department of Planning and Zoning

Ross reported that City Council had approved the Special Use Permit for the proposed restaurant at 106 South Union Street. She said that Council had not yet approved the agreement for use of the public right-of-way for outdoor dining,

which was being negotiated between the applicant and the city attorney's office and would tentatively return to Council for approval on June 8.

Report from Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities

Blakely reported that mold has been discovered in the dockmaster hut. The Department was investigating to determine how extensive the damage was and whether a replacement would be required. Marina staff members were working from temporary quarters.

Smedberg inquired regarding an adult soccer league that had been using Windmill Hill Park. He noted that a group had used the field during a rain storm, which damaged the turf. Blakeley said that Windmill Hill Park is designated as a passive park and adult soccer is not permitted there. He suggested contacting Mac Slover, who manages sports programs for the Department, regarding unauthorized athletic use of park facilities.

Review and Discussion of Waterfront Concept Plan

Moritz provided a presentation on the City's draft Waterfront Concept Plan. Williams reported that public comments regarding the draft plan have focused on parking, financing, and phasing.

There were questions and discussion regarding parking in the vicinity of the waterfront.

Artemel said that he liked the idea of boardwalk extension in Oronoco Bay Park. He said that boat rentals could work in that area, but was not sure about placing planters in the water, which could lead to further silting of Oronoco Bay.

Smedberg said that the plan needed to discuss integration with the flood mitigation plan, and to consider connections to existing bike trails at the north and south ends of Old Town.

Pennington noted that the plan did not propose changes to Founders Park but that it could incorporate additional shade and facilitate picnicking. Smedberg commented that there should be a premium on vistas from the waterfront.

Artemel commented that the proposed enhancements were true to the 1982 Waterfront Plan. He questioned whether additional piers in the vicinity of the Torpedo Factory would work given river currents and silting. He also noted that the proposed piers and changes to the shoreline would be very expensive, in addition to jurisdictional issues with extending into the District of Columbia. He suggested developing an alternate plan with a more realistic approach. Moritz noted that modest changes in the design could accommodate Artemel's considerations.

Van Fleet said that the plan was overly commercial. Cromley said that some commercial activity near foot of King Street was not only warranted but also welcome and desired. Artemel said that there needed to be a balance, and this plan tried to do that.

Macek urged Committee members to review the concept plan as presented, as well as the written concept plan scheduled for release by P&Z, and provide written comments in advance of the June meeting. He said that he would compile comments to facilitate development of a letter to the City regarding the draft concept plan at the June meeting. He said that his goal was to reach consensus on portions of the plan on which the entire committee agreed. After discussion, the Committee agreed to also include both majority and minority comments on the draft plan in its letter to the City.

Announcements

Macek recognized Brooks on his retirement from the Waterfront Committee.

Macek announced that Michael Geissinger had resigned from the Committee since he is moving from the City of Alexandria.

Macek announced that mock-ups of the City's proposed wayfinding signage would be posted for public review and comment in late May.

Macek announced that the Waterfront Committee's annual Waterfront Walk would be Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 7:30 a.m. beginning in Oronoco Bay Park and extending south to the Strand.

Adjournment

Pennington moved to adjourn, Atkinson seconded. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 a.m.