

## Summary Minutes

### ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION

Thursday, January 15, 2013

Alexandria City Hall, Room 2000

**Members:**

**Present:**

Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission  
Christine Bernstein, Founders Park Community Association  
Suzanne Bethel, Old Town Business and Professional Association  
Morgan Delaney, Historic Alexandria Foundation  
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission  
Art Fox, Citizen east of Washington St. and south of King St.  
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce  
Melinda (Mindy) Lyle, Citizen, Park Planning District III  
Nathan Macek, At-large citizen from west of Washington St. and Chair  
Jody Manor, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)  
Patricia (Pat) Miller, Alexandria Commission on the Arts  
Paul Smedberg, Alexandria City Council  
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association  
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St  
Ryan Wojtanowski, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

**Excused:**

Dennis Auld, Citizen, Park Planning District II  
Kent Barnekov, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina pleasure boat leaseholder  
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.

**Absent:**

Trey Hanbury, Citizen, Park Planning District I

**Vacancy:**

Alexandria Archaeological Commission

**City Staff:**

Cpt. James Bartlett, Alexandria Police Department (APD)  
Francine Bromberg, Acting City Archeologist  
Jack Browand, Division Chief, Marketing, Special Events and Waterfront  
Operations, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Lt. Don Hayes, APD  
Jim Hixon, Dockmaster, RPCA  
Sandra Marks, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)  
Jeremy McPike, Director, General Services  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA  
Nancy Williams, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)

**Guests:**

Engin Artemel  
Yvonne Callahan, Old Town Civic Association  
Bert Ely, Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront  
Mel Garbow, Harborside

Harry Harrington, Old Dominion Boat Club  
Alan McCurry  
Gail McCurry  
Kathy Seifert, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Erica Thum, University of Maryland  
Eric Wallner, Chief Executive Officer, Torpedo Factory Arts Center

### **Welcome and Introductions**

The Commission was called to order at 7:35 a.m. and Commissioners, staff and guests introduced themselves.

### **Approval of Minutes from December 18, 2012 meeting**

Williams clarified that the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop the Beachcombers property would invite only restaurant-related proposals. She said the City continues to believe a restaurant at this site would be the use that contributes the most daytime and evening vibrancy to the Waterfront. She apologized for misstating this position when asked at the December meeting if the City's RFP would consider non-restaurant proposals. Commissioners decided to include Williams' clarification in the January 15, 2013 minutes and not amend the December 18, 2012 minutes.

Moved by Delaney, seconded by Dunn, to approve the summary minutes of the December 18, 2012 meeting. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

### **Report from Police Department and discussion of Waterfront policing issues**

Macek introduced Hayes as the new APD liaison to the Commission and reported he and staff had met the previous week to review Waterfront-related policing issues with APD Deputy Chief Huchler, Cpt. Bartlett and Lt. Hayes. He said also participating in the meeting were T&ES Director Rich Bair, Sandra Marks (T&ES), Williams and Browand. Macek said that among the issues highlighted were motorcoach parking and traffic violations, bicycles, Marina security, and traffic at the intersection of King and Union Streets. Macek said one of the meeting's goals was to familiarize the new APD liaison with ongoing issues the Commission has highlighted over time that require City attention.

Macek said it was agreed that APD would provide Commissioners more detailed responses to questions raised at meetings if Commissioners would submit questions and concerns to APD in advance of Commission meetings when possible. Commissioners agreed with the approach, with the understanding that information about actionable issues raised at Commission meetings would be reported as soon as possible and not be held until the next Commission meeting.

Macek said the following data would be useful for the Commission to receive regularly, broken out for motorcoaches, bicycles, delivery trucks, personal vehicles, and pedestrians: (1) phone calls to APD dispatch; (2) number of warnings and contacts; and (3) number of citations issued.

Bartlett said APD is considering possible options for tracking citation data for the Waterfront-related activities of most concern to the Commission so this information can be provided to the Commission. He said the department will work to break out records

for the Waterfront area from the broader Old Town area, as well as different types of traffic and parking violations. He said APD cannot currently break out data on motorcoaches, bicycles, and cars from each other because vehicle type is not coded when violations are issued but APD is considering how and whether its database software might be modified to permit this refinement.

Bartlett said that because APD statistics for the Waterfront area are folded within those for the Old Town area, he and Hayes will with the Commissioner to delineate the street areas within Old Town that APD should designate as the Waterfront-related area so statistics for activities in this area can routinely be presented at the Commission's monthly meetings. He said that data for the Old Town area indicated that during 2011 and 2012 stop sign citations had increased for all of Old Town and speeding citations were down.

Hall asked that data for all Waterfront parks be routinely included in statistics presented to the Commission. Bartlett said APD only has statistics for Jones Point Park and Daingerfield Island, both within the National Park Service jurisdiction, if a call regarding a problem is placed to 911 or to the APD non-emergency number. Macek said APD should continue to provide the Commission crime statistics for the wider Old Town area since these impact the Waterfront area.

Hayes summarized the previous month's crime data. He said people observing traffic or parking violations, especially by motorcoaches, should report them to the APD non-emergency number at 703-746-4444. He said if a photograph of a motorcoach violation is provided to APD it helps identify the company for APD follow up. He said no citations are issued if a police officer has not witnessed a traffic violation, but the police and ACVA can contact the bus company regarding City motorcoach protocols.

Delaney said stricter enforcement is needed for noise ordinance violations by street musicians who use electronic amplifiers. Bartlett said noise enforcement responsibility rests with the City's Office of Environmental Quality. Browand said any use of amplification in a public right-of-way requires a noise variance permit.

Bartlett said the City initiate a traffic enforcement campaign in the spring directed at bicyclists. Macek asked that APD provide data generated by this enforcement action to the Commission as it becomes available.

Macek invited public comments on Waterfront policing issues. There were none.

### **Report from Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities**

#### ***Marina Facilities Assessment Study***

Browand said the consultant's contract would be executed shortly and the review should be completed within 60 days from the contract's start.

#### ***Windmill Hill Park Bulkhead Update***

Browand said work on the safety fence was expected to be finished in the spring and planning continues for replacing the bulkhead so that staff is ready to proceed once full funding for the project is available. He said the public outreach and permitting processes, once begun, should take at least 18-24 months.

Garbow asked how soon preparatory work would likely begin and whether funds from the \$1.3 million currently available for the bulkhead project can be used for preparatory planning. Browand said that \$1 million of the available funds has been set aside to begin preparatory planning. Staff will first consult federal, state and local regulatory agencies to find out which options would likely be approved before the City initiates any planning actions such as inviting public input about preferred options.

Macek said the Commission supports the outgoing Council's December 2012 direction, when approving the temporary safety fence, that CIP funding for bulkhead replacement should be moved up from FY2016 and supported by the incoming Council as it develops the FY14 Capital Improvement Program. He said, however, that even if engineering work were to begin shortly, it would likely be at least 18 months before construction could begin. He said Council's budget decisions in the coming months would help clarify the schedule. Browand said staff had recommended to Council in December 2012 that full project funding be included as FY2015 funds so that the bidding process could begin in late FY2015.

Wojtanowski asked if environmental work related to the bulkhead would cover shoreline stabilization, environmental mitigation, and wetlands work. Browand said environmental planning would consider potential treatments for each of the three sides of the basin, which might include the creation of additional wetlands, as well as community preferences. Wojtanowski said staff should bear in mind the cost effectiveness of pairing construction in the bulkhead area with that for other actions being planned, and that picking options that offer environmental benefits for the public could provide an incentive to regulatory authorities to expedite their review process. Browand said the City will look for CIP funding opportunities to carry out work jointly for the bulkhead area, the City's planned dredging and work on the Marina sea wall.

Browand said the City recognizes that uncertainty exists about which long-buried environmental hazards may exist on site, a former marina. He said multiple City, state and federal regulatory agencies will review options being considered for both replacing the bulkhead and modifying the Windmill Hill Park shoreline so that potential environmental risks and remediation needs are fully considered during the planning process. Bernstein and other Commissioners said the complexity of the process and actions to be taken underscore the need to initiate preparatory advance planning on the Windmill Hill Park bulkhead project soon.

### ***Waterfront Parks Project Updates***

Browand reported that installation of the enhancements planned for Founder's Park near its dog exercise area were expected to be completed within a few weeks and work on the Flexi-Pave project is proceeding.

Browand said Roberdeau and Point Lumley plantings are planned for the spring. He said turf enhancements, including reseeding and landscaping improvements are being considered for south of Founders Park behind the Charthouse, including routine tree trimming, an area the Commission has identified as an eyesore.

### ***Marina Fees***

Browand said the revised fee schedule endorsed by the Commission will be presented to Council February 12, with a public hearing on February 23. If Council approves the schedule it will be put into effect for the spring 2013 season.

### ***Inaugural Marina Security***

Browand and Hall briefly reviewed how the Marina area would be affected by security measures that would be in effect for the riverboat service to the Presidential Inauguration on January 21.

### **Waterfront Plan Implementation**

#### ***RFP Updates***

Williams said that URS Corporation, the consultants conducting the Waterfront flood mitigation engineering and design project, would generate survey data to be used for both the flood mitigation and landscape architectural design planning, including a utility undergrounding master plan. She said arrangements would be made for both URS and the soon-to-be chosen landscape architecture design consultants to meet with the Commission to discuss both projects.

#### ***Development Updates***

Williams said the Commission walk-through of the Brandt Company's restoration of 204-206 South Union Street was set for Thursday January 24, 2013 at 5:00 PM.

#### ***Torpedo Factory Food Pavilion Update***

Williams reported that The Realco Group, master lease holders for the food pavilion, had hired The Rappaport Companies as the new real estate brokers for the facility and staff has asked the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership to have, on the City's behalf, biweekly conference calls with Rappaport to oversee efforts being made to lease the site. Macek said he would follow up on his January 8, 2013 letter inviting Realco representatives to meet with the Commission to discuss plans for the Food Pavilion.

#### ***The Beachcombers Redevelopment Request for Proposals (RFP)***

Williams clarified that the City's planned RFP for the site will invite only restaurant-related proposals because staff considers this use the one most likely to generate Waterfront activity. She said this use was presented to Council by McPike on September 27, 2012 when Council approved the issuance of an RFP to lease the Beachcombers site. McPike said a restaurant use for the building is also consistent with the Board of Architectural Review's judgment that the building is considered historically significant because it was the first building in this historically industrial area of the Waterfront that was used for a non-industrial commercial purpose. McPike said he expects the RFP to be issued in the first week of February.

Hall said she agreed with other members of the City's business community who urge the City to consider non-restaurant uses for the property. Van Fleet said he was concerned about traffic related to a restaurant on the site. Macek asked what happens if there is not a successful restaurant offer in response to the first RFP. Commissioners asked how quickly General Services would invite redevelopment proposals for non-restaurant options if no viable restaurant proposals are received in response to the

initial RFP. McPike said he hoped that the City would be able to complete its evaluation of responses to the RFP by summer 2013.

Smedberg said he questioned the economic viability of preserving the building because of the cost for bringing the building up to code. McPike said the RFP would also invite proposals to replace the existing building with a new one that replicates the existing building's key architectural elements, a position supported by the Board of Architectural Review. Smedberg and several other Commissioners said they supported either preserving the existing building or removing it, but not replacing it. McPike said that when he and other staff had conducted a walk-through of the building for restaurateurs three years earlier there had been some interest expressed, but he could not predict whether those businesses might respond to the forthcoming RFP. Smedberg asked if the RFP will include information about the likely building modifications that would be needed to meet environmental remediation standards, Americans for Disability Act requirements, and other regulations. Smedberg said it is not widely understood that the City RFP plans to include proposals to tear down and replace the existing Beachcombers building with a new building.

Hall asked when General Services will clean up the trash that has accumulated on the Beachcombers property. McPike said GS would remove the trash shortly and is considering taking down the building's balconies this spring for safety reasons.

Hall asked the status of planning to provide public restrooms for Waterfront visitors, a Commission priority, and noted these actions are time-sensitive as the tourist season begins March 1. Browand said RPCA's proposed FY2014 CIP budget request includes a budget item for construction of public restrooms at the Marina, based on a recently completed cost estimate. McPike introduced Eric Wallner, the new Chief Executive Officer of the Torpedo Factory Art Center (The Torpedo Factory), and said Wallner is considering whether and how restrooms at the Torpedo Factory might be made available to the visitors to the Marina area. Smedberg said making Torpedo Factory restrooms available would not replace the need for the City to provide new Waterfront restrooms. Wallner said he looks forward to working with the Commission on ways the Torpedo Factory can support the Waterfront area.

Browand said the City Manager plans to release his budget recommendation to Council on February 26, 2013. Macek said the Commission will review the City's finalized budget recommendation to Council to see how it aligns with the Commission's FY2014 budget recommendations to staff submitted in September 2012. He said the Commission would then decide what follow-up actions might be appropriate.

Smedberg said there has been discussion about whether about 1,000 square feet of the Food Pavilion's alcove area, previously used for storage, could be converted for use as a public restroom.

In response to a question, Williams said she would provide to the Commission the square footage of the Beachcombers and the City's FY2014 budget timeline, and that staff would follow up on the proposal to convert the Food Pavilion's former storage alcove area for use as a public restroom.

## **Report from Commissioners**

### ***Marina Committee***

Macek said either a Marina Committee meeting or Commission special meeting would be scheduled to review the status of efforts to find new tenants for the Torpedo Factory Food Pavilion as soon as Realco Group representatives are available. He said the Committee plans to discuss, in early spring, the Marina Facilities Assessment once the City has chosen a consultant to conduct the review.

### ***Art and History Waterfront Plans Implementation Committee (Art and History Committee)***

Miller said the Art and History Committee plans to hold a January 26 retreat to consider ways in which the art and history plans for the Waterfront might be combined. Browand said staff continues to work with the Art and History Committee and the Office of Historic Alexandria to determine how best to move ahead on implementing the new Naming Process currently awaiting Council approval. He said he would advise Van Fleet, sponsor of a naming proposal to rename Waterfront Park Fitzgerald Park regarding initiation of the review of his proposal, which will be the first to be reviewed using the Waterfront Naming Process. Macek said he will work with Van Fleet on any modifications that may be needed to his proposal so that it will match the requirements of the new Naming Process.

### ***Union Street Corridor Study***

Browand said Marks had reported that staff is identifying which of the corridor study's short-term recommendations can be implemented within the next 18 months and that this follows up on Council's direction to do so when it approved the short-term recommendations on December 15, 2012.

## **Announcements/Public Discussion**

Macek provided an update on the schedule of upcoming meetings and said Jacob Hoagland had been nominated as the new Alexandria Archaeological Commission representative on the Commission and Kathy Seifert is expected to be approved as the new Alexandria Seaport Foundation representative on the Commission when Kent Barnekov finishes his term.

Williams asked Commissioners to share with their constituencies information about the City's January 29, 2013 What's Next Alexandria meeting to discuss residents' suggestions for civic engagement principles.

Macek invited public comments. There were no public comments offered.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 a.m.