

Summary Minutes

Alexandria Waterfront Committee Meeting October 19, 2010

Lee Center Gold Room

Members

Present: Engin Artemel
Christine Bernstein
Mel Fortney
Doug Gosnell
Linda Hafer
Charlotte Hall
Nathan Macek
Jody Manor
Peter Pennington
Pete Peterson
Robert Taylor
Van Van Fleet

Excused: William Cromley
Jay Atkinson

Absent: Paul Smedberg

City Staff: Roger Blakeley, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)
Lt. Len Fouch, Police Department
Laura Seidler, RPCA
Nancy Williams, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)

Guests: Susan Cohen
Harry Harrington
Joanne Platt
Sarita Schotta

Welcome and Introductions

Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

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

Officer Elections

There were no nominations for secretary.

Report from Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities

Blakeley circulated a copy of the final draft of the Waterfront Committee's FY10 Annual Report, which RPCA staff had recently formatted. All of the Committee's recent Annual Reports had been grouped together on the Committee's website.

Blakeley provided a map of where trees were to be planted in Founders Park. Recovery day was scheduled for November 6, 2010, and 16 to 19 trees would be replaced, including tree wells along the North Union Street sidewalk. Bernstein said that Founders Park Community Association (FPCA) members worked closely with RPCA staff to ensure tree plantings would be consistent with the Concept Waterfront Plan and would not obscure Potomac River sightlines.

Seidler said the City would need to replace 12 decorative street lights in the vicinity of the Marina that were damaged by the August 5, 2010 microburst storm. She said the City would need to include a budget allocation for the lights in its FY12 capital improvement program. She said the lights would cost approximately \$4,000 each, plus installation for lights and poles as previously approved by the Board of Architectural Review.

Report from Department of Planning and Zoning

Williams announced that there had been a change in schedule for completion of the Waterfront Plan. She anticipated that the plan would be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council during winter 2011. She said a community meeting regarding parking, funding, and phasing issues was anticipated in December 2010, and would be scheduled early in the month to avoid conflict with the holidays. She anticipated that the full plan would be released in January followed by a 30-day comment period. She anticipated that a full presentation of the plan would be given to the Waterfront Committee in January.

Williams reported that the delay was because staff was working through design aspects of the plan, meeting with adjacent property owners, and working with RPCA regarding the marina design. She noted that City staff had met with officials from the District of Columbia, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Commonwealth of Virginia regarding the plan's proposed river elements in September. Artemel said it would be great to be kept abreast of changes in the plan, rather than all being reported as a fait accompli at the end.

Report from Transportation and Environmental Services

Macek read a report from Yon Lambert of T&ES, which noted that staff was working with FPCA members to address sidewalk issues along North Union Street adjacent to Founders Park. Macek read that Lambert had reviewed the stop sign at Queen Street and North Union Street, and the issue is one of

enforcement, not an engineering issue, as the intersection is too narrow for additional signage.

Report from Police Department

Fouch provided a comprehensive report on Citywide, Old Town, and Waterfront-specific crime and security issues. He reported that officers have been increasingly performing bicycle and pedestrian enforcement along Union Street. He noted that a City judge had recently thrown out 160 citations issued to bicyclists during a targeted enforcement campaign believing the citations were “frivolous.” Fouch suggested that the Committee send a letter to City’s chief judge regarding adjudication of bicycle and pedestrian citations.

Bernstein raised the issue of vagrants in Founders Park and elsewhere along the Waterfront. Lt. Fouch advised calling the police when suspicious activity is spotted.

Moved by Bernstein, second by Artemel, to draft a letter to Chief Judge Haddock regarding the importance adjudication of citations issued to bicyclists and pedestrians in the City of Alexandria. Motion carried on a voice vote.

An officer from the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department’s (MPD) Harbor Patrol was in attendance. Macek noted that through the outreach of Gosnell, Waterfront Committee members were planning to meeting with Lt. Paul Niepling of MPD regarding enforcement of boating violations in the Potomac River off Alexandria.

Budget Discussion

The Committee discussed various budget priorities to be addressed in a letter to City Council and City staff. Macek opened the discussion by noting that FY11 was likely to be another challenging budget year for the City, but the Committee must outline priorities for the coming year and beyond, when the economy is likely to improve.

Regarding the timing of the line-item to implement the Waterfront Plan in the City’s FY10 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Seidler stated that there wasn’t a definite schedule for completion of the plan when the last CIP was adopted, and that the timing of Waterfront Plan implementation can be revisited when the next CIP is adopted.

The Committee agreed to discuss the following priorities in a letter:

- Replacement of the dockmaster hut: Seidler said that RPCA staff was working with General Services staff to to complete a temporary fix of the existing hut, and that replacement needed to be part of the Waterfront Plan. Pennington said that there should be a functioning dockmasters hut at the City Marina by Spring 2011.
- Repair of the north seawall

- Replacement work boat
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Waterfront plan implementation
- General infrastructure
- Replacement lighting (and maintenance of existing lighting)
- Windmill Hill Park improvements
- Marina staffing (since current staff cannot fully cover the available shifts)
- Special events staffing
- Security, including night watchmen patrols if installation of gates at the Marina is not appropriate given the forthcoming Waterfront Plan
- Revenue opportunities, including rates for transient boaters

Moved by Hafer, second by Hall, to document the Committee's budget priorities in a letter to City Council, the City Manager, and the heads of RPCA, P&Z, T&ES, OMB, and other relevant City departments.

Announcements

Fortney reported that Seaport Foundation holds a morning coffee open house the first Wednesday of every month.

Manor reported that an open house would be held at the Mirant Plan on Saturday, October 24.

Hall suggested that an upcoming meeting discuss to topic of the Waterfront and Marina as an economic engine. Macek tentatively docketed the topic for November's meeting.

Pennington announced that a river clean-up was scheduled for Saturday, October 30 along Four Mile Run.

Adjournment

Pennington moved to adjourn, Bernstein seconded. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 a.m.