

Summary Minutes

Alexandria Waterfront Committee Work Session April 28, 2011

Lee Center – Conference Room 4

Members: Engin Artemel, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.
Christine Bernstein, Founders Park Community Association
William Cromley, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
Nathan Macek, At-large citizen and Chair
Jody Manor, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association
Peter Pennington, Environmental Policy Commission

City Staff: Jack Browand, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities
Jim Hixon, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities

Guests: John Gosling, Old Town Civic Association

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 4:10 p.m. The group met as a committee of the whole.
Meeting purpose was to discuss the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan.

Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan Discussion

Artemel said that Fitzgerald Square, a central plaza at the foot of King Street, was central to the Waterfront Plan. Members discussed whether the Old Dominion Boat Club could be persuaded to move from its existing parking lot at 2 King Street.

Macek asked whether members were comfortable enough with staff-proposed revisions to the Plan to recommend approval, or continue to study, reiterating lingering questions regarding the plan.

Artemel said that staff had done a good job, but questioned whether they had adequately addressed all of the points in the Committee's March motion.

After discussion, there was consensus amongst Committee members to focus comments to the Planning Commission (with a CC to City Council, the City Manager and Deputy City Manager, and other appropriate staff) on proposed alternatives to the Fitzgerald Square concept. A letter would address the following points:

- Describe the Waterfront Committee as a unique collection of interest groups from across the City, representing many constituencies that have the best interests of the Waterfront at heart.
- Strongly disagree with the relocation of Fitzgerald Square from the foot of King to the foot of Prince. It is not only one of the centerpieces of the plan but has the

potential to be so for the City. State that this should be included in the plan as proposed, and encourage the City to continue negotiations with ODBC in an effort to achieve this portion of the plan.

- Note that Fitzgerald Square ties together Alexandria's main commercial street, the main waterfront axis, the point of access for water taxis, and provided a sense of arrival on the Waterfront. Fitzgerald provides a celebratory square open to the river at the end of King Street, and if removed, the heart of the Waterfront Plan is removed. The square would create public place of pride for the City.
- Limiting access to the waterfront at the end of the City's main street is wrong, especially when there is a reasonable alternative at hand.
- Note Committee support for the land swap that facilitated Fitzgerald Square and the use of portions of Waterfront Park for parking.
- Do not endorse Option A or Option B, which do not open the street end and have limited public access, views. These options do not create an engaging civic plaza at the end of King Street.
- Encourage public commentary on the elements of the plan that have changed significantly, including proposed changes to Fitzgerald Square and Waterfront Park.

The Committee briefly discussed a letter to City Council following likely passage of the Waterfront Plan by the Planning Commission. It would:

- Reiterate the Committee's Fitzgerald Square concerns;
- Note the staff responses provided in its memorandum to the Planning Commission;
- Comment that some issues had been address, but other remain, and add Fitzgerald Square as an additional concern

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.