

**Summary Minutes  
Monthly Meeting  
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION  
Tuesday, December 15, 2015  
Sister Cities Conference Room  
City Hall  
301 King St  
7:30 a.m.**

**Commission Members**

***Present***

Charles Ablard, Historic Alexandria  
Dennis Auld, Citizen Park Planning District II  
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission  
Jerry Bennis, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholders  
Howard Bergman, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)  
John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.  
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission  
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair  
Kathryn Kolbe, Citizen, Park Planning District III  
Jody Manor, Visit Alexandria (formerly Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association)  
Stephen Mutty, Park Planning District I  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Archaeology Commission  
Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council  
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.  
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association  
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.  
Ryan Wojtanowski, Environmental Policy Commission

***Excused:***

Sally Masterson, East of Washington St. and south of King St  
Shirley Downs, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

***Vacancies:***

Representative, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Representative, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)

***City Staff***

Fran Bromberg, City Archaeologist, Office of Historic Alexandria  
Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison and Division Chief, Public Relations, Special Events & Waterfront Operations, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Tony Gammon, of Project Implementation (DPI)  
Ann Horowitz, Urban Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)  
Lisa Jaatinen, Infrastructure/Right of Way Division, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA

**Guests:**

Christine Bernstein, resident  
Brian Buzzell, resident  
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Bert Ely, Friends of Alexandria Waterfront  
Hal Hardaway, resident  
Dan Straub, Urban Design Advisory Committee

**Welcome and Introductions**

Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2015**

Dunn moved and Thayer seconded that the November 17, 2015 minutes be approved with the understanding that several wording changes would be made to clarify the Tide Lock Park summary. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Handling/Managing Contaminated Materials** (Robinson Terminal North site)

*See: T&ES briefing, pp 7-8, 12/7/2015 Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/special/WaterfrontPlan/info/AdHocWaterfrontConstruction7Dec2015.pdf>*

Lisa Jaatinen (T&ES) reviewed the environmental reports, plans, monitoring and other actions related to site contamination that the City is requiring for construction-related activity on the Robinson Terminal North (RTN) site. She noted Bill Skrabak, deputy director of T&ES' Office of Environmental Quality, had presented this in more detail at the December 7, 2015 meeting of the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction (Ad Hoc Monitoring Group) and will be available for the Commission's January 2016 meeting. (See Web link at section head.) Jaatinen said T&ES will update this information at the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group's next meeting on January 11, 2015.

Jaatinen said the data to be collected will be added to that collected during RTN site examinations in 2006, 2008, 2013 and 2014. She said these prior examinations identified contaminants such as petroleum by-products in soil and groundwater, organic chemicals, lead, pesticide/fertilizer constituents and metals. Jaatinen said T&ES will create a timeline of past and planned environmental reports and activities and will create with the developer a fact sheet covering these issues.

***Discussion***

***The need for a concise public information overview sheet***

Commissioners asked T&ES to create, as soon as possible, a concise public information sheet that includes the process being followed, current data on RTN site contamination, and what additional monitoring will be done, what data will be collected, and what remediation actions will be taken and when.

Jaatinen agreed to Hall's request that T&ES make this information available to the Commission and the public as soon as possible, ideally by start of the new year. Bordner, Ad Hoc Monitoring

Group chair, said they have asked T&ES to create a comprehensive timeline of past and planned reports covering contaminant-related issues.

***Ongoing community notification process***

Bergman asked that the City work with the developer to create an ongoing communications process to advise residents on a continuing basis about contaminants that are identified, results of air sampling tests, and upcoming actions. He said it's also important for residents to be notified when air sampling shows no contamination.

Bordner said the Ad Hoc Work Group has asked to be notified when the RTN developer has submitted its remediation plan.

**Harborside Marina Update**

Ann Horowitz (P&Z) reported that Council has approved a request from Harborside Condominiums to amend the 2002 DSUP conditions for the small Harborside pleasure boat marina. The amended DSUP will let Harborside Condominiums make slip ownership available to City residents who live outside Harborside. Brian Buzzell, a Harborside owner, said Harborside requested the DSUP modification because Harborside owners are not using all of their marina slips.

***Public comment***

Ely asked if Harborside might add docks to their marina if demand for the slips exceeds the available slips. Buzzell said no.

**Historic Preservation Update: 220 South Union Street**

***Note: Presentation posted online to:***

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCIndigoHistoric15Dec2015.pdf>

Fran Bromberg, City Archaeologist, briefed the Commission on the major archaeological discoveries discovered to date during the Carr Hospitality's excavation at 220 South Union Street for the Indigo Hotel. She reviewed the process for identifying and evaluate artifacts, the assessment criteria used to determine a site's historical significance and the different types of archaeological evaluation and historical research used.

Bromberg reviewed the historical context for which recently discovered archaeological artifacts found at the 220 South Union Street are now providing tangible evidence. She noted the City's shoreline at the time of its founding had stretched along a shallow cove between West's Point to the north and Point Lumley to the south and City founders had used old ship hulls and other materials to create a surface area capable of supporting the piers, warehouses and other activities needed to support an international port City. She said the archeological site research completed for Carr by Thunderbird Archeology is helping to identify and analyze the artifacts now being uncovered.

***Major archaeological discoveries to date:***

***Original City shoreline***

Bromberg said the excavation has revealed sand flats and clay fill showing the City's original cove shoreline.

***Remnants of the site's first warehouse structure***

Bromberg said the first major archaeological discovery that has been found on the site is wood from the warehouse built by John Carlyle in 1755 at the direction of the City's founders.

Bromberg said the City is investigating options to conserve the structure so it can be studied and possibly incorporated into elements of the City's waterfront design. She said wood from the foundation has been sent to the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab for a conserving process that could take up to three years.

***Historic vessel hull used as landfill***

Bromberg said the site's second major archaeological discovery is the hull of a vessel, about 50 feet long, that was likely used as landfill to build up the site. She said the City will investigate the feasibility and cost of saving the wood from the hull.

***Commission discussion***

***Cost of archaeological site work and conservation***

In response to Auld's question, Bromberg said the costs for the City's initial archaeological work are being covered by the Office of Historic Alexandria's budget and the City is planning a fundraising effort to cover additional costs as needed. In response to Dunn's question, she said the RTN developer pays Thunderbird Archeology for its site work. She noted that Thunderbird has been hired by various developers to conduct the required archaeological work for most of the City's Waterfront projects. In response to Auld's question, Bromberg said similar archaeological discoveries are likely to be found during excavation work on the Robinson Terminal North (RTN) and Robinson Terminal South (RTS) sites.

***Potential impact on redevelopment construction timelines***

Bordner said the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group will be following how actions related to archaeological discoveries during excavation will impact the work timeline for Waterfront construction projects.

***Public Comments***

In response to Christine Bernstein's question, Bromberg said the developer pays the full excavation cost, but the City needs to negotiate with the developer to determine who will pay the costs for conserving excavated items. Bromberg said Carr has been very helpful in ensuring that materials are recorded properly on the site and assisting with transport of items to the conservator. She said there are still many questions needing to be answered about what actions can and will be taken to conserve the materials.

**Commission Liaison Reports**

***Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction***

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/special/waterfront/default.aspx?id=82590>

Bordner reported the Ad Hoc Work Group had been briefed on how contaminated materials on the RTN site will be handled and what types of remediation will be needed. He said Bergman had discovered and provided to the Work Group information on EPA having worked with the City of Minneapolis to help clean up arsenic contamination found in an old Minneapolis

neighborhood where chemical plants had once been located. Bordner said the report on the EPA's cleanup of the Minneapolis site will be posted to the Work Group website when it becomes available.

***Carr and Robinson Terminal South construction's potential flood plain impact***

Bordner said a representative from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had advised the Ad Hoc Work Group that construction on the Carr and (RTS) sites will not affect the static flood plain of any part of the nearby area. He said the Ad Hoc Work Group is waiting for a FEMA study that will cover how this might affect the fluid flow. He said the next Work Group meeting will also discuss lessons learned from pile driving on the Carr site that can be applied to work on other Waterfront projects.

***Monthly South Waterfront Community meeting***

Bordner said people will meet in front of the Potomac Riverboat charters for the on-site monthly meeting on Thursday December 17, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. for an informal meeting to discuss with City staff and a Carr representative any issues people want to raise.

***Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group***

Bergman reported that Council is scheduled to discuss staff's OTAPS report at its January 26, 2016 meeting. Smedberg said all OTAPS-related issues will be open for discussion. Bergman said Council's next step is to approve the OTAPS Work Plan.

**Waterfront Governance Subcommittee**

Kolbe reported that the Waterfront Governance Subcommittee has been meeting biweekly and will submit a recommendation to the Commission regarding governance options for the City's new Waterfront as soon as the Subcommittee's analysis of the information covered has been completed. She said their briefings have included representatives from governance models in use throughout the region, including Business Improvement Districts (D.C. and Arlington), a new governance entity (Fairfax County Park Authority), a government/non-profit foundation partnership (Glen Echo Park Partnership), and City staff reviewing how City government is organized to address the range of Waterfront responsibilities.

Kolbe said the Subcommittee is working to define what the components of a Waterfront governance structure should be and identify the pros and cons of each of these governance structures. She said the Subcommittee's analysis will also identify potential revenue sources and expenses for the Waterfront.

**Marina Subcommittee**

Thayer reported that the Marina Subcommittee had not met this month and is awaiting the Marina Feasibility Study expected to be finished in January 2016. Thayer said the next Marina Subcommittee meeting will be scheduled for the week of January 11, 2016.

**Agency Updates**

***City Marina Maintenance work***

Browand reviewed maintenance and improvement work being done in the Marina and its surrounding area.

***Marina security***

Browand asked Commissioners to remind people that it is important to report to the Alexandria Police any activity around the Marina that raises a concern. Bennis said slip holders have been reminded to file police reports and are also discussing ideas with the City for how to discourage unauthorized access to the Marina's boats and slips.

**Public Participation at Meetings Discussion**

**Note: The Commission policy is posted at:**

<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/FinalPolicyWfCmtePublicDiscussion92011.pdf>

Hall said she had received requests for the Commission to consider whether the current policy on how to receive public comments at meetings should be revised and invited Commissioners' thoughts on it. She reviewed the policy as passed by the Waterfront Committee, the Commission's predecessor entity, on September 20, 2011.

*The Alexandria Waterfront Committee welcomes public participation during its meetings.*

*Individuals are invited to speak on any Waterfront Committee agenda item for a period of up to three minutes. Members of the public wishing to speak will be called on in turn by the chair following Committee member and City staff discussion, but prior to Committee action on any motions. It is the Committee's policy to limit public discussion on any single agenda item to a total of 15 minutes. The Committee may allow additional time for public discussion by a majority vote.*

*Members of the public may provide comments on any issue not included on the Committee's agenda during the Announcements / Public Discussion item at the end of each agenda. Individuals may speak for a period of up to three minutes.*

Baum said she had raised the question because the Park and Recreation Commission, on which she sits, only receives public comments at the start and end of its meetings and schedules public hearings to receive more lengthy public comments.

Wojtanowski supported the current policy and noted that when there is an extended public discussion on a Commission agenda topic it shows the Commissioners that there is substantial community interest in it. Bordner said some of the best ideas supported by the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction have been raised by public comments at the meetings. Mutty noted that audience members can bring additional expertise and perspectives to a discussion. Van Fleet said maximum transparency should be ensured.

Hall invited public comments on the question.

**Public comments**

Ely said the process should be as open and transparent as possible and said Hall skillfully manages discussion time at Commission meetings. Bernstein said she had served on the Commission when the policy was passed and continues to support it as a way to ensure that discussion of each agenda topic can benefit from the public's expertise and perspectives.

Bergman moved and Watters seconded that the policy language be retained as is and the matter be revisited if a Commissioner wishes to propose a specific modification to it. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**Reports from Commissioners**

***Commission leadership***

Smedberg proposed that the Commission schedule a date to elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year. He noted the Commission had not elected its Chair and Vice Chair since the Council had reorganized it more than two years ago and changed it from a City Committee to a Commission. Smedberg said other Commissions elect their officers on an annual or bi-annual basis. Dunn said the Planning Commission's bylaws specify that it elect its officers annually. Browand said the Park and Recreation Commission elects its leadership annually but the City Code does not include specific language regarding when the Waterfront Commission should elect its leadership.

Hall said she would propose at the next meeting a process for the Commission to consider regarding how and when to nominate and vote on its officers.

**Announcements / Public Comments**

Hall announced two vacancies on the Commission. Commissioner Mutty's seat as Planning District 1 representative on the Commission will be opening up when Mutty, as the Alexandria Seaport Foundation's new executive director, moves into the Seaport Foundation's seat on the Commission. The Old Town Business and Professional Association seat is open and being advertised.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.