

**ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2013  
Alexandria City Hall, Room 2000  
7:30 a.m.**

**Members:**

***Present:***

Dennis Auld, Citizen Park Planning District II  
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission  
John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.  
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 and Chair  
Mari Lou Livingood, Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Jody Manor, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)  
Stephen Mutty, Citizen Park Planning District I  
Allison Nance, Alexandria Arts Commission  
David Speck, Citizen Park Planning District III  
Steven Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St., and Chair,  
Marina Committee  
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association  
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St

***Excused:***

Christine Bernstein, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)  
Jacob Hoogland, Alexandria Archaeological Commission  
Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council

***Absent:***

Suzanne Bethel, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)  
Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina pleasure boat leaseholder  
Ryan Wojtanowski, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

**City Staff:**

Emily Baker, Director, Department of Project Implementation (DPI)  
Francine Bromberg, Acting City Archeologist, Office of Historic Alexandria  
(OHA)  
Jack Browand, Division Chief, Marketing, Special Events and Waterfront  
Operations, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)  
Al Cox, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)  
Battalion Chief Michael Cross, Alexandria Fire Department (AFD)  
Randy Fries, T&ES  
Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)  
Lt. Don Hayes, Alexandria Police Department (APD)  
Jim Hixon, Dockmaster, RPCA  
Jeremy McPike, Director, General Services (GS)  
Hillary Poole, Complete Streets Coordinator, T&ES  
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA

Nancy Williams, Principal Planner, P&Z  
Steve Zenyatta, T&ES

**Guests:** Will Belcher, RLA, landscape architect, The Olin Studio  
Howard Bergman, FPCA  
Brian Buzzell, Citizen  
Leigh Ann Campbell, RLA, Associate and Project Manager, The Olin Studio  
Dennis Carmichael, FASLA, Principal, ParkerRodriguez, Inc.  
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Public Art Committee  
John Goslin, OTCA  
Skip Graffam, ASLA, Partner-in-Charge and Design Lead, The Olin Studio  
Harry Harrington, Old Dominion Boat Club  
Val Hawkins, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP)  
Nate Macek, Citizen  
Craig McClure, RLA, Associate, ParkerRodriguez, Inc.  
Andrew McConnico, RLA, Landscape Designer, The Olin Studio  
Ruth McKenty, Beautification Committee  
Sarah Napier, PE, Project Civil Engineer/Manager, URS Corporation  
Janelle Okome, Alexandria Renew Enterprises, Inc.  
Maria Ross, PPC, Inc.  
Ed Velarde, Eagle Bank  
Mike Young, Olde Town Gemstones, 6 Prince Street

### **Welcome and Introductions**

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

### **Approval of Minutes from July 16, 2013**

Moved by Dunn, seconded by Watters, to approve the summary minutes of the July 18, 2013 meeting, with the correction of 220 Duke Street“ to “220 Union Street. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **Report from Public Safety Organizations**

#### ***Police Department***

Hayes reviewed crime statistics for the previous month for the area bordering the Waterfront, including South Union Street and King Street extending from the Waterfront to Washington Street, including several arrests for nuisance activities in Oronoco Bay Park. He said there were few parking complaints but traffic within this area remains a concern and is being watched carefully, especially from Fairfax Street through Oronoco Street. In response to Watters question whether driveway parking that obstructs the bike lane is illegal, Hayes confirmed that it is and such incidents should be reported.

Hall asked Hayes to provide information regarding an August 27, 2013 theft of power cords from several boats moored at the Marina.

### **Union Street cyclist traffic violations**

Van Fleet and Speck said cyclists continue to ignore stop signs and other traffic regulations along Union Street near Windmill Hill Park. Van Fleet said the City should consider actions such as installing cameras along Union Street to encourage adherence to the traffic rules. Hall said she had invited the Police Chief to meet with the Commission at its October 2013 meeting to discuss this and other issues. Manor said the City should implement the Union Street Corridor Study's recommendation that the pavement be changed at this location to encourage cyclists to slow down before entering traffic.

### ***Fire Department***

Cross reported that the City's new higher-capacity fire engines had all entered service, its new fireboat, Relief, would enter service after its pre-service performance check was complete, and City firefighters had recently taken part in shipboard firefighting training.

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

#### ***Marina Facility Condition Assessment Study Update*** (Assessment Study)

Browand reported that staff had reviewed the final draft of the Assessment Study and expects to receive the finalized report, reflecting staff comments, by end of September. He said the draft is consistent with the summary of the Assessment Study that staff had submitted to the Commission in June 2013.

#### ***City Marina Fire Suppression Inspection Results***

Browand reported the inspection verified the Marina's fire suppression system is in good operating condition.

#### ***Marina Security Contract Update***

Browand reported that, as the Commission had recommended to the City, the responsibility for Marina security had been transferred from General Services to RPCA, as of July 1, 2013. He said the City no longer contracts for its security services as part of the larger Fairfax County security services contract and, as of September 1, 2013, the City's security services contract is a stand-alone contract with the City. He said staff continues to review opportunities for additional Marina security enhancements.

### **Waterfront Small Area Plan (SAP) Implementation FY 15 CIP & Operating Budgets**

Browand reviewed the staff recommendations for funding Waterfront-related items in the FY15 operating budget, the FY15 CIP and the FY15-24 CIP, including FY15 funding for the Waterfront landscape and flood mitigation design project, the utility master plan, and the design and implementation of the Union Street Corridor Study's recommendations.

He said staff will recommend FY15 funding for two Waterfront items: a public restroom facility and a civic building, for which FY14 funding had been denied, and said work on the public restroom can begin as soon as funding is available.

In response to Dunn's question, Baker said the City plans to design a utility master plan that will accommodate the Waterfront landscape design being developed and will include options to underground overhead cables within the core area from King Street to Wolfe Street. She said the

City is working with Dominion Power to develop options for locating their facilities in a way that would be consistent with future Waterfront design plans.

In response to Auld's question, Williams said the Waterfront Small Area Plan (Waterfront SAP)'s language referencing a civic building is in Chapter 3's discussion of cultural nodes and in Chapter 5's implementation discussion. Cohen said the three Waterfront cultural nodes to be created were in the Torpedo Factory, Strand, and the Oronoco Bay Park/Robinson Terminal North areas.

Browand said fall is the time to submit Commission and public recommendations for which Waterfront-related items should be included in the City's FY15 budget request since the City begins to develop its budget recommendations to Council at this time.

### **Department of Project Implementation**

Jinks reported that the City had created, as of August 1, 2013, a new Department of Project Implementation (DPI) that consolidates staff responsibilities for overseeing all aspects related to implementing the Waterfront SAP and other City capital improvement projects. He said the new department's responsibilities will include engineering, contracting, and overseeing the construction of City-owned infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, sewers. Jinks said the new department has slightly over 20 staff, will be responsible for executing infrastructure capital projects developed by the P & Z. He reported that Emily Baker, formerly Deputy Director of T&ES and the City's Chief Engineer, has been appointed as the new DPI director and the City will be hiring a DPI deputy director who will be responsible for implementing Waterfront SAP-related projects. Jinks said the new department does not change the City's planning and zoning process and Williams and Browand will remain the City's staff liaisons to the Commission.

### **Olin Studio & URS Corporation Introduction – Waterfront Landscape Architecture and Flood Mitigation Design Projects**

Hamer introduced Skip Graffam, landscape architect, Olin Studio partner and the Olin Studio's lead on the City's Waterfront landscape design project. Hamer said the City was excited when the Olin Studio, founded by Laurie Olin and Bob Hannah, had indicated it was interested in bidding on the City's Waterfront landscape design contract because the Olin Studio ranks among the top U.S. and international landscape architecture firms.

Graffam said the firm's focus includes public space design, rehabilitating natural systems and built systems, and working with historic landscapes, and he briefly reviewed highlights of some of the firm's U.S. and international award-winning projects. He said the firm's designs for New York City's Hudson River-based Bryant Park and Battery Park were examples of projects in which Olin Studio designers "selectively edited" an existing landscape to enhance the elements already in place to respond to stakeholders' current needs and interests. He said the Olin Studio's National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC was an example of a design that created spaces that highlight artworks, enhance existing elements, and provide public space that hosts year-round activities. Graffam said the Independence National Historical Park project illustrated the Olin Studio's approach to opening up an historic area to make it more accessible to the public by opening up previously blocked street access and enhancing views of the water.

[Note: The full Olin Studio presentation is posted to the City website]

Graffam said he has enjoyed Alexandria public spaces as a person working in the City, had previously worked with EDAW on City projects, and introduced the team that will work with The Olin Studio on the Waterfront landscape design project:

- (a) Skip Graffam, Lee Anne Campbell, Will Belcher, Andrew McConnico, Olin Studio
- (b) Dennis Carmichael, ParkerRodriguez, local landscape architecture and urban design;
- (c) Moffatt & Nichol, marine engineering;
- (d) City Activators, public space activities and programming;
- (e) Steve Benz, Horton Lees Brodgen, lighting designer,
- (f) Jack Mackie, public art consultant.
- (g) Craig McClure, Christopher Consultants, surveyor and civil engineer

Graffam briefly reviewed the October 2013-June 2014 project schedule for the landscape design project, the tasks that will be performed, and planned dates to meet with the Commission, for public engagement meetings, and for other key events. He said the Waterfront landscape design team is working closely with URS Corporation, the City's consultants developing the flood mitigation project's design.

***Relationship between City's public landscape design and private space actions***

Commissioners asked how the City's landscape design team will create a Waterfront landscape design for public spaces that reflects ongoing and anticipated development designs for private Waterfront properties. Hamer said the City's goal is to create a "unified edge" for the private development and to ensure a unified approach to flood mitigation, grading, and related activities.

In response to Auld's question as to how planning for privately owned and/or developed projects, such as the Beachcomber, will interface with the design being developed by the Olin Studio-led team, Graffam said the Olin team will focus on the public spaces, and recognizes that private space development actions will proceed along different schedules. He said public space design will include aspects such as drainage and grading and incorporate related information from private space planning as soon as it becomes available to the City. Auld said that, as a general principle, Commission recommendations for City-owned property should not be made until after the Commission knows what development choices have been made for private Waterfront property sites.

Thayer said the City should reach out to current building and landowners likely to be affected by the City's flood mitigation actions to ensure that any actions taken to protect private property against flooding are consistent with the City's flood mitigation design plans. Baker said the City plans to do so.

***Windmill Hill Park***

In response to Baum's question about which parts of Windmill Hill Park will be included within the Waterfront landscape design's scope, Baker said the Olin design will start at Harborside and no revisions to the City's existing park plan are being considered. Baker said the City plans to revisit the Windmill Hill Park's bulkhead plan with the public to determine which aspects may need updating to reflect factors such as current needs for shoreline stabilization and the current

regulatory environment. She said the Commission will be provided a draft revised Windmill Hill Park bulkhead scope of work summary for discussion at its October 2013 meeting. Browand said the City's goal is to avoid creating community expectations for the bulkhead replacement that do not reflect current cost and other parameters that limit City options for Windmill Hill Park.

### ***Addressing river debris problem***

In response to Mutty's question about how the design plan will factor in river debris that accumulates along the shoreline, Graffam said options such as changing the shoreline's texture will be considered as ways to mitigate the river debris problem in a manner reflecting tides, winds and other natural factors.

### ***Waterfront Art and History Plan***

Delaney said it is important for the landscape design team to factor into its landscape design process the City's Art and History Waterfront Report, created to complement the Waterfront SAP. Graffam said the team has the Art and History Waterfront Report and team member Jack Mackie, a public art consultant, is responsible for focusing on this element of the landscape design planning.

Hamer reported that the City has scheduled a 7 p.m. October 15, 2013 public meeting at which Laurie Olin, founder of the Olin Studio, will discuss the philosophy that guides him in designing award-winning preeminent public spaces, parks, waterfronts and flood mitigation features around the world and how that will relate to the City's project. She said details of the meeting will be provided once they are confirmed.

## **Waterfront Plan Implementation**

### ***Planning & Zoning***

Williams said she will soon be transferring from P&Z to the new DPI and will remain as a City liaison to the Commission.

### ***Development Updates – Waterfront SAP Project Matrix Review***

Williams referred the Commission to the earlier discussion by Browand, Baker of issues included in the matrix, and said Senyatta would review the City's plan to study the impact of pedestrianizing the unit block of King Street.

### ***220 S. Union Street (Carr Hospitality)***

Williams reported that Carr Hospitality's revised plans for its boutique hotel will be discussed at the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) meeting on September 25, 2013 at 7:30 pm and said Carr had filed a request for a development special use permit (DSUP) the previous Friday that staff is currently reviewing. Williams said Carr Hospitality had asked to discuss its revised concept plan with the Commission at its October 2013 meeting.

### ***601 N. Fairfax - The Oronoco (EYA)***

Williams reported that EYA expects the building to be fully encased by October 2013 and suggested the Commission schedule a second October meeting to review the building. Hall agreed.

Williams said the Commission had been provided several documents for their reference: the Waterfront SAP's Chapter 2, "Goals and Waterfront-Wide Elements", covering issues such as design, environmental and maintenance; a list of Commission accomplishments since the Waterfront SAP had been adopted; and copies of handouts provided to participants during the Commission's two DC Waterfront study tours in August 2013.

### ***General Services***

#### ***Beachcomber RFP Update***

McPike briefly reviewed the status of the City's review of bids received for development of the City's Beachcomber property and said additional information will be provided as it becomes available. Hall invited questions. There were none.

### ***Transportation & Environmental Services***

#### ***Union Street Corridor & Unit Block Implementation Schedule***

Poole reviewed some preliminary ideas of how to factor the needs of stakeholders such as pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, tourists, emergency vehicles, residents, and businesses into concepts being considered by staff for creating a pedestrian plaza at the foot of King Street between The Strand and Union Street.

She said she hopes to have some plaza concept options ready for the Commission to discuss at its October 2013 meeting and expects the City's formal public outreach process to start in winter 2014. Poole said the City's goal is to implement the plaza concept in time for spring/summer 2014. Dunn said the City should consult merchants on either side of the plaza early in the design process.

In response to Speck's question, Poole said the City prefers to maintain the plaza using a public-private partnership to minimize the City's operational costs, a practice used by most cities for maintaining pedestrian plazas. In response to Fox's question, Poole said motor coach access to the pedestrian plaza is an option being considered. Poole said the pedestrian space is not likely to be sidewalk-to-sidewalk to accommodate emergency vehicles and, if it remains in place, the King Street Trolley. She said the City will try to anticipate how pedestrianizing King Street's unit block might affect traffic on neighboring streets such as The Strand and Union Street. In response to Baum's question, Baker said staff is developing the current plaza design in-house because this is an interim measure to improve pedestrian use of the area until the City can create a permanent plaza as part of the Waterfront SAP's implementation. Hamer said this interim plaza will include no permanent modifications to the King Street unit block.

Hall thanked T&ES for recently installing a planter at the foot of King Street to replace the eyesore sawhorse that had been there, and she thanked Manor for having his business pick up the planters' maintenance costs.

#### ***Strand Street Flood Mitigation (Backflow Preventer)***

Baker said construction is expected to start around 9/30/13, installation is expected to be done in about 90 days, and project details will be posted to the City website.

#### ***Windmill Hill Park Bulkhead Replacement Summary Scope of Work***

Addressed previously in the meeting by Baker.

***Union Street Corridor and Unit Block Implementation Schedule***

Senyatta said the City's RFP for a consultant to study the potential impacts of closing off the unit block of King Street to traffic is expected to be ready for release in October 2013 and he expects a consultant would be hired by November 2013. Thayer said the study should include outreach to businesses along both the unit and 200 blocks of King Street. Dunn said outreach to nearby property owners should be done early in the study's development and the Commission should be consulted before any decisions are made or any interim measures considered. Speck said the City should ask the Old Town Civic Association to help with public outreach.

Hall invited questions from the public. There were none.

***Potomac Interceptor Project – Alexandria Renew Enterprises, Inc.***

Okome said work on the project is expected to begin in October 2013, to continue Mondays through Thursdays at night through December 2013, and will affect all of Union Street. She said the work will also inspect the interceptor by video camera to detect any cracks so they can be repaired and will remove debris to reduce the chances of sewage backups. She reviewed Potomac Interceptor's plans for communication and public outreach and said a public open house is scheduled for October 12, 2013.

In response to Thayer's question of whether the work would violate the City's noise ordinance, Okome said the noise level would be comparable to that of a small generator. She said all the matter removed from the interceptor will be cleaned before being released into the river.

***Food Court & Robinson Terminals- Alexandria Economic Development Partnership  
Food Court***

Hawkins said a letter of intent for the Food Court had been signed with a restaurant group interested in the entire Food Court space for a one-off unique restaurant. He said he expected more details to be available at the Commission's October 15, 2013 meeting. Hall said the Commission is ready to help move the project forward as needed.

***Robinson Terminal North (RTN) and Robinson Terminal South (RTS)***

Hawkins reported that best and final offers were called for the previous week and said purchase and sale agreements had been executed by the various offerers and they now have 45 days to conduct their due diligence before finalizing the sale. Hawkins said he did not know when a public announcement would be made but expected it shortly.

**Reports from Commissioners**

***Marina Committee***

Thayer said that once the Commission had accepted the Facilities Assessment Report it would be referred to the Committee would review and Committee recommendations on the report will then be forwarded to the full Commission for action. He said the Committee will also be considering options for revising the Marina's fee categories for visits such as those by historic vessels and will be following the Marina security review to be conducted by the City's new Marina security firm.

**Announcements / Public Discussion**

Livingood said family-oriented Seaport Day will be held on September 28, 2013 at Waterfront Park.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.