Thank you

Big Picture – ultimate outcome – take what you all have compiled and add materials to create an integrated management plan for the park

Brief History of work to date

Work Completed to Date

- Ad Hoc Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Stakeholder Advisory Group (FWAG), working with City staff, has developed initial ideas for how to best manage the significant historic, natural and recreational resources of Fort Ward Park
  - FWAG’s Report, Recommendations for the Management of Fort Ward Historical Park, January 2011 and updated chapters
  - FWAG’s Monthly Meetings and Minutes
- Consultant led informal ‘Brainstorming Sessions’ for two half days in the park in June 2013
- Online Survey on City’s webpage in June 2013

Ongoing Study
- Stormwater Study
Tonight focus on one piece of the puzzle or thread for our ultimate weaving of a management plan. Upcoming meetings will focus on other threads and are open to the public. Followed by discussion in January 2014 on compiled Draft – with weft and warp all woven together, then take to public in an informal meeting and to appropriate City Commissions and to City Council work session. Many opportunities over the fall for you to weigh in and provide comments and concerns.

Tonight – focus on Natural, Cultural and Recreation Resources. Won’t go through the Existing Conditions report, but please provide us comments and concerns – set date of upcoming meeting – Sept 11.

Report contains a compilation and aggregation of issues drawn from our work and your report. Important to let us know if we have missed issues or misunderstood ones listed. Again, not intending to walk through each one this evening. Instead, we want to spend the short time together this evening to show you how we have recognized that some issues can be addressed, some conflict with each other, some require additional funds and some require additional coordination and share with you some examples of best practices that we think are a good fit with selected park issues that we have identified. Intend to go through them rapidly, and then open up the meeting for a robust discussion – are we on the right track? Remember, many layers to come in the next three meetings, and then we come back to you with an integrated management plan. So tonight is the launch, not the completion.

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Drawn from our issues matrix in the back of the Existing Conditions Report – three areas under the category of Natural resources to discuss this evening.

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Tonight’s Discussion Topics

- Existing Conditions Report, focused on Natural, Cultural and Recreational Resources
  - Status of synthesizing sources, findings yet to come
  - Please read and provide us edits, comments, etc.
- Issues Matrix - Is our listing complete?
  - Conflict and/or coordination required between issues
  - Issues requiring additional funding
- Potential Best Practices as applied to Fort Ward
  - Landscape Maintenance Practices, Turf and Meadow, Soil Erosion, Ground Disturbance, Vegetation – damage, invasive, tool for visibility

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Examples of Natural Resource Management Issues

- Natural Resources
  - Preserve and Enhance Park’s Natural Character
    - Define Landscape Maintenance/Cultural Practices
    - Declining Tree Plantings
    - Declining or Absent Ornamental Plantings
    - Declining Turf and Meadow Management
    - Invasive Species
    - Soil Erosion
- Stormwater
  - To come per URS Report

* Best practice examples proposed for these subheadings in this presentation

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Study Milestones - Where We are Today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Date</th>
<th>Study Milestone</th>
<th>Discussion Points</th>
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<tbody>
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Landscape Maintenance and Cultural Practices

Issues
• Overgrown shrubs and vines
• Leaf litter
• Tree stumps and limb decline

Concern regarding cultural practices – invasive growth, tree stump removal, tree care, disposal and disposition of leaf litter

Landscape Maintenance and Cultural Practices

Best Practices
Example
• Define areas for leaf litter placement, away from turf areas and sheltered from wind blow

Example of placing leaf litter under trees, in area bounded by walk and fallen tree – clear boundaries for application and looks intentional

Declining Turf and Meadow Management

Issues
• Turf managed by two entities
• Meadow intention unclear

Survey results from June session had mixed results – some responders thought the park was gorgeous and well maintained, others worried and didn’t understand the meadow program
Resource Management Discussion:
Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Management Plan

### Declining Turf and Meadow Management

**Best Practices Examples**
- Establish consistent mow cycle in conjunction with two entities
- Clearly mark intentional meadow edge

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Potential ways to manage intentional meadow; mowed paths can also be used for dog walking as is done in New River Gorge in West Virginia

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### Soil Erosion and Compaction

**Issues**
- Heavy use by recreational users
- Equipment and vehicles on turf
- Lack of paths or trails – ‘goat herd’ or make your own

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Soil Erosion and Compaction caused by heavy use, stormwater, or lack of paths

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**Best Practices Example**
- Combine pads into singular, soft surface in heavily used areas

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Perhaps look to ‘soft’ surfaces for larger areas – expand on the concrete pad concept in areas of heavy use; Tonight’s look is at the intersection of the natural or cultural resource with recreational resources - will look in more detail at recreational facilities themselves in the meeting in November – dog park, playground, amphitheater, picnic facilities, etc.
Cultural Resources - Best Practices Discussion

Examples of Cultural Resource Management Issues

- Cultural Resources
  - Exposure or Potential Exposure of Archaeological Resources: Ground Disturbance
    - Depth to Resource/Soil Erosion*
    - Data still to be Determined – Alexandria Archaeological Office
  - Vegetation/Damage to Historic Resources
- Recreation Resources
  - Conflict between users of Circular Path
  - Intensity of Use and Location of Recreation Facilities
  - Lack of Recognition for “The Fort” Community and Burial Sites
- Park Management and Funding Considerations
- Other Considerations

* Best practice examples proposed for this subheading in this presentation

Best Practice Example

- Rank maintenance practice by depth to resource
  - Soil aeration (up to 4”)
  - Vegetation removal (up to 18”)
  - Stump grinding (up to 4 feet)
  - Stormwater improvements (up to XX)
  - Walkways/trails installation (up to 18”)

Aerators relieve soil compaction by removing evenly-spaced cores of turf up to 4” in depth. Baseline archaeological survey has identified locations where aeration will not impact significant archaeological deposits.

Many Layers of History - Ground Disturbance

Issue
- Depth of resource varies: ground disturbance

Randall House

Barracks of the First Battalion, Companies C, E, and L, 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery, at Fort Ward (National Archives ca. 1863)

Many Layers of History - Ground Disturbance

Best Practice Example

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  - Soil aeration (up to 4”)
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Aerators relieve soil compaction by removing evenly-spaced cores of turf up to 4” in depth. Baseline archaeological survey has identified locations where aeration will not impact significant archaeological deposits.
Many Layers of History - Ground Disturbance

Best Practice Example
• Stabilize resource at ground level

Issues
• Exposed ground surface
• Lack of groundcover vegetation
• Tree and invasive plant growth on rifle trench and parapet
• Informal use of parapet as trail system
Best Practice Examples - Rifle Trench

- Repair the eroded condition of the earthwork
- Establish a new trail for visitors to replace the rifle trench parapet
- Integrate the trail with other planned trail improvements (i.e. nature trail)

Best Practice Examples - Rifle Trench

- Establish a sustainable land cover to protect against further erosion (grass or other plant material, leaf litter)
- Encourage visitor stewardship of the irreplaceable resource through signage and interpretation

Issues - Earthworks

- Need to limit foot traffic and access
- Invasive plants
- Eroded spots
- Tree growth
**Best Practices Examples**

- Control or eradicate invasive species growing on the earthworks
- Address the care and needs of trees and other plants to remain healthy

**Best Practices Examples**

- Establish management practices to support the growth of healthy grass stands while promoting visual accessibility for interpretation
- Consider using a taller, native warm-season grass for the fort parapet to reduce mowing and discourage visitors from climbing on the earthwork

**Best Practices Example**

- Establish a sustainable land cover to protect against erosion (such as use of leaf litter)
- Establish management practices to support woodland needs, limit the potential for damage to the earthworks from tree fall and other problems
Making Sites Visible: “The Fort” Community

Issues
- Preserve remnant landscape features such as line of cedars along School House Road
- Need to mark ‘invisible’ features for visitor

Best Practices Examples
- Identify the locations of “The Fort” community buildings and landscape features
- Establish protection strategies for maintaining above- and below-ground evidence of “The Fort” community
- Consider trail and interpretive options (subject of upcoming meetings)

Best Practice Example
- Design marking strategies to accompany interpretive program
Compilation of Best Management Practices

The Management Plan will

• Integrate this information with other components from upcoming discussions (see slide 3)

• Identify priorities and site sensitivities

• Balance needs and resources of the park

• Combine text, mapping and graphics

Promise – this will all come together with threads from next three meetings focus to create a management plan designed for Fort Ward park and its wonderful conflicting complexities. Will use maps, matrices, pictures and words.

Next Steps

• Meeting on Interpretive Framework – 9/11/13

• Meeting on Interpretive Enhancement Opportunities – 10/9/13

• Meeting on Facility Enhancement Opportunities – 11/13/13

• Draft Review of Management Plan – 1/8/14

Again, more meetings ahead for you all to weigh in and provide guidance and insight

Comments and Questions?

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Open Space Coordinator
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Alexandria, VA 22314
(P) 703.746.5493
laura.durham@alexandriava.gov

Please send comments and questions to Laura, info here.
Next Steps

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<td>FWAG #5</td>
<td>10/9/13</td>
<td>Enhancement Opportunities/Interpretive Facilities</td>
<td>• Idea of the commemorative walk – how used thematically and to provide additional recreational resource&lt;br&gt;• How to mark gravesites and “The Fort” Community&lt;br&gt;• How to integrate with resource management&lt;br&gt;• Additional park programming and events</td>
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<td>FWAG #6</td>
<td>11/13/13</td>
<td>Facility Enhancement Opportunities</td>
<td>• Parking and arrival; orientation; ring road; secondary circulation; amphitheater; picnic areas; special areas; edges</td>
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<tr>
<td>FWAG #7</td>
<td>1/8/14</td>
<td>Management Plan Draft Review and Implementation</td>
<td>• Review of Draft Document&lt;br&gt;• Additional discussion on programming, management and implementation</td>
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