


oral reports
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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2014
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 
SUBJECT: WATERFRONT CONSTRUCTION – COORDINATION UPDATE

Construction associated with projects approved as part of the Waterfront Plan is expected to begin this fall with the Indigo Hotel at 220 South Union Street. As additional development projects come forward and the City initiates its own capital improvement projects, City Council recommended a working group be established to address the impacts of construction and serve as a liaison to City staff and the surrounding neighborhoods. This memo outlines a framework for an ongoing waterfront construction coordination strategy. This strategy includes a brief primer of existing processes used by the City to ensure construction activities have minimal impact on surrounding properties.

In an effort to address concerns expressed by citizens regarding haul routes, vibrations, asbestos removal, dust control and damage to public and private property, and consistent with Council's direction, I intend to appoint an Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction that would convene immediately in order to address construction impacts associated with the Indigo Hotel. City staff from a dedicated Waterfront Construction Project Team will assist as needed. Pete Mensinger, Code Administration, will be serving as lead staff to the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group and will be the central point of contact for construction related questions and concerns. This central point of contact worked well for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project, enabling concerns to be better addressed, and the City's roles and responsibilities to be well coordinated.

The Ad Hoc Monitoring Group will convene periodically throughout the construction of the Indigo Hotel to monitor issues as well as to address any specific issues that arise during the construction process. These may be issues identified by residents, nearby businesses, or other stakeholders that require either developer or staff response/action. The Group would also explore alternate hauling methodologies such as barging.

The Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction would be charged with:

- In conjunction with the City's Project Team, assessing construction impacts associated with waterfront development and making recommendations to the City's Project Team on how to minimize construction-related neighborhood impacts caused by trucks, automobiles and other construction vehicles by restricting on-street parking for such vehicles and restricting routes to and from construction areas.
- Acting as a liaison between neighborhoods/property owners and the City's Project Team to address negative impacts caused by construction activities.
- Acting as a liaison between neighborhoods/property owners and the City's Project Team in cases of excessive noise, dust, air quality deterioration and other construction activity related impacts; working to assist residents in the effort to eliminate or mitigate impacts of construction to the maximum degree feasible.

The composition of the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group would include:

- 1 member from the Waterfront Commission.
- 1 member from the Old Town Civic Association.
- 1 representative from the Chamber of Commerce (waterfront area business).
- 1 area resident (at-large).
- 1 representative(s) of nearby homeowners associations (HOA, rotating).
- 1 developer representative (rotating).

It is important to note that initial membership will reflect the current project at hand, the Indigo Hotel. The Monitoring Group membership will evolve as other Waterfront development projects move forward. For example, there will be representation for the area near Robinson Terminal North and a representative from the Robinson North development team when that project becomes active. The HOA representatives are likely to be from HOAs in close proximity to the site under development while the at-large representative can be from the broader affected neighborhoods.

The Monitoring Group and Project Team will continually coordinate among the various development projects and City capital initiatives. To encourage better understanding of construction initiatives, the City Project Team will develop a living construction timeline to provide visual aid for project coordination, ensure community inquiries are addressed comprehensively and provide details of existing City ordinances and processes.

The City Project Team will also ensure the community has a broader understanding of the City's processes for allowing commencement of construction activities. In brief, those processes are outlined below with notes in parentheses outlining the current status of the Indigo Hotel project:

1. Developer-led community meeting (complete for the Indigo Hotel).
2. Development site plan is reviewed, approved and released by staff (Indigo Hotel Plan at final stage).
3. All required bonds (erosion & sediment control, street cleaning, public improvements, landscaping) are posted (ongoing for Indigo Hotel).
4. A pre-construction meeting is held between the developers and City staff. City staff communicates to the Developer the City's allowed working hours, erosion and sediment control concerns, what permits are required and the process for acquiring those permits. (This has not occurred for the Indigo Hotel.)
5. The contractor submits an application for a hauling permit which is reviewed by staff and approved by the Director of the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES). (This has not occurred for the Indigo Hotel; staff expects the Ad Hoc Monitoring Group would meet prior to this stage to assess construction impacts, although the City issues this permit.)
6. The contractor submits applications for other T&ES right-of-way permits that may be required. Once reviewed, and if approved, these permits are issued for specific construction activities and durations (this has not occurred for the Indigo Hotel).
7. During construction, the site will be inspected routinely by T&ES and Code Administration inspectors.

cc: Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Emily Baker, Director, Department of Project Implementation
John Catlett, Director, Department of Code Administration
Yon Lambert, AICP, Acting Director, Transportation & Environmental Services
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William J. Skrabak, Deputy Director, T&ES Infrastructure/Environmental Quality
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