



City of Alexandria, Virginia

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes

22 April 2009

Sister City Room, Room 1101, City Hall

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rich Baier (chair), Mayor William Euille, Stephanie Brown, Poul Hertel, Greg Ogden, Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimmick-Calico, Deputy Chief Cleveland Spruill (for Chief David Baker), Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Captain David Ray (staff), Yon Lambert (staff), Karen Callaham (staff)

Guest: John Prevar - Old Town Village, Aaron Lacey – Old Town Village, Bob Bell – North Old Town, Pamela V. Stone - Old Town Village, Ken Presley

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 22 April 2009.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topic was to review recommendations presented and approved by City Council and the Traffic and Parking Board.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Rich Baier opened the meeting by welcoming all.

• Membership Update

Mr. Baier informed the group that Andrea Stowers resigned from the Task Force. A new citizen member from the area will be added. Joann Platt, a former member of a past Motorcoach Task Force, was suggested as a potential candidate. Her community is adjacent to Founders Park.

• Waterfront Meetings

Mr. Baier announced the upcoming Waterfront Stakeholder's meeting. The Motorcoach Task Force will be involved in the Waterfront planning efforts.

2. Review Actions of City Council and Traffic and Parking Board

Approved:

- \$25,000 of last year's snow reserves to be reallocated for Motorcoach initiatives.
- Voluntary on-line Motorcoach registration by spring 2010.
- Funding the Motorcoach counts by staff in 2009.

- The current Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task force to monitor long-term actions of Motorcoach Task Force management strategies.
- The current Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task force to provide quarterly updates to City Council on Motorcoach initiatives.
- The Police Department to aggressively enforce existing City ordinances with regard to motorcoach activity.
- The Police Department to continue its transportation management in the unit block of King Street.
- The unit block of King Street to be changed permanently from a two-way to one-way westbound.
- The removal of six metered parking spaces on west side of the 100 block of North Washington to be designated as 30-minute motorcoach loading/unloading.
- The designation of 45 feet for one motorcoach to load/unload for 30 minutes on the 100 block of South Washington Street.

Not Approved

- Request to remove 26 parking spaces on the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland and South West Streets for three-hour motorcoach parking from 8am – 10 pm. Issues presented by Old Town Village Homeowners Association was traffic congestions at Jamieson Ave and South West Street, respectfulness to the adjacent cemetery, noise intrusion and air pollution on Old Town Village condominium units, displacement of Old Town Village visitor parking and employee parking of nearby businesses, and pedestrian safety.

City Council and the Traffic and Parking Board requested the Motorcoach Task Force to come up with two alternative locations and a no parking alternative.

3. Updates on Short Term Recommendations

- **Outreach/Communication** – Press releases went out from the Police Department, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA), and the City of Alexandria. There was media coverage in the Alexandria Gazette Packet, radio channel WAMU and a news clip on channel 8. The ACVA brochure has been updated with parking information for the motorcoach industry.
- **Counts** – First rounds of counts performed on April 2nd and 4th from 7 am – 11 pm. The video counts performed at 4 north and south gateways into and out of the City is still being processed. The locations were Route 1 and E. Custis Avenue, Route 1 and Franklin Street, the G.W. Parkway at Slaters Lane and the G.W. Parkway at Church Street. The count numbers include motorcoaches entering and existing the City. Staff performed counts at parking loading/unloading sites east of Washington Street and are preliminary. On April 2nd, there were 64 motorcoaches monitored and 67 motorcoaches monitored on April 4th. Counts will continue as funding allows through summer and fall.
- **Enforcement** – 180 police hours performed. 51 warnings were issued and 3 citations. 9 idling warnings and 1 idling citation issued. 5 double-parking warnings and 2 citations issued. 22 warnings issued to motorcoach drivers for using non-dedicated parking locations. 9 warnings were issued for parking longer than the time limit. At times, police will have to use discretion in their traffic management of the motorcoaches on issues outside of idling, double-parking and unlawful loading/unloading practices.
- **Loading/unloading in Upper King Street area** – City Code states motorcoach companies can request loading/unloading in other parking areas not designated. Additional staff

recommendations for possible loading/unloading include east side of 100 block of North Fayette Street after 7pm and the south side of the 1200 block of King Street between Payne and Fayette.

- **Walking Tours** – A number of walking tours currently exist in the City that are managed by various organizations such as Alexandria Archeology, the Black History Museum, Colonial Tours, ACVA, Alexandria Tours/Old Town Experience, Footsteps to the Past, OHA, Ask Alex Cell Tours, and the Lyceum. The majority of these groups each have a few choices of walking tours to choose from.
- **Development of Registration System** – A group of mid-level City staff comprised of the permitting, communications and IT departments have been meeting to develop a registration system to be in place by March 2010. They are also working on business rules for the registration system. A beta version will be ready for review prior to spring 2010.
- **Touring Routes** – Staff met with two local touring companies that conduct step on guides to discuss existing touring routes to see if some minor adjustments and alterations can be revealed.

4. Short-Term Parking Locations

A matrix of 33 possible short-term parking locations was distributed to the Task Force for discussion. The purpose of the matrix is to address additional parking locations that may have/have not been considered. After a review of each location, the Task Force ranked three options for presentation to City Council: 1) the Alexandria City Public School system bus barn on Wheeler Avenue; 2) 900 block of South Royal Street; and 3) Jamieson Avenue – 5 spaces to the west.

5. Public and Task Force Question & Answer

Aaron Lacey- Stated he is a condominium owner in Old Town Village. He spoke about his major concern of pedestrian safety. The Jamieson Avenue area where the Task Force is considering is currently congested and dangerous for pedestrians without the influx of motorcoaches. He also stated his appreciation for the hard work performed by the Task Force regarding the issues of motorcoaches. Mr. Lacy inquired as to the criteria used for short-term parking locations in the City for motorcoaches.

Citizen #1- The Motorcoach Task Force should not have been looking at parking location that had already been researched. Instead, there should have been a plan for new construction with amenities for the tour bus industry in an appropriate location in the City. This needs to be addressed by the Planning and Zoning Department as they are looking at possible sites for redevelopment.

John Prevar – I am Vice President of the Old Town Village Condo Association. We appreciate all the hard work that the Motorcoach Task Force has put into this effort. We all are citizens of the City and it is an issue that concerns us all yet you all are the ones that have put so much into it.