

ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Monthly Meeting

Sister Cities Conference Room

City Hall

7:30 a.m.

Commission Members

Present:

Sarah Bagley, Member, Alexandria City Council

Eldon Boes, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC)

Robert Cvejanovich, Old Town Civic Association (OTCA)

Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Owners

Kristina Hagman, Founders Park Community Association

Charlotte Hall, VisitAlexandria

Trae Lamond, Representative, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)

Nathan (Nate) Macek, Alexandria Planning Commission, and Vice-Chair, Waterfront Commission

Lebaron Reid, Commissioner At-Large

Louise Roseman, Park Planning District I

Barbara Saperstone, East of Washington St. and South of King St

Kathy Seifert, Alexandria Seaport Foundation

Stephen Thayer, east of Washington St. and north of King St. and Chair, Waterfront Commission

Patricia Webb, Park Planning District II

Esther White, Alexandria Archaeological Commission

Excused

Agnes Artemel, East of Washington St. and North of Pendleton St.

Stuart Fox, Park and Recreation Commission

Clair Sassin, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

Absent

Brian McPherson, Park Planning District III

Vacancies:

Representative, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

Representative, Historic Alexandria Resources Foundation

City Staff

Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison, and Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)

Alfred Coleman, Deputy Director, Department of General Services (GS)

Mike Durham, Dockmaster, RPCA

Matthew Landes, Division Chief, Waterfront Program Manager, Department of Project Implementation (PPI)

Jeremy McPike, Director, Department of General Services (GS)

Catherine Miliaris, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)

Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA
Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)

Guests

Bert Ely

Call to Order

Chair Thayer called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and congratulated Mike Durham, formerly the City's Acting Dockmaster, for his appointment as City Dockmaster.

Discussion Items for Action

ITEM 1: Approval of September 20, 2022 Minutes

- **MOTION:** Hagman moved and Roseman seconded that the September 20, 2022 minutes be approved. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ITEM 2: 2 King Street Surplus Property Update - Steve Thayer, Chair, and Jeremy McPike, Director, Department of General Services (GS)

McPike reviewed the recommendations proposed at the October 13 meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission and Waterfront Commission's Joint Subcommittee on 2 King Street. **Note:** Full written staff summary of the October 13 meeting is an appendix at the end of the minutes.

- ***October 13 Meeting purpose:*** Consider possible community benefits for the full Commissions to consider recommending be incorporated into the City documents related to the potential sale of the 2 King Street parcel.
- ***Expression of Interest document*** –Document being developed by the City, the first step in the process, not a Request for Proposals to develop the 2 King Street.
- ***October 13 Meeting participants:***
 - Waterfront Commissioners Thayer and Hall;
 - Park and Recreation Commissioners Steve Beggs; Dana Colarulli; and Geoffrey Goode; and City staff Jeremy McPike (Director, GS); Alfred Coleman (Deputy Director, GS); and Jack Browand (Deputy Director, RPCA).
- **October 13 Joint Subcommittee Recommendations- Staff Summary**
 - ***Parks and Recreation Commission recommendations***
 - Flood mitigation
 - Public Art/Historic content
 - Event Space
 - Area for food truck/trailer
 - One-story building (possible residential above ground floor retail)
 - Property developed by adjacent landowner
 - No-build – park/lawn
 - Restrooms
 - Visitor space

- ***Waterfront Commissioner recommendations***
 - Restrooms
 - Indoor/outdoor, or covered recreation space
 - Meeting rooms
 - Visitor information
 - Arts/Cultural Uses
 - APD/public safety offices
 - Flood mitigation Common Recommendations
 - Flood Mitigation
 - Public Art
 - Recreational/park space.

Commissioner Comments on the Subcommittee’s proposed draft recommendations

- ***Flood mitigation*** – Flood mitigation at the site should be incorporated into any redevelopment plans.
- ***Activation*** - Publicly activated uses at street level should be included.
- ***Public meeting space*** – Should be included.
- ***Parking/Meeting room/ event space*** – Concern parking would be insufficient to support events at this site.
- ***Residential development*** – Commissioners are concerned that including residences in a redevelopment at this site would lead to residents’ complaints about noise from activities held in the nearby public spaces.
 - A developer must recognize park activities are a priority, with residents signing an agreement acknowledging that park activities are prioritized at this location.
- ***History*** –Historical factors should be considered throughout the DSUP process.
- ***Back of the building’s unsightly activities*** - Any development must address unsightly activities facing the Waterfront, such as trash removal and grease traps.

MOTION: (2 King Street)

Macek moved and Hall seconded that the Commission endorse the recommendations of the Joint Subcommittee with the following modifications to the draft circulated by City staff:

- (Flood mitigation) “Tier 1, flood mitigation” should be modified to ‘flood mitigation at the site must be incorporated into future development’
- (Unsightly back of the building) “To the rear of the existing building” – should be modified by striking the first sentence and modifying the next sentence to read “any development would need to address how back-of-the-house operations of existing or future businesses located adjacent to 2 King Street, such as trash removal and grease traps, would need to be incorporated or relocated.(Street-level activation) Add a new item: “Activation at street level of the site” - “The site shall be activated at the ground level including public facing uses such as restaurant and retail”
- (Public art) Strike the public art reference (since it’s always a DSUP requirement)
- (Meeting space) Modify “meeting room/event space” to read “inclusion of public meeting space ;
- (Residential use) With respect to possible residential development over retail

- Add "Vibrancy of the adjacent Waterfront Park and King Street Place is a priority. Therefore use of 2 King Street as residential is discouraged."
- (History) Add that "The redevelopment process should recognize the importance of history at this location, a fact represented by the Waterfront Small Area Plan's inclusion of an Art and History Master Plan".

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Next steps –

- **Park & Recreation Commission** - Waterfront Commission clarifications will be presented at the Park and Recreation Commission meeting the following Thursday.
- **Council review** - Staff will incorporate recommendations into a draft Expression of Interest document to be submitted for Council review
- **Timing** - If a sale is eventually agreed upon, City would not transfer ownership of 2 King Street to the buyer until after the DSUP is approved and construction is about to begin, a process likely to take several years.

**ITEM 3: FY 2024-2033 OPERATING BUDGET AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
BUDGET PLANNING - RESPONSE TO CITY MANAGER - Steve Thayer, Chair
and Nathan Macek, Vice Chair**

In response to the City Manager's request for the Commission to identify its budget priorities for the planning process, Thayer asked Commissioners to consider how the Commission's budget priorities should be identified with the priority areas the City Manager ask be addressed.

- Note: [City Council's six 2022](#)

Commissioner Comments

- Budget priorities and related Waterfront-related programs identified by Commissioners were:
 - **Climate Change** – Flood mitigation;
 - **Energy efficient designs** – Infrastructure designs should be as energy efficient as possible, using technologies, designs and systems.
 - **Safety** - Police staffing to address pedestrian safety, including problems created by scooters;
 - **Employee Compensation** – Important for providing adequate staff for Waterfront maintenance and operations and security. (Thayer noted funding is insufficient for weekend policing throughout the year);
 - **Equitable access to the Waterfront** - Increase funding for public transport and other ways to improve disability access.
 - **Equitable recovery from COVID/Seaport Foundation** - City support for Seaport Foundation programs for at-risk and disadvantaged youth.
 - Siefert thanked the City for its continuing support for the Foundation programs. She reported a number of Seaport Foundation students had dropped out of school during and since the COVID shut-down and need the Foundation's programs more than ever.

- **Infrastructure maintenance** – Ensuring adequate staff to maintain the infrastructure is key. Enhancing aesthetics of pedestrian blocks will help enhance their vibrancy, draw more visitors and add to City revenues.

Next step: Send Commission letter to the City Manager identifying the Commission’s budget priorities for FY2024 before the next Commission meeting.

MOTION:

Macek moved and **Saperstone** seconded that the Chair and/or Vice-Chair be authorized to draft a budget and capital improvement letter to the City Manager that is based on Commissioners’ recommendations at the meeting, builds upon the Commission’s letter for FY2023 to provide recommendations for FY2024 and aligns with the City Manager’s priorities for budget investments. Areas to focus on include COVID recovery, infrastructure, climate change, environmental justice, and youth and family support as discussed at this meeting. Commission concerns to address specifically include staffing for policing, public safety, waterfront maintenance and marina operations; funding to improve disability access; support for Seaport Foundation activities addressing youth needs; and energy efficient designs, systems and infrastructure projects. The Commission also recognizes that activating the Waterfront generates City revenues to support the City’s ability to fund needs such as alternative means to access the Waterfront.

VOTE - The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- **NOTE:** [Commission’s November 1, 2022 letter to Council](#)

City Updates

PUBLIC SAFETY – No report

PEDESTRIAN ZONE: UNIT BLOCK of KING STREET and 100 BLOCK of STRAND STREET – Christopher Ziemann, T&ES

Ziemann reported that staff is moving forward with planning needed to make the blocks’ pedestrianization permanent. He reviewed highlights of community feedback on the proposal. (See presentation at the online link above). Public feedback supporting permanent pedestrianization was overwhelmingly positive.

Next Steps:

- Meetings:
 - October 24 – Traffic & Parking Board
 - November 1 – Planning Commission
 - November 8 and 12 – City Council for final approval
 - Continue monthly advisory board meetings to address issues as they arise
- Consider permitting and parklets, bollards and other long term features for the blocks

Commissioner Comments (Permanent pedestrianization)

Strand Street traffic backups - Commissioners reiterated concerns first raised at their October meeting regarding the need for measures to address the Strand Street traffic logjam created by vehicles that have

too little space to turn around when they encounter the ‘street closed’ barrier for the 100 block of Strand Street.

MOTION:

Macek moved and Saperstone seconded that the Chair and/or Vice-Chair are authorized to convey to Council by letter that the Commission supports the permanent establishment of a pedestrian zone in the King Street Unit Block and 100 block of Strand Street as consistent with the Waterfront Small Area Plan. The Commission also notes concerns regarding management of the Strand parking, suggests potentially dedicating those spaces for handicapped and/or City? vehicle parking, and the need for a Dead End sign at the Strand/Prince Street corner. The Commission further notes its concerns that the sidewalk walkway be maintained and that safety bollards be part of any features that make the closure pertinent.

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- **Note:** [Commission’s Endorsement Letter for King Street Unit Block/100 block Strand Street Pedestrian Zone](#)

COMMUNITY PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES – Jack Browand, Deputy Director, RPCA

- **Waterfront Park** - “I Love You”, this year’s temporary public art installation in the park’s annual Site See series, will be removed around November 7.
- **City Tree Lighting** - November 19, 2022
- **Pride of Baltimore visit** - The tall ship will visit October 21-23 and conduct public tours between 10 a.m. and 3pm.
- **Tall Ship Providence** - The City plans to finalize its franchise agreement with the Tall Ship Providence Foundation later in the week.

WATERFRONT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION – Matthew Landes, Division Chief, DPI

- [Project procurement information](#)
- **Progressive Design Build Team procurement process** - The City advertised the first step of the procurement process for selecting a Progressive Design Build (PDB) Team to implement the Waterfront Plan. Extensive industry outreach was conducted to publicize the City’s Request for Qualifications (RFQ). 72 attendees participated in the City’s virtual project briefing. There are five actively engaged teams so far.
 - Summer 2023 – the likely timeframe for choosing a contractor.
 - **Public engagement** - A community meeting, to be hosted either by DPI or the Waterfront Commission, is planned for when a short list of potential contractors has been chosen. Public engagement on the overall project will continue after a PDB team has been selected.
 - **RFQ** - will be shared with the Commission and be posted online.
- **Flood mitigation grants**
 - State grant of \$3.2 million has been added to the CIP budget.
 - The City will reapply next year for FEMA’s BRIC grant (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities).
- **Robinson Landing Railing** – Purchase order for railing has been issued.
 - Installation date has not yet been set. Factors such as when the contractor provides a scheduling commitment and how long the railing’s fabrication and installation will take

are not yet known. The Commission will be advised when a more specific estimate of timing can be made.

Commissioner Comments

- **Planning for Flood Mitigation elements’ ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) requirements and costs?** A: Staff has been reaching out to neighboring sewer and water authorities for information on their staffing, contractors, maintenance requirements and other specific issues.
- **Flood Mitigation - additional alternatives?** Hagman/FPCA – What actions are being taken to ensure additional options to the underground storage tanks in Founders Park will be considered? A: The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) prominently includes the requirement to conduct a cost-benefit analysis for both the pump stations without underground storage and other low impact underground infrastructure to manage stormwater. A Council member has also conveyed to DPI an interest in the eventual cost-benefit analysis.
 - **Extending underground chambers? Hagman/FPCA:** Might the underground chamber system be extended south of King Street along the Waterfront? (check wording) A: The concept plan in the RFQ considered an option for Waterfront Park and that will be considered further.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES – Catherine Miliaras, Principal Planner, P&Z

- **Juice Box SUP** – A public hearing is planned for December on The Juice Box temporary trailer at 500 N. Union Street (Robinson Landing North site) to bring its operation into compliance.
- **Potomac River Generating Station (GenOn site)** – Community meeting mid-November on its infrastructure DSUP

Commissioner Reports / Subcommittee Reports / Announcements

- **Hagman/Torpedo Factory Art Center Stakeholders Group** (Stakeholders Group) Hagman, the Commission’s representative on the Stakeholders Group, reviewed the first meeting.
 - [Stakeholder Group’s web page](#)
 - **Timing** - First meeting was held September 22. Five monthly meetings are planned, each covering a different topic. The TFAC Stakeholders Group’s recommendations to the City Manager are expected to be finalized mid-2023. City Manager will then submit his recommendations to Council.
 - **Composition** - Its 20 members represent a diverse and inclusive group of TFAC stakeholders. DPI is managing the process..
 - **City Manager input** – He plans to actively participate as fully as he can and has made it clear the City has no plans to sell the TFAC and plans to keep it as an art center, while taking actions that will increase its vibrancy and visibility.
 - **Issues** – Stakeholders have identified a variety of issues of interest to them, such as encouraging climate-conscious design and systems and recognizing the importance of the Archaeology Museum as a TFAC tenant.
 - **Next steps** - Hall, the Stakeholder Group’s Old Town Business Association representative, encouraged interested Commissioners to attend meetings and read the

related information. Landes reported the next meeting will consider similar art centers around the world as examples.

- **Boes/EPC** – Planning Commission and Environmental Commission held a joint meeting the previous evening with a focus on climate change and how to help the City meet its goals for 2030 and 2050. A small working group will be established to focus primarily on the building sector. EPC plans to meet also with the Transportation Commission to discuss carbon reduction measures in that sector. **Macek**, also at the meeting, highlighted the need for the City to find ways to tie its development standards to its citywide climate goals.
- **Council Member Bagley / Backyard archaeology** – reported that City Archaeologist Breen had briefed Council on backyard archaeology and the need for it to be done by professionals in a historic way.
 - Further information is at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/archaeology/backyard-archaeology>

Next Meeting - Proposed Discussion Topics / Items of Information

- TFAC Stakeholder Group update - Hagman
- Update on Waterfront Plan - November or December
- Vision Zero update – Timing TBD
- Parking mitigation strategies.

Next Meeting: November 15, 2022

The possibility of rescheduling the December meeting was discussed without a decision.

Adjournment

At 9:40 a.m. Macek moved and Roseman seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.