

**ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES: March 16, 2022**

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom Webinar

Public Registration URL: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DsZHf9pgTJG29cIEEDFmHg
Meeting/Webinar ID: 922 1607 7097
Meeting/Webinar Password: 431483
Dial-in number: 301-715-8592

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large (Secretary)
Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community Representative
Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large
Rebecca Doser, Visit Alexandria Representative
Ann Greer, Member at Large
Richard (Dick) Owens, Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) Representative
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association Representative
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large

Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation Representative
Christopher (Chris) Warren, Alexandria Historical Society Representative

Members Absent:

Jacob (Jake) Hoogland, Member at Large - excused
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III - excused

City Staff:

Garrett Fesler, Archaeologist
Emma Richardson, Museum Education Specialist

Public:

John Oldfield
Ruth Snead

Call to Order

Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice City of Alexandria by Garrett Fesler and recorded by Emma Richardson.

Review and Approval of Minutes

AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, February 16 meeting minutes. Ann Greer moved to accept the minutes, as amended. Ralph Rosenbaum seconded. Motion passed and minutes approved, as amended.

Chair Report – Ivy Whitlatch

Ivy thanked AAC members who walked in the George Washington Birthday Parade on Monday, February 21 and Emma shared photos. This was the biggest turnout of AAC members in recent memory.

HARC Update: The advocacy committee of HARC, in conjunction with Al Cox, has prepared a letter to the head of the Board of Architectural Review in order to persuade them to nominate the Torpedo Factory building to the National Register of Historic Places.

City Council Packets - Ivy shared the preliminary success of the packets, as she has had one “meet and greet” call with Councilman Canek Aguirre. Aguirre is supportive and thinks Alexandria Archaeology needs more exposure. On Tuesday, March 15, Ivy, Garrett, and Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist, met with Councilmember Sarah Bagley at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum for a “meet and greet.” Councilmember Bagley was supportive and fascinated with the City’s archaeological program and upcoming projects. Meetings with Councilmembers R. Kirk McPike and Alyia Gaskins are scheduled for March and April, respectively.

AAC Ordinance Update - Ivy Whitlatch

The AAC’s request to change membership requirement/language in the ordinance will go before the City Council on April 5.

Strategic Planning/Work Plan for FY 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) - Ivy Whitlatch

Ivy asked AAC members to email her to sign up to help with one of the following priority areas in FY 2023:

- African American History (i.e., input on African American Heritage Trail Signage Project)
- Waterfront (i.e., Support of Ship Model Exhibition and Ship Ponding Outreach and Public Education)
- Museum (i.e., Input on Exhibit Redesign)
- 50th Anniversary (i.e., Development of Planning Document to Rollout)

Membership Update

Dick Owens shared that the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) decided to reappoint him to AAC.

Select Awards Committee and Chair - Ivy Whitlatch

AAC continued discussions around the creation of an award in addition to the annual Ben Brenman Award. Types of potential recipients and the presentation of such award were also shared.

Planning Updates and Reports

Waterfront Commission – Esther White

- Esther reported that Eleanor presented Alexandria Archaeology’s plans for the ship ponding to the Waterfront Commission at its Tuesday, March 15 meeting.
- In preparation for the Flood Mitigation update from Matt Landes of the City’s Department of Project Implementation, at next month’s AAC meeting, Ivy and Esther asked the AAC to review the materials Eleanor sent to the AAC via email and submit any questions to Ivy prior to the April meeting. Ivy asked Garrett if he could put together info for AAC on how Landes and Alexandria Archaeology have already worked together on this project/history of Founder’s Park. Garrett agreed.

African American Heritage Trail Committee – Ted Pulliam

- Ted reported that this Committee reviewed final written comments on the interpretative markers for the last part of the Trail’s southern end. The Committee will meet in April to create a final draft.

Commissioner Reports on Key Initiatives

[This will be a new, standing agenda item. Intention is to hear from organizations represented on the AAC.]

FOAA Update - Dick Owens

- Dick shared that FOAA members were appreciative of the collaboration with City staff and AAC in the logistics for and marching in the George Washington Birthday Parade on Monday, February 21.
- FOAA started to plan for the annual volunteer party, which will be in April.
- FOAA continued to work with City staff in preparation for the ship ponding and ship models exhibition at the Archaeology Museum/Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC).

Visit Alexandria - Rebecca Doser

- Rebecca noted that there are national media visits to the city this spring, with some expressing interest in Black history and culture in Alexandria. She intends on pointing their attention to the African American Heritage Trail. Seth Tinkham also recommended Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial and its inclusion in the African American Civil Rights Network.
- Rebecca is following the opening of the Freedom House, as opening has been pushed back from April to Memorial Day weekend. Ivy - media might be interested in the ship exhibits.
- Rebecca has not had a specific ask from the media about archaeology. Ivy suggested that the media might be interested in the ship exhibit planned for April-June at the TFAC and ship ponding.

Alexandria Association - Ted Pulliam

- Nothing to report

Alexandria Historical Society - Chris Warren

- Nothing to report

Historic Alexandria Foundation - Seth Tinkam

- Nothing to report

Business Community - Dylan Colligan

- Dylan did not have a report, but rather posed the following to the AAC to consider: How can businesses get behind the anniversary planning and the other topics on our FY 23 workplan? What can businesses along the African American Heritage Trail do to promote the trail and welcome trail visitors?

Planning District Updates - Multiple

- Nothing to report

Staff Reports

Archaeology Protection Code Update - Garrett Fesler

- Garrett gave a summary of development projects/permit requests throughout the city that came across Alexandria Archaeology’s desk from Dec 2021 - March 2022.
 - West End Projects (Upland Park, Minnie Howard, Fort Ward, Park View II)
 - Central Projects (2525 Mount Vernon Ave, Oakville Triangle, 2712 Duke Street)

- Old Town Projects [GenOn Power Plant, The Aspire (glass factory floor uncovered during archaeological trenching last week), 615-623 King Street]

Museum/Social Media/Events Update - Emma Richardson

- Museum Updates
 - Saw increased visitation in Winter 2022 compared to Winter 2020
 - Summer Camp sold out!
 - New exhibits: Technology Tells a Story and general updates. Emma thanked Ann Greer for her help with the updates.
 - *SeeWorthy* Exhibit - Studio 9 on first floor of the TFAC will hold ship models. Will be open Friday, April 1 through Sunday, June 5. Looking for volunteers to interpret for the public. Emma will send an email calling for volunteers. There will be training.
 - The City launched a new website recently.
- Social Media Updates
 - Emma shared some upcoming topics for social media posts for March, April, and May.
- Upcoming Events
 - Save the Date for the annual Volunteer Party: Friday, April 8, 7-8:30 pm. Formal Invite to follow.
 - Ship Pounding Events at Ben Brenman Park - Timbers are expected to go into the pond Monday, April 25-Friday, May 13. Friday or Saturday, May 6 or 7 for Public Day. Partners tour TBD.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Ivy moved to adjourn the meeting; Ralph seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m. The next AAC Meeting will be held **in person** on Wednesday, April 20 at the Lloyd House.