

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES: November 16, 2022
LLOYD HOUSE, 7 P.M.
220 N. WASHINGTON STREET

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large, (Secretary)
Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large
Ann Greer, Member at Large
Michael Johnson, Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or equivalent organization
John Oldfield, 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 (via phone)
Scott Vierick, Alexandria Historical Society Representative

Members Excused:

Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community Representative
Rebecca Doser, Visit Alexandria Representative
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III

Visitors/Public:

None

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

Call to Order

- Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Review and Approval of Minutes

- AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, October 19 meeting minutes. Ann Greer moved to accept the minutes, as amended. John Oldfield seconded. Motion passed and minutes approved, as amended.

Chair Report – Ivy Whitlatch

- Develop 2023 Meeting Calendar
 - Calendar now includes expiring AAC member terms. AAC should add Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) volunteer party and Del Pepper Award presentation - possibly in Spring instead of January.
 - AAC discussed possible walkabouts for June 2023 - Visiting Douglass Cemetery to Freedom House/along Duke Street.
 - AAC agreed to add city deadlines on topics that AAC contributes to.
 - AAC discussed the option of holding meetings at different locations other than Lloyd House in 2023. Eleanor Breen will check on holding one at City Archives.
 - Eleanor and Jen Barker will make the edits to the calendar and share with AAC.
- FY 2024 Budget Request Letter
 - AAC reviewed the letter Ivy submitted in early November.

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- Bottle Digging in Old Town
 - Eleanor shared that Alexandria Archaeology reached out to the City's communications office to see how they can help. The Director of Communications wants to meet with Alexandria Archaeology to discuss how communications about archaeology in the City can be elevated.
 - Dick noted that visitors at the museum have asked about bottle diggers. He asked if FOAA/volunteers at the museum can get talking points around this topic.
 - AAC also discussed the Council of Maryland Archaeology's (CoMA) op-ed in the *Baltimore Banner*. Eleanor has discussed it with Stephanie Sperling, head of CoMA.
 - AAC then discussed other possibilities that can be done to help curb the bottle digging or at least make it safer: permit process? require bottle diggers to get bonded? Any incentives we provide to the property owners if they call 311 to report? Eleanor said the Office of Historic Alexandria could do property history and the property owner could be recognized as an Alexandria "privy protector."
- New art installation at Waterfront Park will happen in March 2023. Installation is inspired by maritime history of the City and the archaeology of the ships.
 - The installation, "Two Boxes of Oranges and Admonia Jackson," will commemorate the 18th century ships discovered at the Hotel Indigo and Robinson Terminal South sites.
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Nominations Committee and Voting - Ted Pulliam

- Ivy Whitlatch, Esther White, and Liz Vehmeyer all accepted nominations to serve another term in their current positions.
 - Motion by Ted Pulliam to vote in Ivy for Chair, Esther for Vice, and Liz for Secretary. Seconded by Ralph Rosenbaum. Motion passed.

AAC Representation Reports

- HARC Update - Ivy
 - HARC is examining its membership composition and last night's meeting spent time discussing this.
- Waterfront Updates
 - Waterfront Commission – Esther White - no report
 - African American Heritage Trail Committee – Ted Pulliam
 - Reviewed the story map and met this morning about embedding the story map in the website. Expect it to be done by the end of December. Also, the Committee is discussing physical locations for a handful of signs. Public launch will be February 4, 2023. Next meeting will be Dec. 14 to plan for the February 4th event. AAC asked if Ted or other members of the Committee could give a presentation at the AAC December or January meeting.
- Samuel Madden Redevelopment – Seth Tinkham
 - Seth passed along the AAC's ideas on mitigation from the October meeting to the development group and consultants. Seth plans on reaching out to the Alfred Street Baptist Church about Samuel Madden's connection to the congregation and how mitigation could include his history in the City.
- Torpedo Factory Stakeholders Committee Representation – Ivy Whitlatch
 - Ivy reported out on the October 26 meeting which was about facilities and programming. The current condition of the building was discussed by attendees. Ivy brought up needing storage

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for archaeology and asked for full consideration of the museum's space in this planning process. Marketing and placemaking is the topic for the next meeting on Dec. 7.

Break Out Sessions (15 minutes) and Committee Reports

- Awards Committee (Del Pepper Award) (Nick Dienna, Liz Vehmeyer, Paula Whitacre)
 - Liz asked what was the status of the Del Pepper Award coordination with FOAA. Dick shared that FOAA is on board and will present the inaugural award at the FOAA Volunteer meeting (now possibly in March instead of January).
- 50th Anniversary (Dylan Colligan, Rebecca Doser, Ivy Whitlatch) - no report
- African American Initiatives (Ted Pulliam, Paula Whitacre, Esther White) - no report
- Museum (Dick Owens, Ralph Rosenbaum, Michael Johnson, Scott Vierick)
 - Dick reminded AAC that museum staff/volunteers are in the midst of the American Alliance of Museums re-accreditation process so nothing new to discuss now.
- Waterfront (Ann Greer, Seth Tinkham, John Oldfield)
 - John asked what is latest on Founders Park and the plan for underwater storage tanks. Eleanor said the City is working on an Archaeological Phase 1A addendum on Founders Park area and still awaiting geoaerchology data.
 - Eleanor also shared that there is no new movement on the Waterfront Museum Feasibility Plan.
 - John asked if AAC has a relationship with the Seaport Foundation. Eleanor said yes and shared that Alexandria Archaeology worked with the Foundation when packing the ship timbers to be sent to Texas A&M.

Commissioner Reports

- FOAA Update - no report
- Visit Alexandria - no report
- Alexandria Association - no report
- Alexandria Historical Society - Scott Vierick
 - Alexandria Historical Society is willing to help AAC to spread word on the bottle digger problem and welcomes collaboration on specifics.
- Historic Alexandria Foundation - no report
- Business Community - no report
- Planning Districts - no reports

Staff Reports – Eleanor Breen

- Archaeology Updates
 - Alexandria Archaeology is writing a report, anticipated draft by Spring 2023, to document what happened with the ships after the actual excavations. There is a possible opportunity for AAC members to review drafts.
 - Eleanor will share technical conservation guidance on marble cemetery headstones that Seth shared with her.
- Social Media and Events Update
 - Visitation numbers to the museum were the highest numbers in October since 2018. With the noticed uptick in museum visitation recently, the AAC asked Eleanor if there has ever been a

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visitor survey to understand why they came to the Torpedo Factory and how/if the results be integrated into the Torpedo Factory Stakeholder planning.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m. The next AAC Meeting will be held in person on Wednesday, December 14 at the Lloyd House.

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