

**ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES: March 15, 2023**  
**LLOYD HOUSE, 7 P.M.**  
220 N. WASHINGTON STREET

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**Members Present:**

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)  
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large  
(Secretary)  
Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community  
Representative  
Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large  
Ann Greer, Member at Large  
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

Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria  
Historical Society Representative

**Members Excused:**

Esther White, Planning District II (Vice  
Chair)  
Rebecca Doser, Visit Alexandria  
Representative  
Michael Johnson, Society for the  
Preservation of Black Heritage or  
equivalent organization  
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III

**Visitors/Public:**

None

**City Staff:**

Garrett Fesler, Archaeologist

**Call to Order**

Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes**

AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, February 15 meeting minutes. Ralph Rosenbaum moved to accept the minutes as amended. Scott Vierick seconded. Motion passed and minutes approved as amended.

**Chair Report –Ivy Whitlatch**

- Veterans Curation Program (VCP) in Alexandria – Ivy went to an open house hosted by the VCP recently and recommended that AAC members go when another is offered. Review City Manager’s Budget – The City Council is considering the FY24 budget proposal from the City Manager this month. The Office of Historic Alexandria’s (OHA’s) budget is proposed to be reduced by a small amount, no supplemental requests this year. OHA will be on completing the master plan for Freedom House Museum; Waterfront Museum Feasibility Study; Fort Ward interpretation plan; and development of other interpretive trails in the city.

**AAC Representation Reports**

- HARC Update – Ivy Whitlatch – No report. Meeting next week.

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- Waterfront Updates
  - a. Waterfront Commission – Esther White - no report
  - b. African American Heritage Trail Committee – Ted Pulliam – Committee met earlier this month and discussed the Bench by the Road Project, a memorial history and community outreach initiative sponsored by The Toni Morrison Society. Benches are placed to commemorate African American history and make up for the absence of markers of this kind. The committee is also working on spreading the word on the launch of the southern part of the Trail, such as to schools.
- Samuel Madden Redevelopment – Seth Tinkham
  - While Seth was not at the last consulting parties meeting, he did reiterate the AAC’s concerns to the consultant leading the Section 106 review process that the suggested scholarship program should be open to more than just four year programs and should tie in to former residents of Samuel Madden homes. City Council approved the Samuel Madden development.
- Torpedo Factory Stakeholders Committee Representation – Ivy Whitlatch
  - Ivy provided debriefs on the January and February meetings. At the January Governance meeting, most stakeholders suggested a public/private partnership to govern the Torpedo Factory Art Center. At the February Wrap Up meeting, the Smith Group presented a summary of the Stakeholders Committee’s input; however, Ivy didn’t see or hear the Archeology Museum reflected back as part of this stakeholder group or as part of the branding of the Torpedo Factory.
  - The AAC discussed if there is anything more it can do right now. Discussion centered around possibly needing a new space for the Archaeology Museum in the future or, if the Torpedo Factory is considered an Arts and Culture Center, the museum could be marketed as a place for the intersection of arts and culture.
- Freedom House Master Plan meeting - Scott Vierick.
  - On Mondays March 6 and 7, OHA/Smith Group hosted meetings to gather input for the Freedom House Master Plan. Scott attended as a representative of AAC. He shared that the consultants, Smith Group, lead discussion of what programming people wanted to see and what periods of significance to focus on. Structural, mold, and accessibility issues for the cellar were examined.
  - There is interest in providing educational programming to students at this site. This planning process will look to define motivations of stakeholders and audiences versus quantitative demographics.
  - Gretchen Bulova, Director of OHA, is expected to send out an email to summarize the two meetings that were held and Scott can share more next month.

**Commented [JB1]:** City style for dates is day of week then month spelled out with just number day, for example: Monday, March 6. If the date is from a different year, then include the year.

**Break Out Sessions (15 minutes) and Committee Reports**

- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Dylan Colligan, Rebecca Doser, Ivy Whitlatch)
- Ivy shared the idea of creating a “coffee table” book commemorating the 50th anniversary of the AAC and asked for AAC member input.
- AAC discussion touched on the following:
  - a. Need to define our audience and budget. Market/audience for a coffee table/commemorative book might not be there. Scott shared that in his line of work with History Associates, they are moving away from coffee table/commemorative books but suggested it might be worth having an internal chronicle of the AAC.

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- b. Designing online/digital products for the 50th, like a StoryMap, could help reach a larger audience.
- c. Using 50th of AAC to highlight the history of archeology in Alexandria in general.
- Given the anniversary fast approaching plus the City's 275th and America's 250th, Ivy asked for others to join this subcommittee to help move this planning along. Ann and Scott volunteered. Is there someone else who wants to join the 50th anniversary committee
- Garrett Fesler added that it would be valuable to learn from the AAC members for its 50th via interviews/oral history project. This could be compelling for the community to hear. AAC is unique and has a unique story to tell as citizens involved in city archaeology.
- Awards Committee (Nick Dienna, Liz Vehmeyer, Paula Whitacre)
  - Inaugural Del Pepper Award will be presented at the FOAA Volunteer Party in May. AAC discussed options for what the physical award will look like.
  - Ivy asked this subcommittee to monitor other organizations' awards announcements to see whom the AAC can nominate to those.
- African American Initiatives (Ted Pulliam, Paula Whitacre, Esther White) - no report
- Museum (Dick Owens, Ralph Rosenbaum, Michael Johnson, Scott Vierick) - no report
- Waterfront (Ann Greer, Seth Tinkham, John Oldfield)
  - Reminder that the new public art installation ceremony at Waterfront Park will happen on Saturday, March 25.

#### **Commissioner Reports**

- FOAA Update (Richard Owens)
  - FOAA has a board meeting next week. April AAC meeting is joint with FOAA.
- Visit Alexandria (Rebecca Doser) - No report
- Alexandria Association (Ted Pulliam)
  - A lecture will be held on Monday, March 20th about Thomas Jefferson and the early American Museum.
- Alexandria Historical Society (AHS) (Scott Vierick)
  - Nominations for T. Michael Miller Award are now closed. The award ceremony will be on Wednesday, April 26 at The Lyceum.
  - Monday, May 24 - Susan Dilles will be featured lecturer at The Lyceum.
  - The AHS did a Facebook post about bottle digging in the city and, overall, it received positive engagement.
- Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or Equivalent Organization (Michael Johnson) - No report
- Historic Alexandria Foundation (Seth Tinkham) - No report
- Business Community (Dylan Colligan)
  - More public meetings will be held throughout April for the effort to create a Business Improvement Service District (BISD) in Old Town. The organizers' goal is to get 60% of business owners within Old Town to sign the petition by Wednesday, May 31.
  - Dylan will have some conversations with business district folks about how funds from a future BISD can be used for public history/public archaeology.
- Planning District Updates (Paula Whitacre, Esther White, Ivy Whitlatch) - No report
- Members at Large (Nick Dienna, Ann Greer, Liz Vehmeyer)
  - Ann shared her experience of noticing the Freedmen's Cemetery bronze panels degrading. She contacted Eleanor Breen and filled out an "Alex311" report. She received a

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response from the City about getting a contract conservator to address the panels and identified a bronze conservator through her museum contacts. Seth wondered if there could be a public component to see the conservator at work.

#### **Staff Reports – Garrett Fesler**

- Code Update
  - Garrett provided updates on development projects under code review from December 2022 to March 2023.
  - Fort Ward: Erected gravestone of Robert W. Adams at Fort Ward Cemetery yesterday. Garrett shared Playground relocation Options being considered. Public meetings were held in the last month.
  - Hugo Black House (S. Lee Street) - ca. 1800 house - Garrett noted that while the City cannot require archaeology be done at this property since it is not a “development project” just a regrading project, the owner agreed to do archaeology. He is working on a scope of work with the owner/consultant.
- Archaeology Updates
  - Garrett provided a collections update on the Carlyle warehouse site/Indigo Hotel site. A portion of the wooden Carlyle warehouse remains are now conserved by MAC Lab and are back in Alexandria. They are currently being stored in an off-site storage facility.
- Social Media and Events Update - no report

#### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m. The next AAC Meeting will be the annual joint meeting with FOAA and held in person on Wednesday, April 19 at the City’s Archives and Records Center, 801 South Payne Street.

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