

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Meeting
Minutes of April 17, 2024

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
John Oldfield, Member at Large (Secretary)
Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community Representative
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
Jason Roberts, Member at Large
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large
Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation Representative

Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria Historical Society Representative
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III

Members Excused:

Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large
Michael Johnson, Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or equivalent organization
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)

Visitors:

Jordan McLaughlin, Liberty University

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., at the Lloyd House. AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, March 20, meeting minutes. Ralph Rosenbaum moved to accept the minutes as amended. Paula Whitacre seconded. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

Chair Report:

- AAC is submitting a nomination for the Alexandria City Council's Commission of the Year Impact Award. Ivy asked AAC members to review the draft nomination.
- AAC continues to attend the meetings of the Torpedo Factory Art Center Stakeholders Task Force to push for the interest of archaeology, the museum, and related opportunities. Ralph moved to support Ivy's involvement in the Stakeholders Task Force; Dylan Colligan seconded.
- A discussion of the annual Budget Letter was tabled until the fall when the request will go out to Commissions.
- The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) needs a representative from the AAC for the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House Comprehensive Plan process. The City will assume full ownership of the property when the life tenant passes away, and the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House needs to go through a stakeholder engagement process similar to that of Freedom House. Dylan agreed to represent the AAC in this process, with Seth Tinkham as backup and Ann Greer expressing interest as well.
- Ivy reported that this is Rebecca Doser's last meeting with AAC. Visit Alexandria will appoint a new representative to AAC but Rebecca will continue to support AAC on the 50th anniversary committee.

AAC Membership Reports:

- **HARC:** The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission also needs a representative for the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House process.
- **African American Heritage Trail Committee:** The Committee's initial application to the Toni Morrison Society for the "Bench by the Road" project was not successful; however, additional efforts are underway to get accepted by the project. The Committee is also in early discussions

about a trail for African American women and historic African American churches.

- **Waterfront:** The Waterfront Commission is determining its next priorities with its new Chair. Questions remain about the size of the pumping station in Waterfront Park.

Break Out Sessions (30 minutes) and Committee Reports (15 minutes)

Cemetery Committee (Seth Tinkham leads; members are Ralph Rosenbaum, Michael Johnson, Dick Owens, Paula Whitacre, Jason Roberts, Nick Dienna, and Eleanor Breen)

- The Committee confirmed plans for the upcoming Wednesday, June 12 walkabout. Seth will contact Aubrey Von Lindern from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The walkabout will provide AAC members with ideas about how to strengthen the application for the National Register of Historic Places. The goal of the application is to bring together the disparate elements of the site (including Penny Hill Cemetery) into the most compelling story.

50th AAC Anniversary Committee (Rebecca Doser leads; members are Dylan Colligan, John Oldfield, Ivy Whitlatch, Ann Greer, Scott Vierick, Ted Pulliam, and Esther White)

- The Committee discussed various methods of making the Top Ten Achievements of the AAC and the Oral Histories (on which Scott is working) public via social media, AAC website, newspapers, and a potential event likely in February 2025, the actual 50th anniversary of AAC. Committee members discussed potential sites for the event; the funding necessary; participants; public engagement; and the program, including potentially unveiling something from the hull remnants recently unearthed.
- Scott will take over as Chair of the Committee once Rebecca departs.

Commissioner Reports

- Friends of Alexandria Archaeology Update (Richard Owens): No report
- Visit Alexandria (Rebecca Doser): Rebecca noted the Portside in Old Town Festival from Friday, June 21 to Saturday, June 22, produced in conjunction with the City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts.
- Alexandria Association (Ted Pulliam): No report
- Alexandria Historical Society (Scott Vierick): AHS will hold its annual awards next week on Wednesday, April 24, at The Lyceum. AAC member Michael Johnson will be one of the panelists speaking about career paths for those with a history degree.
- 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): There are renewed efforts to get the Business Improvement Service District passed.
- Planning District Updates: No report
- Members at Large: No report

Staff Reports: – Eleanor Breen

- The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new exhibit of the models of the hull remnants went well, highlighting a great partnership between the City, archaeologists, and the community.
- Alexandria Archaeology and OHA will participate in the upcoming Community Cookouts, organized by the police and includes many other components of City government.
- For Spring2ACTion 2024, OHA will focus on the upcoming exhibit about Moss Kendrix, an African American pioneer in public relations; the exhibit will include a large collection of his photos.

- There will soon be another public meeting regarding the preservation of Douglass Memorial Cemetery. A Descendants Advisory Group has formed to represent African Americans buried there.
- Tatiana Niculescu, Alexandria Archaeologist, and Eleanor Breen are going to the Society for American Archaeology 2024 conference to present on collections and urban archaeology.
- Sunday, April 21 is Volunteer Appreciation Event for the OHA.
- Tuesday, April 23 is the launch of Community Cookouts.
- Tuesday, April 30 from 3 to 5 p.m. is the Public Presentation of the Freedom House Comprehensive Plan.
- Saturday, May 4 is the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Cleanup.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9p.m. The next AAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 15, at Lloyd House.