

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Meeting
Minutes of July 17, 2024

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)
John Oldfield, Member at Large (Secretary)
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association
Representative
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large
Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation
Representative
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III
Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria Historical
Society Representative (Acting Secretary)

Members Excused:

Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community
Representative

Richard (Dick) Owens, Friends of Alexandria
Archaeology (FOAA) Representative
Jason Roberts, Member at Large
Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large
Michael Johnson, Society for the Preservation
of Black Heritage or equivalent
organization

Visitors:

Jordan McLaughlin, Liberty University
Shakiya Evans

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

At 7 p.m., at the Lloyd House, Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order.

AAC members reviewed and amended the Wednesday, June 12, meeting/walkabout minutes. Ralph Rosenbaum moved to accept the minutes as amended; Seth Tinkham seconded. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, May 15, meeting minutes. Ralph moved to accept the minutes as written. Paula Whitacre seconded. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

Chair Report:

- Ivy made a presentation in June to the Visit Alexandria Board, to encourage them to appoint another member from Visit Alexandria to be on AAC.
- AAC's Annual Report is due in August. Ted Pulliam moved to allow Eleanor Breen and Ivy to lead on this effort. Scott Vierick seconded, and the motion passed. AAC Members are asked to send in any highlights, e.g. the Wilkes Cemetery Complex meetings, and plans/goals for AAC's 50th anniversary.
- Ivy led a discussion about whether AAC should form an Advocacy Committee. There is precedent for such a committee (e.g. Historic Alexandria Resources Commission), and there are multiple activities such a committee could undertake in the near future (e.g. welcoming a new City Council and congratulating the Torpedo Factory Arts Center on its 50th anniversary). Esther White moved to organize an AAC Advocacy Committee, Ralph seconded, and the motion passed. It was noted that members of such a committee would need; time to cultivate relationships with City Hall, strong communication skills, and the ability to track relevant legislation.
- Ivy led a review of the Freedom of Information Act rules and regulations from the City website.

AAC Membership Reports:

- **Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC):** No update.

- **Torpedo Factory Arts Center (TFAC):** AAC attended the June stakeholders meeting, which focused primarily on governance issues.
- **African American Heritage Trail Committee:** The Committee is awaiting guidance, regarding its application, from the Toni Morrison Society’s Bench by the Road Project.
- **Waterfront:** No update.
- **Ben Brenman Award:** In the absence of nominations from the public, Seth moved to nominate Marian van Landingham; Ted seconded; motion passed.

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 has ended its six-month exploratory phase. Members expressed their interest in continuing the work, especially after the June 2024 walking tour of the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex.
- Ralph moved for the Cemetery Committee to continue its work; Scott seconded; motion passed.
- The Committee will therefore continue with the National Register nomination process by filling out the Preliminary Information Form and taking next steps as appropriate.

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

- The Committee is working to finalize its list of the top 10-12 AAC accomplishments since its founding and is planning a number of celebratory events through February 2025.

Commissioner Reports

- Friends of Alexandria Archaeology Update (Richard Owens): No report.
- Visit Alexandria (position vacant): No report.
- Alexandria Association (Ted Pulliam): No report.
- Alexandria Historical Society (Scott Vierick): Scott will participate on July 18 at the “*Celebrate 250 Years of Revolutionary Resolve at the Fairfax Resolves Program and Marker Dedication*”
- 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): No report.
- Planning District Updates: No report.
- Members at Large: No report.

Staff Reports: – Eleanor Breen

- Eleanor provided an extensive quarterly “Code Update” on activities taking place under the City’s archaeological protection code.
- She reiterated concern about the lack of storage space in the City for Archaeology, City Records, and others.
- Sixteen new signs have been installed on the Alexandria Heritage Trail over the past year.
- Alexandria Archaeology is participating in multiple upcoming events, including:
 - o Friday, July 19: Shuter’s Hill Site Open House with Summer Campers
 - o Friday, July 26: Pop Up Archaeology: Buried Ships of Robinson Landing
 - o Friday, August 9: Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Cleanup and Renewal
 - o Friday, August 23: Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Cleanup and Renewal

- From Thursday, September 5 to Sunday, September-8: Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial 10-year Anniversary
- Friday, September 13: Torpedo Factory 50th Anniversary, Archaeology through the Ages

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m. The next AAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 18, at 7 p.m. at the Lloyd House.