

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Meeting
Minutes of October 15, 2025

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)
John Oldfield, Member at Large (Secretary)
Kim Abraham, Member at Large
Cindy Boren, Member at Large
Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community Representative
Raymond Eresman, Member at Large
Ann Greer, Member at Large
Richard (Dick) Owens, Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) Representative
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association Representative
Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation Representative

Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria Historical Society Representative

Members Excused:

Michael Johnson, Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage (or equivalent organization)
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III

Members Unexcused:

Guests:

Cindy Zwaduk
Ed Bestic
Colton Nagel

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

At 6:59 p.m., at the Lloyd House, Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order.

AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, September 17 meeting minutes. Esther White moved to accept the minutes as amended. Seth Tinkham seconded. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

Chair Report: The AAC and the City of Alexandria hosted a well-attended kick off meeting for the Wilkes Street Cemetery National Register of Historic Places Nomination on Tuesday, September 30. The meeting was for cemetery owners/custodians, informing them of the Preliminary Information Form process that is the precursor to a Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

AAC Membership Reports:

- Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC): No HARC update
- Waterfront Updates: City Council has asked the Flood Mitigation Group to evaluate the Prince Street alternative site for the pumping station.

Ben Brenman Award: The AAC Ben Brenman Award will be presented on Tuesday, October 28 at the City Council meeting. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Committee Reports:

Cemetery Committee:

- There will be a “walkabout” for owners and custodians of the Wilkes Street Cemetery complex on Sunday, November 2.

- Dick Owens will research 1) what maps of the cemeteries the City has on hand, and 2) what data the Virginia Department of Historic Resources has on the various cemeteries in the Wilkes Street Cemetery complex.
- Committee members are considering whether to include Black Baptist Cemetery in the African American Heritage Park in the effort.

Advocacy Committee:

- The Advocacy Committee discussed the need for archaeology to be considered for part of the cultural display - if there is one - at the new pump station.
- The committee proposed to draft a letter to various stakeholders regarding the hull remnant returning to the City, including a rationale for why the hull remnant merits a proper display rather than just storage. Dylan Colligan moved to approve the drafting of the letter. Seth seconded. Scott Vierick will draft the letter.
- Committee members expressed their support for the continued representation of Visit Alexandria on the AAC.

Commissioner Reports:

- Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA): No report.
- Visit Alexandria: No report. AAC members expressed interest in the potential tourist/visitor draw of the ship hull remnant when it returns to the City in 2027.
- Alexandria Association: No report
- Alexandria Historical Society (AHS):
 - o Applications remain open through Wednesday, October 15 for AHS's History Grants.
 - o AHS will host "*What's New in Alexandria History? AHS Golden Grantees Tell What They Found*" on Wednesday, October 22 at 7 p.m. at The Lyceum.
- Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or Equivalent Organization: no report
- Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF): No report.
- Business Community: No report
- Planning District Updates (Paula Whitacre, Esther White, Ivy Whitlatch): No report
- Members at Large (Kim Abraham, Cindy Boren, Raymond Eresman, Ann Greer, John Oldfield): No report

Eleanor Breen:

- October is Archaeology Month, and Alexandria Archaeology has been active throughout the City with a series of public events.
- Alexandria Archaeology was approached by several groups participating in UNEARTHED, the archaeology themed First LEGO League challenge. Alexandria Archaeology has provided resources (including a webpage) to help teams create innovative solutions for archaeologists.
- Alexandria Archaeology will host *Slip Into the Past at Art Safari* on Saturday, October 25 at 12 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Art Center.
- All are encouraged to attend the presentation of the 2025 Ben Brenman award at the Alexandria City Council meeting on Tuesday, October 28.
- City staff will provide an update on the Douglass Cemetery Stormwater Project and Burial Permit on Wednesday, October 29 at 7 p.m. at the Lloyd House. Alexandria

Archaeology does not expect to find human remains where the proposed stormwater channel will go, but as a precaution is applying for a Permit for the Excavation of Human Remains with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in advance of the project.

- Alexandria Archaeology continues to repair gravestones at Douglass Cemetery, funded by Virginia's Department of Historic Resources' African American Cemetery and Graves Fund.
- Alexandria Archaeology has started posting signs at sites where archaeological work is ongoing. The signs will include a QR code directing visitors to the Alexandria Archaeology website.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. The next AAC Meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 19 at 7 p.m. at the Lloyd House.