

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
Freedom House Museum
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 21, 2022

PRESENT: (in person)

Carol Black
Christopher Brownlowe
Shawn Eyer
Mark Farkus
Sean Ferguson
Martha Harris
Michael Hobbs
Richard Klingenmaier
Laura Lieberman
Martha Raymond
Gail Rothrock
Danny Smith
Steve Stuart
Rosemarie Esber
Linda Lovell
Lisa Schumaier
Tom Soule
Catherine Weinraub

PRESENT: (participating by conference line)

EXCUSED:

Sam Hoffman
Deborah Osborne
Ivy Whitlatch

ABSENT:

GUESTS:

Francesco DeSalvatore, Oral History Manager, OHA
Esther White, representing FOAA

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Bill Conkey, Planning (absent)

Visit of HARC Members to Freedom House: 6 to 7 p.m. to tour the three new exhibitions

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Danny Smith at 7:05 p.m. at the Freedom House Museum.

Approval of Minutes for May 17, 2022:

On a motion by Linda Lovell and seconded by Gail Rothrock, HARC voted to approve the May 17, 2022 minutes.

Chairs Update:

Danny Smith offered congratulations to OHA for the Opening Ceremony of the Freedom House Museum. Many members of HARC were in attendance.

Gretchen Bulova introduced Francesco DeSalvatore, the new Oral History Manager for OHA. Francesco outlined his plan for the oral history program and invited members of HARC to participate in a workshop he is planning.

Commissioner Updates:

Carol Black – Old Presbyterian Meeting House

- Church is celebrating its 250th anniversary, holding a reunion event June 23-26
- Fantastic coverage of the anniversary in the June issue of the Zebra

Chris Brownlowe – Athenaeum/Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

- Partnered with the Carlyle House on a Juneteenth Celebration
- Will be repointing the north and west walls in the courtyard in the next few weeks

Rosemarie Esber – Planning District 1

- Attended the DDay Commemoration on Market Square, June 4
- Attended the Juneteenth Concert on Market Square, June 19

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic National Memorial

- Illuminated the Memorial for Juneteenth
- Scaffolding is coming down, able to see a relief medallion in the pediment that was rendered by Gail Sherman Corbett, spouse of the original architect. Be sure to take a look next time you visit.
- Cornerstone rededication planning in place for 2023. Registration is now open.

Mark Farkus – Planning District 2 (no update at this time)

Sean Ferguson – Public Records Advisory Commission (no update at this time)

Martha Harris – Volunteer at Historic Property

- Andrea Tracey has stepped down from the Carlyle House, a new Director will be announced soon

Michael Hobbs – Old Town Civic Association (OTCA)

- June 8th meeting, adopted new bylaws and had a presentation on the City's stormwater plan

Sam Hoffman – Planning District 1 (excused absence)

Richard Klingenmaier – Alexandria Association

- Held a reception at the Lee-Fendall House, celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Alexandria Association
- Continue to have great speakers at monthly meetings and encouraged everyone to join

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- Prohibition themed fundraiser was successful, raising funds toward the Historic Structures Report
- New exhibition open featuring the enslaved of the house, “Under the Same Roof: Enslaved and Free Workers at Lee-Fendall”
- Great programs planned for the summer, including a lecture on the Quander family, children's programs, and trivia nights.

Linda Lovell – Mortar & Pestle Society

- The National Historic Landmark plaque was dedicated on May 20
- Noted that tourism is very high and that tours are very full!
- Annual meeting will be held in August at The Lyceum, featuring an expert on Civil War medicine

Deborah Osborne – Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission (excused absence)

Martha Raymond – Planning District 2

- Reinvited everyone to sign up for savedelray.org, current discussion about building bonus heights in Del Ray

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- \$30,000 in awards were given out at the HAF annual Garden Party
 - Alexandria Archaeology - \$5,000 for a new exhibition to enhance an exhibit on the Lee Street Site to include experiences of free and enslaved African Americans
 - Alexandria Elks Lodge - \$5,000 to support interior preservation of the bronze-washed tin ceiling in the lodge room
 - Athenaeum - \$5,000 to tuckpoint the north and west walls within the courtyard
 - History Revealed – \$5,000 for continued support of Shopping Stories Phase 2 to expand the work of 18th century Alexandria merchants Robert T. Hooe, John Mills
 - Lee-Fendall House Museum - \$5,000 toward a Historic Structures Report
 - Scholarship Fund of Alexandria – \$5,000 to support a graduating student pursuing a career in a history/archaeology/preservation related field

Lisa Schumaier – Torpedo Factory Artists

- Introduced herself as a new member

Tom Soule – Planning District 3

- Offered support and appreciation for the new exhibits at the Freedom House Museum

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- Took a moment to discuss the planning districts and representation

Catherine Weinraub – Alexandria Historical Society

- Annual meeting will be held at The Lyceum on June 22. Charlie Clark with lecture about George Washington Parke Custis.

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission

- Esther White offered an update on behalf of Ivy
- Alexandria Archaeology completed the ship ponding project in Ben Brenneman Pond
- SeeWorthy exhibition at the TFAC has recently closed

Danny Smith – Business Representative

- George Washington’s Alexandria tour will meet at Christ Church at 2 p.m. Sunday June 26th.

New Business: Nothing at this time

Old Business:

New building bonus height proposal (Danny Smith)

- Business district along Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray is of concern
- Planning Commission Meeting June 23 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers; Council scheduled to consider this July 5 at 7 p.m.
- HARC’s May 19 letter to the Planning & Zoning Department is included with the Planning Commission’s June 23 Docket.
- Michael Hobbs offered comments about the affordable housing components of this proposal and outlined the areas in Alexandria that will be affected by this change
- Tom Soule moved that the Chair make a further statement at the Planning Commission meeting on behalf of HARC, reinforcing concerns expressed in the May 19 letter. Seconded by Linda Lovell. Motion passed.
- Danny Smith asked support from the Advocacy Committee for specific talking points.
- Martha Harris noted that members could write a letter to the editor in the Times or Gazette as a citizen, using the letter from HARC as a guide.

Elks Lodge (Carol Black)

- Thankful for the \$5,000 grant from HAF to restore the bronze washed tin ceiling
- Kitchen equipment purchased with funds from Spring2Action

Curb Cut at 322-324 South Lee (Danny Smith)

- Danny Smith attended the last BZA meeting and the applicant requested and was granted a deferral until September
- BZA has a letter from HARC

Torpedo Factory Information Letter to the BAR Chair (Danny Smith)

- As directed at the last meeting, the letter proposing nomination to the National Register was revised as information only and provided to Bill Conkey for the BAR. Bill Conkey agreed to schedule a meeting among Chairman Spencer, Danny Smith, and himself.

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project - Mark Farkus

- Committees are planning the August 8th remembrance of Benjamin Thomas, a formal Soil Collection program on September 24th, and a community pilgrimage to Montgomery, AL October 6-10.
- The details of the pilgrimage are being finalized and registration is planned to go live in early July.
- Information on these events will be promoted at Alexandria's many farmer's markets and the City's birthday celebration scheduled for July 9

Advocacy – Martha Harris and Martha Raymond, Co-Chairs

- Next meeting date has been changed to July 12 at 10 a.m. at La Madeleine on King Street
- Enjoyed meeting Francesco De Salvatore at this meeting and talking about oral histories for members of the Elks Lodge
- Repair and maintenance of historic paving materials designated in the City budget which may offer an opportunity to explore repairs to the cobblestone 100 block of Prince Street
- Discussed future widening of 495 in Alexandria

Ad Hoc, HARC Composition – Richard Klingenmaier, Chair

- Michael Hobbs distilled the committee's work into a report, circulated to the members
- Special note that the report included work when there were numerous vacancies.

OHA Support – Steve Stuart, Chair

- Nothing to report

Open Space – Martha Harris

- Information provided in advance to all HARC members
- So little opportunity for expanding open space in this densely developed city
- The quality of open space can be improved! Adding a history component is especially enriching.

Torpedo Factory Stakeholder Group – Martha Raymond

- Formally applied to represent HARC, no further information to report

Board of Architectural Review Update: Bill Conkey

- Not in attendance. Report submitted electronically to be read by Danny Smith.
- Bonus Height Zoning Text Amendment
The Department of Planning & Zoning has posted a website, see the link below, for all information pertaining to the proposed Bonus Height Text Amendment. The Department hosted a second community meeting on May 19, 2022 to address questions

and comments from the public. A recording of that meeting along with the presentation from the meeting are available on the website. In addition, a document including all of the questions and associated responses from that meeting can be downloaded from that website. The text amendment is on the Planning Commission docket for the June 23, 3033 meeting and the City Council docket for the July 5, 2022 meeting.

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/zoning/bonus-height>

- Samuel Madden

The Permit to Demolish and a Concept Review for the two proposed mixed-use buildings at the north end of North Patrick and North Henry Streets has been heard by the BAR at two recent hearings. At the June 15, 2022 hearing, the Board approved the Permit to Demolish for the existing structures with conditions related to the documentation of the existing conditions and the preparation of a complete documentary study for the site. At a special work session prior to the hearing, the board considered the Concept Review for the proposed buildings. The Board provided feedback on the proposed massing and scale and responded to some initial depictions of architectural character. It is expected that the applicant will return to the Board in July for an additional Concept Review, which will similarly be held in a special work session.

The project is seeking Federal Tax incentives and is therefore going through the Section 106 review process that requires documentation and analysis of the historic nature of the site. This process is currently underway, the applicant has hired an architectural historian to produce the required documentation and the first Section 106 required community meeting was held at the Charles Houston Recreation Center on May 11, 2022.

- Board Members

City Council has appointed new Board members to replace Purvi Irwin and Christine Roberts who have rotated off the Board. Theresa Del Ninno is a local architect who previously served on the Parker Gray Board and will be taking over Ms. Irwin's architect position. Margaret Miller previously served on the OHAD Board and will be taking over the OHAD representative position previously held by Ms. Roberts. Their first hearing will be on July 6th.

OHA Report: Gretchen Bulova

- Alexandria Community Remembrance Project
 - In addition to comments provided by Mark Farkus, ACRP representative to HARC:
 - Working on descendant outreach to both the McCoy and Thomas families
 - Identifying and researching "heroes" associated with the Thomas lynching
 - Planning a soil collection ceremony for Sept 24th.
- Murray-Dick-Fawcett House
 - Master Plan awarded to Glave Holmes and will begin July 5
 - Restoration on the siding, windows, and door continues
 - A series of Saturday talks were well attended in May, offered by Al Cox

- Alexandria Archaeology ship ponding in Ben Breneman Pond is now complete, ahead of schedule!
- The Freedom House Museum at 1315 Duke Street
 - Open regularly, with online tickets available
 - Terrific press coverage, ranging from radio to blogs to the Washington Post Metro section
 - Master Plan awarded to SmithGroup and will start soon
- Oral History Manager was introduced earlier tonight.
- Development Position is authorized for FY23 and the position will be posted in July

Public Comment:

The next meeting will be held July 19 at 7:00 p.m. Location to be determined.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Bulova, OHA