

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
Lloyd House
220 N. Washington Street, Alexandria
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, December 20, 2022

PRESENT: (in person)

Carol Black
Donna DeBlasio
Shawn Eyer
Sean Ferguson
Martha Harris
Michael Hobbs
Gail Rothrock
Martha Raymond
Danny Smith
Steve Stuart
Ivy Whitlatch

CONFERENCE LINE:

EXCUSED:

Christopher Brownlowe
Mark Farkus
Sam Hoffman
Richard Klingenmaier
Laura Lieberman
Linda Lovell
Deborah Osborne
Tom Soule
Catherine Weinraub

ABSENT:

Lisa Schumaier

GUESTS:

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Bill Conkey, Planning

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Danny Smith at 7:45 p.m., after a holiday social gathering of members.

Approval of Minutes for November 22, 2022:

On a motion by Steve Stuart and seconded by Gail Rothrock, HARC voted to approve the November 22, 2022 minutes.

Chairs Update:

- Letter of gratitude sent to Karl Moritz, Director of Planning, and he responded that he sincerely appreciated the letter and expressed interest in attending a future meeting of HARC to discuss issues of mutual interest.

Commissioner Updates:

Carol Black – Old Presbyterian Meeting House

- Andrea Tracey, former HARC member, has lost her father and the funeral will be held on December 21.
- Expressed concern for the dangerous condition of the brick sidewalks. The concern was supported by Michael Hobbs, Danny Smith, and Ivy Whitlach.

Chris Brownlowe – Athenaeum/Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (excused absence)

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1 (no updates at this time)

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic Memorial

- Held an International conference in November with Scottish Masons
- In February, Centennial Celebration of the cornerstone laying planned for 3:30 p.m. on Monday, February 20, 2023

Mark Farkus – Planning District 2 (excused absence)

Sean Ferguson – Public Records Advisory Commission

- New member of PRAC has been appointed by City Council

Martha Harris – Volunteer at Historic Property (no updates at this time)

Michael Hobbs – Old Town Civic Association (OTCA) (no updates at this time)

Sam Hoffman – Planning District 1 (excused absence)

Richard Klingenmaier – Alexandria Association (excused absence)

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House (excused absence)

Linda Lovell – Mortar & Pestle Society (excused absence)

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

Martha Raymond – Planning District 2

- Related to the rethinking of HARC's structure, wanted to bring to everyone's attention that the duties of the individual planning districts need to be considered and more defined. Each planning district includes several neighborhoods and there are a lot of potential outreach opportunities and impacts from upcoming zoning issues. Communications with the federation of civic associations could be explored.

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) – (no updates at this time)

Lisa Schumaier – Torpedo Factory Artists (absent)

Tom Soule – Planning District 3 (excused absence)

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3 (no updates at this time)

Catherine Weinraub – Alexandria Historical Society (excused absence)

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission

- AAC held a brief meeting this month, looking forward to launch of Southern Trail of the African American History Trail on Saturday, February 4th at The Lyceum.

Danny Smith – Business Representative (no updates at this time)

New Business:

- Elections
 - Nomination committee report was offered by Steve Stuart
 - i. Secretary, Catherine Weinraub
 - ii. Vice Chair, Sean Ferguson
 - iii. Chair, Shawn Eyer
 - Motion to accept the committee report by acclamation was moved by Danny Smith and seconded by Carol Black. Motion passed.
 - All agreed that Danny Smith should continue to chair this meeting, to serve out his term.

- A round of applause and gratitude was offered by commissioners
- Annual Report
 - Draft to be circulated prior to the January meeting for consideration

Old Business:

- New building height limits proposal (Danny Smith)
 - Working with Nancy Williams in Planning on process for public input
- Samuel Madden development (Gail Rothrock)
 - January 9, virtual meeting on the project
 - Feb 7 and 21, Planning Commission and Council meetings on the project

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project – Gretchen Bulova for Mark Farkus

- Steering Committee is holding a planning retreat on January 4th
- Essay contest with EJI will open on January 15th for Alexandria City High School students
- ACRP is considering a spring symposium in collaboration with other location Community Remembrance Projects

Advocacy – Martha Harris and Martha Raymond, Co-Chairs

- Conversation about the TFAC stakeholder issues
- Next meeting is January 3

OHA Support – Steve Stuart (no report at this time)

Torpedo Factory Stakeholder Group – Martha Raymond

- December 7, most recent meeting, was attended by the City Manager and he is interested in immediate improvements that would have impact on the visitor experience at the TFAC.
- Discussion about improvements that don't impair the historic fabric of the building included a new waterfront entrance and specialty lighting.
- The Archaeology Museum's continuation at the TFAC was discussed.
- The National Register Nomination for the TFAC was not addressed at the meeting. The City Manager requested that HARC bring this to his attention directly, with the assistance of City staff.
 - Motion was made by Martha Harris and seconded by Gail Rothrock to send a letter to the City Manager requesting a meeting to discuss the National Register Nomination for the TFAC and its importance. Motion passed.
 - The Advocacy Committee was asked to draft a letter.
 - Suggested if a meeting opportunity is granted that a PowerPoint presentation be prepared to provide concise, efficient presentation of key points and to leave a written document of the points with the City Manager

- Next meeting January 18, 2023.

Open Space – Martha Harris

- Sam Hoffman has agreed to be the new HARC representative to the Open Space Committee.

HARC Composition Committee – Michael Hobbs chaired the discussion

- Recommended changes to continue discussion started at November meeting:
 - Discontinue the specifically designated seats for ACVB (now ACVA), the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, and the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association.
- To meet the objective of representing tourism as a function of HARC, it was recommended that the business representative seats serve in this capacity (tourism and business). It was also offered that the museums and friends of the museums also serve to represent the tourism industry.
 - A question was asked about the intent and goals to reduce the number of seats on the commission.
 - Motion to have 2 members represent the tourism and business community was made by Danny Smith and seconded by Shawn Eyer. Discussion took place about eliminating the specific organization designations. The motion passed.
- Committee recommended to eliminate the seat designated for the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association.
 - Motion made by Danny Smith and seconded by Martha Harris to reject the committee recommendation to delete the seat for the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association. Discussion took place. The motion passed.
- Next meeting: Recommendation to potential reduce seats for the Planning District Commissions and the Civic Associations.

Board of Architectural Review Update: Bill Conkey

- 319 N Alfred Street is on the docket for 12/21/2022. This is an after the fact approval for HVAC piping installed on the exterior of the north wall. Staff is recommending denial.
- The BAR hearing on 1/4/2023 is cancelled due to a lack of cases. The second meeting should be busy.
- Diversity training for the BAR Board is planned for 2023. This was a recommendation for the BAR's annual retreat.

OHA Report: Gretchen Bulova

- Staff participated in a three-day site visit for museum reaccreditation.
- A survey for Freedom House is now open. This information will be used in the master planning process for the site.
- Murray-Dick-Fawcett House
 - The restoration on the east façade and stabilization of the Prince Street entrance porch is wrapping up.
 - Next items include replacing the existing gates and renewing the woodwork on the 1970s garage.

- The FY22 Annual Report for OHA was distributed to HARC members, calling attention to the numerous projects that were managed and completed this year.

Public Comment: no members of the public present

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m. The next meeting will take place on January 17, 2023, at the Lloyd House

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Bulova, OHA