

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
Lloyd House
220 N. Washington Street, Alexandria
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 21, 2023

PRESENT: (in person)

Donna DeBlasio
Shawn Eyer
Sean Ferguson
Linda Lovell
Barbara Marvin
Martha Raymond
Rebecca Rose
Gail Rothrock
Tom Schultz
Lisa Schumaier
Roberta Stevens
Danny Smith
Ivy Whitlatch

REMOTE:

EXCUSED:

Bailee Barfield
Carol Black
Christopher Brownlowe
Mark Farkus
Kate Gillis
Laura Lieberman
Deborah Osborne
Russell Simonaro
Steve Stuart

ABSENT:

GUESTS:

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
William Conkey, BAR Staff

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shawn Eyer at 7:08 p.m. after quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes for October 17, 2023:

A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Sean Ferguson and seconded by Donna DeBlasio. The October 17, 2023, minutes were approved.

Chairs Update:

The Chair welcomed new member, Barbara Marvin. She will be representing Planning District 1.

Commissioner Updates:

Bailee Barfield – Volunteer Representative

- Excused Absence

Carol Black – Historic Houses of Worship

- Excused Absence

Chris Brownlowe – Athenaeum/Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

- No report

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No report

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic National Memorial

- Acknowledged the 100th anniversary of the memorial's cornerstone.
- Announced his new position as Director of the Lee-Fendall House and encouraged everyone to attend their holiday program.

Mark Farkus – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence

Sean Ferguson – Public Records Advisory Commission

- No report

Kate Gillis – Planning District II

- Excused Absence

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- Excused Absence

Linda Lovell – OHA Friends Group Representative

- No report

Barbara Marvin – Planning District 1

- No report, first meeting

Deborah Osborne – Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission (AHRPC)

- Excused Absence

Martha Raymond – Planning District 2

- Coalition for Livable Alexandria has distributed brochures and signs opposing Zoning for Housing. They conducted a survey in the City that showed 80% of the respondents wanted to slow down the process. See LivableAlexandria.org for more information. A rally is planned for November 25th on Market Square from 2 to 4 p.m.

Rebecca Rose – Alexandria Historical Society

- AHS is planning for their 50th anniversary in 2024.
- History Award nominations are now open. There are two awards available and nominations close March 1. These will be awarded at the April meeting.

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- No report

Tom Schultz – Alexandria Civic Association Representative

- Recognized that this month is the 100th anniversary of the cornerstone laying of the Masonic Memorial.

Lisa Schumaier – Torpedo Factory Artists

- Information in the DCist noted that the December 12th City Council meeting will discuss plans for the Torpedo Factory.

Russell Simonaro – OHA Friends Group Representative

- Excused Absence

Danny Smith – Business Representative

- Noted that potential significant changes to the real estate commission structure in the coming years could slow sales and/or put downward pressure on prices by requiring buyers to pay part of the sale commission. Under current Virginia law, buyer commissions cannot be included in mortgages.

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association

- The next lecture will be January 17, 2024 by Calder Loth, Senior Architecture Historian with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

- No events will be held in December.

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission

- AAC is working on activities to celebrate their 50th anniversary.
- They are also experimenting with their meeting structure and reducing the number of committee meetings.

New Business:

Elections of officers

- The nominating committee, led by Danny Smith, offered the following slate of officers for HARC: Shawn Eyer, Chair; Sean Ferguson, Vice-Chair; Roberta Stevens, Secretary.
- A motion to accept the slate by acclamation was made by Linda Lovell and seconded by Tom Schultz. Motion passed. The new officers were congratulated!

December 19 meeting

- The Commission agreed to cancel the December 19th meeting and to include a social as part of the January meeting.

Draft letter from HARC to Council regarding Zoning for Housing

- Proposed by the HARC Advocacy committee.
- Discussed the points made in a letter by Historic Alexandria Foundation to Council.
- Motion was made by Sean Ferguson and seconded by Donna DeBlasio to approve the letter and send via the City's 311 system to Council. Motion passed.

Draft joint letter to Council regarding Zoning for House

- Proposed by Historic Alexandria Foundation, Art Deco Society of Washington, and other local preservation organizations.
- Letter includes the need for a preservation study before moving forward with Zoning for Housing initiative.
- Motion was made by Danny Smith to add HARC as a signatory to the joint letter to Council and seconded by Gail Rothrock. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- Letter from HARC, AAC, and PRAC to the City Manager on behalf of OHA to fund a new collections off-site storage facility was submitted.

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project – Mark Farkus, report offered by Gretchen Bulova

- Two student scholarships in the names of Thomas and McCoy have been established for two ACPS students. The committee is starting fundraising efforts.

Advocacy – Martha Raymond

- The committee discussed Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) letter re: Zoning for Housing that was published in the Alexandria Times.
- Discussion also included a HUD grant related to Zoning for Housing.

OHA Support – Steve Stuart

- No report, absent

Freedom House Master Plan – Donna DeBlasio

- OHA staff are proofing the final report. A presentation to the stakeholders will be held and materials will be posted on the museum's website.

Ad-Hoc Proposed Street Naming Committee – Linda Lovell and Mark Farkas, Co-Chairs

- Public hearing is scheduled for November 30, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Sister City Room in City Hall.

Board of Architectural Review Update: Bill Conkey

- **Design Guidelines**

At the November 2, 2023 BAR hearing the Board voted to adopt the template for the updated design guidelines and to adopt the first five chapters of the updated Parker Gray Design Guidelines. Those five chapters are: Fences, Gates + Walls, Chimneys + Flues, Skylights, Solar Energy Systems, and Stoops, Steps, + Railings. The Design Guideline Committee will meet again in December to prepare the next batch of chapters to be reviewed by the Board.

- **Painted Masonry Workshop**

At the November 16, 2023, BAR hearing, the Board held a workshop to discuss the technical aspects of applying and removing paint and applying stain to existing masonry buildings. The Board has heard a number of painted masonry cases recently including one that went to City Council on appeal. They asked staff to arrange this workshop to learn more about the various processes involved with the treatment of existing masonry buildings. A painting contractor who has removed paint from several buildings within the historic district took part in this workshop along with the contractor responsible for staining the AKA hotel building.

- **225 North Fairfax Street**

At the November 16, 2023, BAR hearing, the Board approved the design for a new shed dormer on the north side of the existing building at 225 North Fairfax Street. The building was originally built in 1919 and has served as a warehouse and as a commercial structure. The dormer was designed to be compatible with the industrial nature of the building and will allow for greater use of the upper level.

OHA Report: Gretchen Bulova

- City Council will vote to claim Douglass Cemetery for City ownership at the November 28 Council Meeting.
- The Mortar and Pestle Society has donated \$70,000 to OHA to support a full-time, one year limited-term position, to digitize the Apothecary archival collection.
- Staff submitted an IMLS grant on November 15 to support the collections and library processing at the Black History Museum.
- A presentation on the planned exterior restoration of 1315 Duke Street was made to the BAR and unanimously approved.
- VDHR, however, has not approved the façade change for 1315 Duke Street and the application will need to be resubmitted for approval.
- Exhibit panels created by students at Gonzaga High School in DC about the enslaved man Gabriel, who was owned by Gonzaga and sold through the Alexandria Slave Pen, are on view at Freedom House through March.
- This weekend launches Plaid Friday, Shop Small in Alexandria, the Scottish Walk Festivities, Boat Parade of Lights – and OHA’s holiday events including Christmas in Camp at Fort Ward and more.
- Begun to hold Alexandria250 planning meetings with local attractions and stakeholders. Two key events – the Fairfax County Resolves and the 200th anniversary of Lafayette’s 1824 visit – will be held in 2024.

Public Comment

- No members of the public attended.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m. The next meeting will take place on January 16, 2024, at the Lloyd House.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Bulova, OHA