

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
Lloyd House
220 N. Washington Street, Alexandria
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 20, 2024

PRESENT: (11 for quorum)

Donna DeBlasio

Carol Black

Christopher Brownlowe

Shawn Eyer

David Kovalik

Barbara Marvin

Deborah Osborne

John Patrick

Rebecca Rose

Gail Rothrock

Russell Simonaro

Steve Stuart

Ivy Whitlatch

REMOTE:

Laura Lieberman

EXCUSED:

Bailee Barfield

Mark Farkas

Mia Mulrennan

Tim Rose

Roberta Stevens

ABSENT:

Tom Schultz

Lisa Schumaier

GUESTS:

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA Staff

Bill Conkey, BAR Staff, Planning and Zoning

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shawn Eyer at 7:00 p.m. after a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes for July 16, 2024:

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna DeBlasio and seconded by Barbara Marvin. The July 16, 2024 minutes were approved as amended.

Commissioner Updates:

Bailee Barfield – Volunteers at a Historic Property or Attraction

- Excused Absence

Carol Black – Historic Houses of Worship

- Updated new members on the Elks Lodge and news that they are getting a new roof.

Chris Brownlowe – Athenaeum/Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

- Completed the installation of a temporary accessible entrance.

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No report

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic National Memorial

- New executive director, Matt Szramoski, has started at the Memorial. He has a fundraising background and is very interested in updating exhibits.
- Ivy Whitlach thanked the staff of the Memorial for their support of the Alexandria Archaeology Summer Camp.

David Kovalik – Public Records Advisory Commission

- No report

Mark Farkus – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- Lee-Fendall House exterior repainted according to paint analysis.
- Invited everyone to the final trivia night of the summer, with a “2000s” theme.
- A Civil War tour, Women of Lee-Fendall History tour, and other specialty tours being offered this fall.

- Corinne Marasco – Houses of Workshop

Barbara Marvin – Planning District 1

- No report

Mia Mulrennan – Tourism and Business Community

- Excused Absence

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

- Announced that she is transitioning off the board next month and will assist with identifying a new HARC representative.

John Patrick – Planning District 2

- Invited by a group to speak about Rosemont and asked for a copy of the Rosemont National Register Nomination. Ivy Whitlatch suggested individuals to reach out to for additional information.

Rebecca Rose – Alexandria Historical Society

- No report

Tim Rose – Community Representative

- Excused Absence

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- No report

Tom Schultz – Alexandria Civic Association

- Absent

Lisa Schumaier – Lease Holding Artist at the Torpedo Factory Arts Center

- The Torpedo Factory celebrated its 50th anniversary as an Arts Center. The gala featured founder Marian Van Landingham and a special poem by Zeina Azzam, the City's poet laureate.
- Ivy Whitlatch has submitted a letter to the editor of the Gazette about the history of the Torpedo Factory and its connection with the founding of Alexandria Archaeology.

Russell Simonaro – Tourism and Business Community

- Excused Absence

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association

- Lecture November 17 about William Pitt and influence in Decorative Arts at 7 p.m.

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- No report

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)

- Commission excited to work on Wilkes Street Cemeteries National Register Nomination.
- Working on an AAC 50th anniversary event combined with volunteer party in February.
- Working on a recognition for Alexandria Archaeology as part of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center 50th anniversary.
- September 13, participating in the Torpedo Factory Arts Center “Late Shift” event.

New Business:

- City Hall Restoration
 - The city is undertaking the renovation of the City Hall building, Market Square plaza, and Market Square garage. Community engagement sessions are being planned.
- Jones Point Lighthouse, as a follow up to a 2022 discussion, is in even worse shape now. Carol Black noted that this site is owned by the National Park Service and wanted to have HARC to weigh in on reaching out again to the NPS superintendent. Ivy Whitlatch explained that the NPS region responsible for the Lighthouse is currently working on the George Washington Parkway renovation and that is where their resources are going.
 - Carol Black made a motion to write a letter to the City Manager and City Council requesting they contact the NPS about the deteriorating condition of Jones Point Lighthouse. Motion seconded by John Patrick. The motion passed.
 - Carol Black and Gail Rothrock recommended asking the representative from NPS to attend a future HARC meeting to discuss the preservation plan for the Jones Point Lighthouse.
- Ivy Whitlatch suggested that support for a Business Improvement District (BID) be added to a future meeting agenda.

Old Business:

- The FY24 Annual Report will be finished soon for review by HARC.
- Matt Landes from the Department of Project Implementation has been invited to a fall meeting with members of the Alexandria Archaeology Commission to discuss the planned Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project.

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) – Mark Farkus, HARC Representative

- The documentary on Alexandria’s lynching history has been completed and a film debut is planned for September 21 at the Masonic Memorial at 7 pm. Tickets are \$10 and available through the OHA website.

Advocacy – Gail Rothrock and Donna DeBlasio, Co-Chairs

- No meeting was held in August.
- The next meeting is planned for Tuesday, September 3. Everyone is invited.

OHA Support – Steve Stuart

- No report

Murray-Dick-Fawcett House Comprehensive Plan– Gail Rothrock, HARC Representative

- Glave Holmes is working on the plan, with comments from the stakeholders and staff. A final presentation is planned for November.

Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Update: Bill Conkey

- Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines Committee has been working this summer to update two of our most used chapters, windows and signage. In response to recent cases involving the repair of historic windows, the committee is developing a means by which to categorize repairs based on the extent of work required. Ultimately the goal with this will be to provide a level of predictability to the consideration of historic window repair. The new window chapter will also include visual examples of how these repairs are completed. The City is undergoing a review of the Zoning Ordinance sections related to signage and the committee is looking to inform this process as it relates to the historic district through the adoption of a new set of guidelines.

- Preservation Conference

Brendan Harris and Marina Novaes, from the HP staff, attended the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum in Florida and presented their session titled “Water You Waiting For? Using Digital Tools for Disaster Planning and Resilience in Historic Preservation.” The session highlighted the ongoing digital survey of the historic district that staff has been managing. This survey will ultimately create a digital catalogue of the buildings within the historic district that includes photographs and physical descriptions of each building.

- Infrastructure Work

Historic Preservation staff has been working with staff from Transportation and Environmental Services to coordinate upcoming work that will be performed on historic rights of way. The work will be completed such that the critical infrastructure is updated and the historic fabric is properly replaced. This includes the re-installation of cobblestone pavers, brick pavers and brick sidewalks.

OHA Report: Gretchen Bulova

- Latest issue of the Historic Alexandria Quarterly has been published.
- Freedom House exterior restoration is making progress, and the scaffolding is scheduled to go up next week.
- Upcoming 10th anniversary of the dedication of Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery will be held Sept 6 and 7.
- Friendship Firehouse Muster is planned for September 14 with a Fire History Symposium on Sunday, September 15. Both events are being organized by the friends group and are free and open to the public.
- A week-long commemoration is being planned for the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's 1824 visit to Alexandria. Events include walking tours, a marker dedication, a book talk and an interpretive dinner.
- The annual Alexandria Cider Festival will take place at the Lloyd House on November 23 from 1 to 5 p.m. We are always looking for volunteers and ways to increase our ticket sales!

Public Comment

- No members of the public attended the meeting.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will take place on September 17, 2024, at the Lloyd House.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Roberta Stevens, HARC Secretary