

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION

CITY HALL, Room 1900

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

PRESENT: (14 for quorum)

Carol Black

Christopher Brownlowe

Donna DeBlasio

Shawn Eyer

David Kovalik

Barbara Marvin

Nigel Mease

Mia Mulrennan

John Patrick

Rebecca Rose

Gail Rothrock

Lisa Schumaier

Roberta Stevens

Ivy Whitlatch

EXCUSED:

Bailee Barfield

Mark Farkas

Laura Lieberman

Corrine Marasco

Tom Schultz

Steve Stuart

Rebecca Super

ABSENT:

Tim Rose

Russell Simonaro

PUBLIC:

Michael Pope

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA Staff

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Christopher Brownlowe at 7:06 p.m. Chairman Shawn Eyer arrived at 7:15 p.m., establishing a quorum.

Approval of Minutes for November 19, 2024:

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna DeBlasio and seconded by John Patrick. The November 19, 2024, minutes were approved.

Chairs Updates:

Vice Chair Brownlowe acknowledged the work of Shawn Eyer as Chair for the last two years and thanked him.

Commissioner Updates:

Bailee Barfield – Volunteers at a Historic Property or Attraction

- Excused Absence

Carol Black – Historic Houses of Worship

- No Report
- She added thanks to the Alexandria Historical Society Golden Grant program that supported the Elks Lodge with a records digitization project.

Chris Brownlowe – Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (NVFAA)

- The NVFAA's annual member appreciation party was held on December 8th.
- In January they will host their annual sculpture show.

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No Report

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic National Memorial

- For the Lee-Fendall House Museum, Shawn reported that the December programs included a Victorian Christmas and an upcoming Kissing Ball Workshop. They are wrapping up their 50th anniversary year with the new paint color for the building's exterior and a resolution for the garden wall's repair.
- For the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Shawn reported that they are focused on February events celebrating Washington's birthday. On Saturday, February 22nd, the large Washington statue will be rededicated for its 75th anniversary. President Truman spoke at the statue's dedication on February 22, 1950. Truman's grandson will speak at the 75th anniversary rededication. He also noted that two engravings from George Washington's 1792 family Bible are missing from it and research is underway to discover what they looked like.

Mark Farkus – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence

David Kovalik – Public Records Advisory Commission

- No Report

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- Excused Absence

Corinne Marasco – Houses of Worship

- Excused Absence

Barbara Marvin – Planning District 1

- No Report

Mia Mulrennan – Tourism and Business Community

- No report, but she wanted to add that this year's waterfront art installation was enjoyed by the public.

Nigel Mease – Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission (AHRPC)

- The Commission met on December 11th and discussed goals for 2025.
- They are looking to identify more African American sites to be preserved with easements.
- They are working with Virginia's Attorney General on the processes for the Commission, since it is authorized by the State, and specifically on the handling of violations.
- They are also trying to increase visibility of the Commission's easement program.

John Patrick – Planning District 2

- No Report

Rebecca Rose – Alexandria Historical Society (AHS)

- On December 10th, the 50th anniversary of AHS was honored by the City Council. The Golden Grant awardees were acknowledged at the meeting. Award recipients included the Elks Lodge, an LGBTQ+ history tour, an OHA oral history intern for the Douglass Cemetery, an index of the Hooe store records, and a historic military music performance.

Tim Rose – Community Representative

- Absent

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- HAF's annual Toast of the Town fundraiser on Saturday, November 23rd at the Athenaeum, raised \$45,000.

Tom Schultz – Alexandria Civic Association

- Excused Absence

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

- No Report

Russell Simonaro – Tourism and Business Community

- Absent

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association

- The Association's January 20th program will feature Shawn Eyer's presentation "Lee Fendall House Structural Survey: A Lesson in Historic Preservation." The Alexandria Association contributed \$40,000 towards the survey's cost.

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence

Rebecca Super – Carlyle House

- Bathroom renovations begin on January 6th. On the same day, staff will be meeting with experts to discuss next steps with various repairs to the stucco and terrace.
- The Carlyle House had a successful Scottish Walk Open House followed by Yuletide tours the next weekend.
- Their inaugural winter lecture series will begin on February 16th with a talk by Steven Hammond.

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)

- The original north wall of the Canal Locks was exposed when the building in the 900 block of North Pitt Street was torn down.
- The AAC will hold an event on January 31, 2025, at the Torpedo Factory to celebrate its 50th anniversary. Commissioners are working on national recognition.
- The AAC plans to meet with the City Manager to discuss City-wide recognition for the formation of the AAC.
- Approval of national recognition for the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex is being sought.

New Business:

Nominating Committee Report:

- Carol Black and Gail Rothrock offered the 2025 Slate of Officers and thanked the currently serving officers.
- A call for nominations from the floor was made by Shawn Eyers. No nominations were made.
- A motion was made by Ivy Whitlach and seconded by John Patrick to accept the slate as proposed. The motion was approved.
- The elected officers for the 2025 year: Christopher Brownlowe (Chair), Donna DeBlasio (Vice Chair), and Roberta Stevens (Secretary).

Old Business:

Jones Point Lighthouse Update:

- City Staff is working with Chistine Smith, Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway on the maintenance issues. Mayor Justin Wilson was told that the National Park Service did not have the money to make the repairs.
- Carol Black volunteered to contact Mayor-Elect Gaskins to continue the conversation with the Park Service. A motion was made by Carol Black and seconded by John Patrick to update Mayor-Elect Gaskins. The motion passed.

City Hall Renovation:

- Gail Rothrock attended the third community outreach session that was focused on the redesign of Market Square. The consultants talked about trying to preserve some of the original historic fabric and spaces of City Hall.
- The City's Web page has links to plans and recordings of the Zoom meetings.
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/CityHall>

Section 106 for Waterfront Implementation Project: Alexandria's Department of Project Implementation

- Matt Landes, from the Department of Project Implementation, is available to attend the January HARC meeting to review the project and answer questions.
- HARC will extend an invitation to members of the AAC to attend the presentation.
- A suggestion was made to reserve Room 1900 in City Hall to accommodate a larger crowd.

Section 106 for the Heritage Project

- The HARC committee was formed at the last meeting and responded to the project coordinator to meet the December 2, 2024 deadline.

Standing Committee Reports:

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

- ACRP is showing the documentary for local community groups and is looking for additional screening opportunities.
- A suggestion was made to show the documentary on a loop at the Torpedo Factory.

Advocacy – Gail Rothrock and Donna DeBlasio, Co-Chairs

- A position will need to be made on the pump station at Waterfront Park as well as the temporary closure of the 200 Block of King Street.

OHA Support – Steve Stuart

- No Report

Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Update: Bill Conkey

201 Gibbon Street Appeal

- On Saturday December 14, 2024, the City Council heard an appeal of the Board of Architectural Review's denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of two second floor windows on the south elevation of 201 Gibbon Street. The Board denied the request, noting that the subject windows are the last two remaining historic windows on the structure. The Council agreed with the BAR and upheld their decision.

Waterfront Flood Mitigation

- The BAR will be holding a Concept Review session at their hearing on December 18, 2024, to discuss the proposed design for the redevelopment of Waterfront Park and Point Lumley Park. This will include a proposal for a new pump station to be located in Waterfront Park. At this Concept Review, the Board will consider different options for the design and location of the pump station and the design of each of the two parks.

1007 and 1007A Oronoco Street

- The current property at 1007 Oronoco Street is a single historic structure with empty lots to the east and west. The property owner recently had the subdivision of the single lot into three lots approved by the Planning Commission. The dividing line for the historic district runs immediately to the west of the existing structure, meaning that the modifications to the existing building and the proposed new building to the east of the site will be reviewed by the BAR. They will be reviewed at the December 18, 2024, BAR hearing.

Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) Report: Gretchen Bulova

- Thanked everyone for their support and participation in OHA's stakeholder meetings, events, and fundraising activities.
- Wrapping up 2024 – it was a busy year of research, exhibits, and programming for the City's 275th anniversary.
- There were visits from all three sister cities – Dundee, Caen, and Helsingborg.
- The Education team participated in more than 40 outreach events throughout Alexandria.

- Almost 4000 students and teachers have participated in school programs in OHA's eight museums.
- Restoration projects have included new windows/doors at Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Apothecary, building renewal at the Archives and Records Center, and the exterior rehabilitation of the Freedom House Museum.
- OHA staff oversaw the research, fabrication, and installation of the Fairfax Resolves Road to Revolution Marker, Lafayette Commemoration marker, 11 markers along the waterfront as part of the African American Heritage Trail, and two Vietnam Veteran memorials.

Public Comment

- Michael Pope attended the meeting, representing the Alexandria Historical Society.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. The next meeting is planned for January 21, 2025, in room 1900 of City Hall (301 King Street).

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