

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION

City Hall Room 1900

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 21, 2024

PRESENT: (14 for quorum)

Christopher Brownlowe

Donna DeBlasio

Shawn Eyer

David Kovalik

Corrine Marasco

Barbara Marvin

Nigel Mease

John Patrick

Rebecca Rose

Gail Rothrock

Roberta Stevens

Tom Schultz

Steve Stuart

Rebecca Super

Russell Simonaro

Ivy Whitlatch

VIRTUAL:

Carol Black

EXCUSED:

Mia Mulrennan

Bailee Barfield

Mark Farkas

Laura Lieberman

Tim Rose

ABSENT:

PUBLIC: Latane Montague, Ted Pulliam, Camille Shaw, Scott Shaw, Scott Verick, Martha Raymond, Richard Raymond

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA Staff

Eleanor Breen, OHA Staff

Bill Conkey, BAR Staff

Matt Landes, DPI Staff

PRESENTATIONS:

Matt Landes, Department of Project Implementation, Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project Update

- A project update was provided to members of HARC as well as the Alexandria Archaeology Commission (AAC). The presentation reviewed the reason for a pumping station, alternative locations explored for the station, the rationale for its size and for a single station instead of two smaller stations, preliminary architectural designs, funding allocated to date, and a possible timeline.
- Matt Landes answered questions from both Commissions as well as members of the public and offered to make a follow up presentation as planning progressed.

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist, provided an update on the excavation of the partial remains of Alexandria's Canal on the 900 block of North Pitt Street. A public viewing was held on Sunday, January 19th with more than 500 residents attending. Efforts are being made to salvage and repurposed some of the original canal stones.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Christopher Brownlowe at 8:18 p.m. A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes for December 17, 2024:

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna DeBlasio and seconded by Tom Schultz. The December 17, 2024 minutes were approved.

Chairs Updates: Christopher requested that new business be sent to Gretchen Bulova ten days before the HARC monthly meeting date.

Commissioner Updates:

Bailee Barfield – Volunteers at a Historic Property or Attraction

- Excused Absence

Carol Black – Historic Houses of Worship

- No Report

Chris Brownlowe – Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (NVFAA)

- The NVFAA is featuring their annual sculpture show this month.
- The 2025 Salon at the Statehouse is being held on February 8th.

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No Report

Shawn Eyer – George Washington Masonic National Memorial

- For the Lee-Fendall House Museum, Shawn reported that it will be closed during the month of January for preservation projects. Wallpaper is being researched. A new fire suppression system is the museum's top priority.
- For the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, he reported that during the snow closure a steam valve burst raising temperatures throughout the building. Staff worked to protect historic objects. The theater was not affected. The insurer estimated the cost of repairs at \$400,000.
- 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 and his grandson will speak at the 75th anniversary rededication. Tickets are available on the Memorial's website.

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

- No Report

Barbara Marvin – Planning District 1

- No Report

Mia Mulrennan – Tourism and Business Community

- Excused Absence

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

- Inspections for easements are being conducted.

John Patrick – Planning District 2

- The Rosemont Citizen's Association is looking to create a pattern book similar to the one in Del Ray.

Rebecca Rose – Alexandria Historical Society (AHS)

- A free Zoom presentation by David Alff on "How the Northeast Became an Acela Corridor" will be held on Wednesday, January 22nd, at 7 p.m. A sign-up is required to attend this virtual event.

Tim Rose – Community Representative

- Excused Absence

Gail Rothrock – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- No Report

Tom Schultz – Alexandria Civic Association

- No Report

Russell Simonaro – Tourism and Business Community

- No Report

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association

- Shawn Eyer was thanked for his thorough presentation at the January 24 Alexandria Association Meeting. The next program will be held February 17 with Calder Loth presenting on “Alexandria’s Official Historic Landmarks.”

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- No Report

Rebecca Super – Carlyle House

- Bathroom renovations began on January 6th. On the same day, staff met with experts to discuss next steps for stucco and terrace repairs.

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 31st at the Torpedo Factory to celebrate its 50th anniversary. Commissioners are working on national recognition for this milestone year.
- The AAC plans to meet with the City Manager to discuss City-wide recognition for the formation of the AAC.

New Business:

Ideas for outreach to new Council Members include:

- A packet (it can be a folder)
- A welcoming letter
- A description of the role of HARC, its top 10 accomplishments and HARC’s vision for the next few years; Steve Stuart, Gail Rothrock, Ivy Whitlatch and Christopher Brownlowe offer to work on this project.

Old Business:

Jones Point Lighthouse Update:

- City Staff will follow up again with Chistine Smith, Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway on the maintenance issues.

City Hall Renovation:

- Concern over the impact of the Market Square Garage closure was expressed.

Section 106 for the Heritage Project:

- No update

Standing Committee Reports:

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

- ACRP's documentary is airing in January and February on PBS WHUR.

OHA Support – Steve Stuart

- Ways to better support OHA were quickly discussed with more follow up on this topic needed.

Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Update: Bill Conkey

- 2 Prince Street
At the January 15th BAR hearing, the Board approved an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the conversion of the current bike shop at 2 Prince Street into a new restaurant. The changes to the building are extensive and include new roll-up door openings in place of the small window openings and a new occupied roof deck. The roof deck will include a seating area under a retractable roof and a bar. A portion of the roof will be enclosed and will house bathrooms, a mechanical room and egress stairs.
- 802-808 North Washington Street
At the January 15th BAR hearing, the Board held a Concept Review for a multi-unit residential building at 802-808 North Washington Street. This was previously the site of the Town Motel which was demolished to make way for a new hotel. Construction on the hotel halted when the below grade construction was finished and after the historic townhome on the site had been relocated. A new owner has acquired the property and will be moving forward with a multi-unit residential development on the site. Because the below grade construction has largely been completed, the building's size and massing will be similar to the previously approved design. The owner is proposing a new architectural design in keeping with the change in the site's use.
- Fire Station 201 at 317 Prince Street
Fire Station 201 at 317 Prince Street is going to be replacing the doors leading to the apparatus bay to address maintenance issues and improve maneuverability of the trucks as they enter and leave the station. Historic Preservation staff has been working with the Fire Department on a design that will be similar to those found in historic photos of the Fire Station.

Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) Report: Gretchen Bulova

- OHA is concerned about low temperatures and the effects on Alexandria's historic buildings, specifically Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House. Staff are working to prevent pipes from bursting.

- Historic Alexandria is participating in a national Association of American Museums survey. Gretchen asked HARC members to take a few minutes to answer the survey.
- For Black History Month, a proclamation will be made by the City Council on January 28th. There will be a Martin Luther King student art show in the Vola Lawson Lobby [of Alexandria's Animal Shelter] from February 1st to February 28th.
- The roof is being removed from the Freedom House on the south facade on Thursday, January 27th.
- February events are online to celebrate George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette
- Spring2Action – This year's event will take place on April 9th and support the interior accessibility of Freedom House.

Public Comment

- None. Questions asked during the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project Update

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting is planned for February 18, 2025 at the Lloyd House.

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