

Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)
Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2017 - DRAFT

Members Present:

Elizabeth (Indy) McCall, Member at Large
(Chair)

Mary Jane Nugent, Friends of Alexandria
Archaeology (Vice Chair)

Ann Davin, Alexandria Association
(Secretary)

Georgia (Katy) Cannady, Alexandria,
Historical Society

Jacob Hoogland, Member at Large

Mark Ludlow, Member at Large

Janice Magnuson, Planning District III

Kathleen Pepper, Alexandria Society for the
Preservation of Black Heritage

Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Member at Large

Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large

Rebecca Siegel, Planning District II

Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria
Foundation

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I

Members Absent:

City Staff:

Fran Bromberg, City Archaeologist

Eleanor Breen, Archaeologist

Guests:

Randy Randall

Hal Hardaway

Call to order: The AAC's Chair, Indy McCall, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion to accept minutes as amended made by Kathleen Pepper and seconded by Seth Tinkham. All members approved the motion.

Membership Issue:

No update on Membership issue.

City Strategic Plan:

Indy reported on the Saturday, January 28 City Council meeting where discussions focused on the *FY 2017-2022 City Strategic Plan*. Alexandria Archaeology (AA) staff and AAC representatives were heartened by members of Council references, due to input and lobbying, to the Waterfront History Plan as an important tool for City planning and also to a possible museum to house the artifacts recovered during the Waterfront development.

Indy suggested that the ACC strategize on ways to improve communications with City Council members to better advocate for history. Indy also discussed that the AAC should develop a working relationship with the new members of the Alexandria Arts Commission.

Indy recommended that AAC commissioners review the budget when it is released on Tuesday, February 21. Janice Magnuson volunteered to attend the City Manager Mark B. Jinks' presentation of the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program held on Thursday, February 23, at the Beatley Library (5005 Duke Street).

Strategic Planning and AAC Workplan:

AAC is developing a work plan. The AAC needs to advocate for archaeology specifically, and

not just as part of the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA). Commissioners would like to be more aware of the bench marks in the budget cycle and also for new small area plans in order to have input at the appropriate time.

In order for the Commission to be more efficient and responsive, Indy suggested that a review of the subcommittees be conducted and that changes in structure be made.

Ramsay Homes:

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has a 15-day window in which to review the Ramsay Homes project area and respond to the proposed mitigation studies. There is no avenue for further public comment. \$50,000 has been consigned for mitigation activities. These potentially will include documenting the structures using 3D technology and other methods to record their appearance and structural elements. Public tours of the buildings also potentially will take place before demolition.

Archaeological investigations will begin soon under the City's Archaeology Code. No construction plan takes into account what maybe found below ground, nor does open space planning show the potential to reference what might be found archaeologically.

Waterfront Discussion:

Waterfront Commission

No update (no meeting).

Boat Club

Fran Bromberg had requested investigations be conducted at the Old Dominion Boat Club to determine the presence/absence of an early 19th-century pier. Negotiations are ongoing and may include additional waterfront interpretation.

Robinson Terminal South (RTS)

Status report:

A. There is a legal condition on the project that requires archaeological investigations to be conducted when and where ground disturbance is planned. Thunderbird Archaeology (TBA) will be on site at all relevant times.

B. TBA is monitoring the site as construction progresses. Three test trenches were excavated by TBA to better understand the area's stratigraphy and to determine the water table height. These tests showed that 20th-century fill was quite deep in some areas, but also identified an area in the northwest corner where the natural soils of the bluff remain intact. Archaeologists did drawings, took photographs, etc., in the test trenches.

C. Sump pump - the construction crew requested input from the archaeologists as to where to excavate a large hole for the sump pump. The hole was placed and excavated in areas of extensive ground disturbance/fill.

D. AA will post progress on the archaeological investigations on their website to ensure that the word gets out to the public; AA staff will attend the Monday, March 6 meeting of the monitoring group; and AA will be present at the RTS project area a couple of times a week to oversee the proceedings.

Ship Update

The ship will be leaving soon for the conservation laboratory. The contract is being settled.

Cemetery Committee

The trial run will start at the Douglass Cemetery, located in the northeast corner of the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex. City GIS surveyors will be assisting members of AAC and AA staff.

Other Planning Updates and Reports (as needed)

Alley Ways Committee

Working group is meeting tomorrow. Possibly use the information collected during the surveys to update information on the National Register.

Torpedo Factory

Indy recommended that discussions related to the events surrounding the Torpedo Factory and its management be put on March's meeting agenda.

Member Reports

George Washington Parade details discussed.

Rebecca Siegal handed out "coupons" for dining at Vola's Dockside Grill & Hi-Tide Lounge, where a portion of the proceeds will go to ship preservation. "Spring2ACTion" fundraising will start in April.

Staff Reports

Record Volunteer Hours

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m. Motion to adjourn was made by Indy and seconded by Jake Hoogland.