

**Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)**  
Minutes of February 19, 2020 Meeting

**Members Present:**

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)  
Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)  
Ann Davin, Member At Large (Secretary)  
Dylan Colligan, Business Community  
Mark Ludlow, Member at large  
Janice Magnuson, Planning District III  
Richard Owens, Friends of Alexandria  
Archaeology  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association  
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large

**Members Excused:**

Georgia (Katy) Canady, Alexandria Historical  
Society  
Jacob Hoogland, Member at Large  
Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation  
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large

**City Staff:**

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist  
Benjamin (Ben) Skolnik, Archaeologist

**Call to Order:** Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** AAC members reviewed the January minutes. Ivy moved to accept the minutes as is, Ann Davin seconded, and all AAC members agreed.

**Chair Reports:**

Torpedo Factory Art Center

Ivy relayed that at the February Old Town Civic Association meeting, Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities, reported that there are no definite plans for the Torpedo Factory Art Center, except for renovations to the first floor. The City plans to keep the Torpedo Factory as an art center, but she was not specific about what that meant.

Old Town Theater

Dylan Colligan requested to make an "out of order" agenda change to discuss the Old Town Theater and the planned exterior changes as proposed by its new tenant, Patagonia. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) agenda for this evening's meeting included a discussion of the historic building, which is owned by Asana Partners. AAC members voted to have input into the signage of Old Town Theater at the BAR meeting and moved to send Dylan to the BAR meeting to recommend that the signage remain as part of the historic landscape of King Street. Dylan reported back to AAC that BAR members voiced support to retain the signage and the members voted to defer the final outcome of the sign.

Dylan recommended that AAC write a letter in support of preserving the existing signage on the theater and stress that preservation should also look to the future. Ivy moved that she and Dylan write a letter to the BAR, Esther White seconded the motion, and all members agreed. Will cc Mayor Wilson and the City Manager, Mark Jinks in the letter.

AAC Work Plan

Ivy is working on an AAC Work Plan which will target membership, the ship report, and African American initiatives in the city.

## HARC

Discussions at the last meeting included the Equal Justice Initiative. There is lecture series planned for the upcoming months.

## Department of Planning

Al Cox, Historic Preservation Manager, Department of Planning & Zoning, is retiring and his position will be split into two positions staffed by William Conkey and Susan Hellman, currently Principal Planner.

**Planning Updates and Reports (as needed):** The following items were reported by Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist:

## Ship

Eleanor reported that the final week for scanning the ship's timbers is scheduled to begin Monday, March 30. The data then will be used for the model construction of the ship.

For the FY 2021 budget, the City Council budgeted \$268,000 for preserving and maintaining the ship in the Ben Brenman pond.

At a public outreach tour at Cameron Station, Eleanor spoke to the community about the ship and the plans for preserving the timbers in the pond. There also will be a public event to commemorate when the timbers go into the water and there will be interpretive signs at the pond.

## City Budget for FY 2021

Eleanor reported on the following proposed FY2021 budget items as they affect Alexandria Archaeology:

- Funding for the part time Museum staff position going to full time person. Ben Skolnik's position is proposed as full time;
- Funds for Fawcett house and Freedom House. There will be a proposed OHA staff person dedicated to these two buildings.
- Research historian position. Proposed two year term position for a documentary study of the waterfront area to be impacted by flood mitigation construction. GIS skills in digital mapping format. People have applied and the selection process is ongoing.
- A fiscal operator/analyst for the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) to be hired by the first week in March.

## Waterfront Commission

Mark Ludlow reported that at the last meeting, Mark Jinks, the City Manager, spoke on conflict of interest. McArthur Myers gave a presentation on the African American Heritage Trail. There were also updates on the tall ship Providence.

## African American Heritage Trail committee

Progress is being made and June is the target month for launching the northern end of the trail.

### Ramsay Homes

On Friday, May 15 there will be a day long symposium at the Charles Houston Recreation Center that will focus on the Ramsay Home's architecture and the history of affordable housing. This symposium will be followed by a reception at the Black History Museum.

### Douglass Memorial and Penny Hill cemeteries

Ben gave a presentation to the AAC on the non-invasive surveys of the Douglass Memorial and Penny Hill cemeteries.

**OHA Work Plan/Strategic Plan:** Eleanor reported that OHA is in beginning stages of reorganization. The hiring of the fiscal manager is the first step in how to better serve the community.

**Open Space:** There will be an Open Space Committee meeting on Thursday, March 5. Ivy will attend the first meeting.

**FOAA:** FOAA Board is meeting this Saturday, February 22.

### **Record Volunteer Hours**

Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. made by Ralph Rosenbaum, seconded by Janice Magnuson, and agreed to by all members.