

Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)
Minutes of October 21, 2020 Zoom 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 (by phone)
Jacob Hoogland, Member at Large
Mark Ludlow, Member at Large
Richard Owens, Friends of Alexandria Archaeology
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large

Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria Foundation
(by phone and then Zoom)
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large

Members Absent:

Janice Magnuson, Planning District III

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist
Emma Richardson, Education Coordinator,
Alexandria Archaeology

Public: John Oldfield

Call to Order:

Ivy Whitlatch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice, City of Alexandria by Eleanor Breen and recorded by Emma Richardson.

Members of the AAC were joined by John Oldfield, a member of the public, with a strong interest in maritime archaeology and a new resident of Alexandria.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

AAC members reviewed the September 16 meeting minutes. Ralph Rosenbaum moved to accept the minutes as amended, Mark Ludlow seconded, and all AAC members agreed.

Chair Reports:

Ivy reported to the AAC that she submitted a letter to Zebra Press in response to an article (linked here) "[Discovering Alexandria's Untold History One Privy at a Time,](https://thezebra.org/2020/10/05/discovering-alexandrias-untold-history-one-privy-at-a-time/)" <https://thezebra.org/2020/10/05/discovering-alexandrias-untold-history-one-privy-at-a-time/> published on Monday, October 5, regarding a bottle collector who excavated privies in the backyards of Alexandria. The letter recommended that residents who find artifacts in their backyards reach out to Alexandria Archaeology so that these discoveries may add to the greater understanding of the city's history, and not for a single person's benefit. A copy of the letter was also sent to City Council where it was met with positive responses.

HARC

Ivy reported that HARC members are having trouble finding new members from the Black community and decided to talk to old City Council members to find new members. The AAC have approached this issue by changing the wording in the ordinance code to broaden the scope of eligible people.

HARC also discussed the decision of the Board of Architectural Review to approve the demolition of the Heritage Apartments and additionally the potential for impacts to the adjacent historic district by new

construction. The project is currently in the Concept Review phase. The Planning and Zoning Commission will decide the fate of the apartments. Alexandria Archaeology will require a Phase 1 background research project and make preliminary recommendations.

Ivy reported that she was appointed to be HARC's representative on River Renew for HARC and has applied as a stakeholder.

Torpedo Factory

Ivy reported on the Action Plan for Vibrancy & Sustainability at Torpedo Factory Art Center, a multi-year plan that re-imagines the Art Center for the 21st century. The City sponsored Torpedo Museum Action Plan has been on hold due to COVID-19, but the draft report was finally released in October.

Esther White recommended that Alexandria Archaeology staff develop a plan for the museum as to whether to stay long term in the Torpedo Factory or move to a new location, so that the AAC will know what to advocate for.

Annual Report:

Annual Report has been submitted and is on the City's website.

Membership Update:

Historical Society member is needed to for Alexandria Archaeology with the resignation of Katy Canady.

Planning Updates and Reports:

Waterfront Commission

Mark Ludlow reported that the Old Dominion Boat Club presented project plans that include installation of floating docks for kayaks and small boats. The Waterfront Commission voted in support of project.

Alexandria Archaeology

The following items were reported by Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

- Archaeology Protection Code Updates
Brief update on required archaeological work due to the Archaeological Protection Code included a project at 1300 King Street by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group out of Fredericksburg, VA.

New historic signage is in place on Union Street at the new Watermark Condominiums.

AAC and Eleanor agreed to have the Code updates quarterly, perhaps as PowerPoint converted to pdf that could be uploaded to cell phones. If there is a major development, then it will be addressed at the next meeting.

- African American Heritage Trail Committee – the northern end of the trail has been completed and work is starting on the southern half.

African American Civil Rights Network

Seth Tinkham reported that he and Elizabeth Vehmeyer are working on the nomination of the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery to the African American Civil Rights Network. The City Manager and City Council will be informed and the nomination will be discussed at the Tuesday, November 24

City Council meeting. Historic Alexandria also is a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and this will be helpful in the nomination process.

Staff Reports:

- Wednesday, November 18 is the next virtual AAC Meeting. All Alexandria commission meetings will be virtual at least until the end of calendar year 2020.
- Eleanor reported that Texas A&M came to Alexandria for one more laser scan session of the ships. They are working slowly and steadily to reconstruct timber by timber what the hull looks like. Additional samples of the timbers were also taken for dating.
- Eleanor reported that the ship ponding project at Brenman Park was progressing- and staff are aiming to do this in the spring of 2021. Alexandria Archaeology is planning public outreach programs for when the timbers are submerged.
- There is also a new temporary art installation at the foot of King Street: [Wrought, Knit, Labors, Legacies](https://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/arts/info/default.aspx?id=104495) by Olalekan Jeyifous
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/arts/info/default.aspx?id=104495>.

Record Volunteer Hours

Meeting ended at 8:43 p.m.