

MINUTES

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

PRESENT:

Nancy Tingen, Linda Lovell, Steve Stuart, Keith Lawson Moore, Stephen Damm, Shawn Eyer, Martha Harris, Jolande Goldberg, Elliot Bell-Krasner, Laura Lieberman, Danny Smith, Mike Commisso, Margaret Wood, Elizabeth McCall, Gail Rothrock, John Dumsick, Jennifer Walsh, Bill Hendrickson.

EXCUSED:

UNEXCUSED:

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

Lance Mallamo, and Al Cox.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Carter Batey, and.

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. and asked Mr. Bell-Krasner to introduce his guests who were present to observe the meeting. Mr. Bell-Krasner informed HARC members that his guests were visiting from various countries in South East Asia. Each guest took a moment to introduce themselves and informed the group about the country they came from and their professional backgrounds.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Members reviewed the April 18, 2017 HARC minutes. Minor amendments to the minutes were suggested. Elizabeth McCall made a motion to approve the April 18, 2017 minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Martha Harris. The motion was voted on and was unanimously approved.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW HARC MEMBERS

The Chairman informed the group that the following members will be leaving HARC: Susan Hellman and Michael Commisso. A woman named Maddie McCoy will be filling Mrs. Hellman's position on HARC. Maddie was not present at the meeting. Carter Batey will be filling Mr. Commisso's position on HARC. Mr. Commisso introduced Mr. Batey to the group.

The Chairman introduced two new HARC members: Jennifer Walsh and Steve Stuart. Ms. Walsh represents the Public Records Advisory Commission and Mr. Stuart represents planning district three. The Chairman urged the new members to peruse the OHA website and to sign up for EMAS email alerts for OHA news and events.

THE ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH PROJECT: IMPLICATIONS FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES AND HISTORIC FABRIC OF THE CITY

City resident, Paula Glaser gave a presentation on the proposed Alfred Street Baptist Church project and the potential impact it has on the surrounding historic residential properties as well as how this project could change the overall historic fabric of the City. Highlights of her presentation include:

- In November 2015, Ms. Glaser's neighborhood association was informed that the Alfred Street Baptist Church submitted a proposal to the City of Alexandria to construct a new Church. Why? The church has seen a significant growth in its membership (went from 2,000 members to 7,000 members). Most of the members drive rather than walk to church. Due to increase in membership, they hold three services on Sunday. Each service has about 1200 attendees.
- The proposal seeks to drastically expand the church's physical footprint in an area that is actually zoned residential, specifically for townhomes. The plan calls to double their footprint, taking up two blocks or 86,000 square feet. The plan details creating a new sanctuary that holds 2,000+ seats, which, for perspective, is almost as big as the Kennedy Center. Plan also includes creating five nurseries, four kitchens, and having a total capacity of 5,000.
- The plan includes demolishing the 11 low income townhouses that house 22 low income families as well as removing all existing green space areas.
- The concerns raised by members of Mrs. Glaser's neighborhood is their fear that the pleasant characteristics of the surrounding historic neighborhoods are threatened for the following reasons: the proposed footprint of the building, future growth of the church, traffic and parking issues, and the plans failure to adhere to the City's current zoning ordinances.

Mrs. Glaser opened the floor to questions:

- Michael Commisso asked if the Board of Architectural Review has suggested any changes to the plan. Mrs. Glaser informed him that they had not, but they also have not approved or endorsed the plan.
- Linda Lovell suggested that HARC should invite someone from the church to come speak at a future HARC meeting before HARC takes a position on this matter.

- Motion made by Martha Harris: “HARC invite the leadership of the Alfred Street Baptist Church to speak about the historical significance of the church and its surrounding grounds at the June 2017 HARC meeting.” The motion was seconded by Danny Smith. The motion was brought to a vote. Linda Lovell was the only member to abstain from voting and all other members voted in favor of the motion; therefore, the motion passed.

For full details on this discussion, the PowerPoint presentation given at the meeting has been incorporated into these minutes as an attachment.

TORPEDO FACTORY: CITY PERSPECTIVE ON IT’S FUTURE

Since Diane Ruggiero was unable to attend this meeting, this topic was tabled and will be discussed at a future meeting.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT HARC LETTER ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION ASPECTS IN PROPOSED UPDATE OF OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN

The Draft HARC letter on the historic preservation aspects in the Old Town North Small Area Plan was presented to the group and discussed. Gail Rothrock informed the new members of the group that the purpose of this letter is to try to have the plan address and contain stronger language when it comes to the topics of historic preservation, interpretation and implementation. Martha Harris asked Al Cox if the requests made in the draft letter is an “adequate standard?” Mr. Cox said it is a great start because currently, there are no standards.

Another member of the group asked Mr. Cox how much the Interpretive Guide cost the City. Mr. Cox informed the group it cost \$15,000.00.

Motion made by Danny Smith: “HARC accept the letter as written and send it to the City of Alexandria Urban Planner and the City’s Planning Commission.” The motion was voted on and was approved unanimously.

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR HARC JUNE 2017 ELECTION

The group discussed the slate of officers for HARC’s June 2017 election. Slate of officers includes the following people and positions:

Chair: Elizabeth McCall and Danny Smith

Vice Chair: Elliot Bell-Krasner and Martha Harris

Secretary: Nobody yet. It was suggested that a new or newer member be Secretary.

The nominating committee will send out questionnaires to interested candidates. The election will be done by ballot vote.

OHA UPDATES

Lance thanked those who were able to attend the Reeder House (517 Prince Street) ceremony on short notice. Current local and state elected officials were in attendance. There will be a happy hour next Thursday night from 5-7 p.m. at the Reeder House. You can register to attend online via www.historicalexandria.org.

There is no update on the Northern Virginia Urban League. Lance left a message with Laverne Chapman and is awaiting her response. Fort Ward plan for how the City will promote the use of the park – exhibits, programming. Fort Ward interpretive planning committee will resume meeting once a month. The archaeology project at Fort Ward will be completed within the next week. Then archaeology surveys will only be done at the park on an as needed basis.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS & CONCERNS

The floor was opened to member announcements/concerns.

The Chairman asked the representative of the Masonic Temple if he could secure it for a tour and as the location for the June 2017 HARC meeting.

On June 25, 2017 the Carlyle House will hold an “espionage tea” event.

Jennifer, who represents the Archives & Records informed the group that the department is looking into utilizing an intern program.

Linda Lovell emphasized the importance for new members to view the OHA’s website and to sign up for OHA emails news alerts.

Martha Harris expressed her concern for the waterfront park and would like to know if there will be a historic feature(s) for this site and if so, is interested in how it will be implemented.

Jolande Goldberg urged members to peruse the Torpedo Factory website. It has lots of information on it.

Danny Smith informed the group that the funding resources strategy committee created a document summarizing the desired goals for finding alternative sources of funding for historical sites. He provided members with a copy of the document. The document has been incorporated as an attachment to these minutes.

Mike Commisso informed the group that the Alley subgroup will organize a night where they do a presentation for interested citizens to learn about the City’s historic alleys.

Indy McCall said FOHA is having a social this Thursday, May 18th from 5-7 p.m. at Light Horse Harry’s.

NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m., June 20, 2017. Location will either be at Lloyd House or the Masonic Temple. Lance or Bill will confirm the meeting location with members at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy E. Tingen, Recording Secretary, HARC
J. Lance Mallamo, Director, OHA