

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 16, 2019

PRESENT:

John Dumsick
Shawn Eyer
Martha Harris
Richard Klingenmaier
Laura Lieberman

Linda Lovell
Paul Mazzuca
Elizabeth McCall
Deborah Osborne
Gail Rothrock

Danny Smith
Stephen Stuart
Monica St. Dennis
Severiano Ortiz

EXCUSED:

Jolande Goldberg

ABSENT:

Bill Hendrickson
Michael Hobbs

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Susan Hellman, BAR
Dana Wedeles, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities
Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Smith at 7:04 p.m. at Lloyd House.

Approval of Minutes for June 18, 2019 Meeting

On a motion by, Stephen Stuart seconded by Richard Klingenmaier, HARC voted to approve the minutes from the June 18, 2019 meeting.

Chairs Update

HARC Elections Nominating Committee – Laura Lieberman and Linda Lovell

Need people to run. Positions include: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Co-chairs are permitted. The Nominating Committee cannot run for office.

Co-chair Smith announced Maddy McCoy’s term has expired; earliest she can reapply is in September. A possible short-term solution is to postpone HARC elections until October, allowing McCoy to run for Vice Chair or Chair.

On a motion by Stephen Stuart seconded by Severiano Ortiz, HARC voted to extend terms of current officers until elections are held in October, 2019.

At Martha Harris’s suggestions, Co-chairs Smith and McCall will distribute a brief survey via email to HARC members asking for their input on the improvement of HARC. Co-chair McCall stressed feedback on the following: effective advocacy, being ahead of city’s agenda, and critical matters on the horizon.

Open Space Policy Presentation – Dana Wedeles

The project aims to implement the Environmental Action Plan and Open Space Master Plan goal to increase the publicly accessible open space quantity and improve its environmental quality, management, and social benefits.

An Open Space Steering Committee will represent external stakeholders to provide policy guidance. The Steering Committee will be City Council approved and City Manager appointed. The City Manager will appoint the Chair. The Steering Committee will be comprised of seven members, including:

- One at-large member
- Historic Alexandria Resources Commission
- Beautification Commission Member or designee
- Environmental Policy Commission Member or designee
- Planning Commission Member or designee
- Park and Recreation Commission Member or designee
- Northern Virginia Conservation Trust Alexandria Board Member

Action items will include re-assessment of the methodology, policies, and tools for evaluating future publicly accessible open space sites, whether through acquisition, easements, or development. Through this process, the work group will also evaluate the potential to increase the current open space ration of 7.3 acres per 1,000 people to 7.5 acres per 1,000 people.

Charge of Work:

1. Update the definition of “publicly accessible open space.”
2. Evaluate methods of pursuing new publicly accessible open space.
3. Building on the work of the “Open Space in New Development” discussion, provide guidance for new development’s contribution to publicly accessible open space where it is not already guided by the small area plan, particularly to clarify:
 - a. When new development is contributing to off-site publicly accessible open space;
 - b. What they are contributing toward and;
 - c. How a reasonable contribution from new development will be determined.

Scope of Work/Summary was distributed to HARC members. Lifespan of Steering Committee is eighteen months. Would like HARC to review, provide comments, and designate a representative by July 30th. Members can send feedback individually to Wedeles. In August, staff will formalize the scope of work based on feedback provided.

Dana Wedeles Email: dana.wedeles@alexandriava.gov

Chairs Update (cont.)

Hugo Black House - Gail Rothrock

HAF filed a lawsuit about a month ago. A series of preliminary motions will be filed by July 18th. Further actions not until September.

Ross Dress for Less – Keith Moore

Currently working with architect. Was told the entire building will be deconstructed.

Linda Lovell brought up the issue that Ross’s employees may not have been informed about the store closing.

Co-chair Smith mentioned getting in contact with the architect.

Board of Architectural Review Update – Susan Hellman

Small Cells –

Replace existing wood poles; pole height will not increase the existing height by more than ten feet and will not exceed fifty feet without a special use permit. Wireless facility will be shrouded, enclosing everything, and painted to match the existing pole.

Ross Dress for Less –

No solid plans yet. Met with architect, proposing setbacks for upper levels to reduce presence. Confirmed, building will not be completely deconstructed.

619 South Lee –

Circuit Court appeal; motion to dismiss on file.

Parking Kiosks –

Only installed on blocks where residents petition to have one. For South Pitt Street by St. Paul's, Al Cox chose a location at the north edge of Norton Hall on the north side of the tree. Purposely placed in this location for photographic purposes.

Parking Lots –

Drawings for parking lots behind Misha's and VA Tech will probably be available in four months. Parking lot behind Misha's will be four stories with a setback at three; retail on first floor below parking. Parking lot behind school will be 50 feet; will be hidden by surrounding buildings. The historic townhouses on Patrick Street will be retained. Al Cox feels comfortable with designs so far.

Campagna Center –

Sale of the Campagna Center site has been terminated. Campagna Center will therefore remain in place and cancel their planned relocation to the west end.

Potomac Yard Metro Project –

Scale was approved. Height and architectural character with a long list of details and materials will be restudied.

10 Duke Street –

Unanimously approved on July 10, 2019. Currently working on the height issue for the roof monitor.

Added Item on behalf of Maddy McCoy:

Virginia Time Travel – "Tilled by Freeman" featuring Susan Hellman and Maddy McCoy. Video available on YouTube. Gretchen Bulova will distribute link to HARC.

City Hall Survey

Co-chair Smith asked for feedback regarding the City Hall public survey.

Laura Lieberman –

City Hall is currently accessible by bus and various modes of public transportation. Moving government services elsewhere may impact low income individuals who find the current location convenient.

Martha Harris –

Not well presented. Should have provided more background (history), a clearer purpose, and overall more context. Also, not enough resources to take on another historic site/museum.

Co-chair McCall –

Agrees with Harris concerning the content of the survey and the impact on OHA. Posed the question whether HARC should officially address the issue and to whom.

John Dumsick –

In the past, worked on a feasibility study of the building. Requires an extensive amount of work including structural repair and mechanical upgrades. Parking garage will also need to be worked on if any changes are made to the building. Believes that part of the first floor should be dedicated to history. A mixed use of the property is most practical. Dumsick will share his copy of the report with Gretchen Bulova.

Gretchen Bulova –

City Hall Visioning Study Community Meeting on July 31 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sister Cities Room. Will discuss the City Hall Visioning Study and renovation planning. An opportunity for City residents to provide ideas and comments regarding the ideal occupancy and uses of City Hall for the future.

Co-chair Smith –

Will add feedback from the City Hall Visioning Study Meeting to the August agenda.

Freedom House Museum Update – Gretchen Bulova

Both The Lyceum and Freedom House suffered significant water damage from last Monday's flash flooding. Both sites are in the process of water and mold remediation. Freedom House was closed last weekend and will continue to be closed this upcoming weekend.

Equal Justice Initiative

Steering Committee Meeting on July 17th at the Black History Museum. Maddy McCoy will still be able to attend the meeting as the selected representative. Date will be selected for the community meeting in September.

Open Space Policy Plan (cont.)

Co-chair McCall will volunteer as a placeholder for the Steering Committee for the time being. She encourages other HARC members to consider volunteering as the representative.

OHA Report- Gretchen Bulova

- City Council approved a new FTE for OHA with the FY20 budget. A Director of Administrative Services will soon be advertised.
- Good news from Friendship Firehouse! Funds have been raised to send the 1853 Prettyman Hose Reel out for conservation. We are still working with bids, but we hope to send the piece off this fall with a farewell reception.
- The first information meeting on the Equal Justice Initiative will be held in September at the Durant Center. The exact date/time will be decided this week by the Steering Committee. Over the summer, OHA staff will develop more content for the OHA website, create an informational rack card to distribute at public venues throughout the city, and fill out the formal EJI application to participate in the initiative.
- Staff are working on the CIP request for the FY21 budget. These include projects related to the excavated ships, the African American interpretive plan implementation at Fort Ward, and the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House.
- Staff are working on the program for the 5th anniversary of Freedmen's Cemetery. The weekend's events (September 13 and 14) will include a Friday night lecture by Char McCargo Bah, and a full program on Saturday that will range from a wreath laying, to a luncheon/lecture, to a bus tour of Alexandria's African American sites, to an evening

Vigil. We anticipate more than 100 descendants will participate in the weekend events. In addition, two granite markers are being installed in the sidewalk in front of the cemetery to draw attention to burials outside the cemetery gates.

- As of July 1, the George Washington Celebration Committee is under OHA. It had formally been administered by the Department of Recreation.
- Visitation was up over 20,000 visitors this year, with increases at the Apothecary and Fort Ward

Great summer activities include:

July 21 - Tours with Young Historians at Gadsby's Tavern Museum (Most Sundays)

July 27 – Summer of Ships activities with Alexandria Archaeology

July 28 – Harry Potter Tours at the Apothecary Museum

Aug 3 – Friendship Firehouse Festival, Tavern Day at Gadsby's, Adult Harry Potter at Apothecary

Aug 4 - Tours with Young Historians at Gadsby's Tavern Museum

Aug 9 – After Work Concert at Lloyd House

Aug 10 – Summer of Ships activities with Alexandria Archaeology

HARC Committee Reports

OHA & Planning Support – Nothing to report.

Advocacy & Preservation – Nothing to report.

Finance – Nothing to report.

Commissioner Updates

Laura Lieberman – Lee Fendall House

- Lee Fendall House and Carlyle House are still hosting Trivia Nights.
- Annual fundraiser on September 14. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available via website.

Linda Lovell – Mortar and Pestle Society

- Apothecary floor mats are scheduled to be installed on July 24, 25, and 26. Museum will be closed.

Elizabeth McCall – Archaeology Commission

- HAF grant received for a backdrop to the Indigo ship outline model.

Danny Smith – Business Representative

- George Washington's Alexandria Tour will be held Saturday, July 20 at 10 a.m.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA Staff to the Commission