

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 15, 2021

PRESENT:

Carol Black
Rosemarie Esber
Shawn Eyer
Martha Harris
Michael Hobbs
Sam Hoffman

Richard Klingenmaier
Laura Lieberman
Paul Mazzuca
Martha Raymond
Danny Smith

Tom Soule
Monica St. Dennis
Steve Stuart
Stetson Tinkham
Ivy Whitlach

EXCUSED:

Linda Lovell
Deborah Osborne
Gail Rothrock

ABSENT:

Christopher Brownlowe
Andrea Tracey

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Steve Halperson
Nina Tisara

CITY STAFF:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Bill Conkey, BAR
Kris Lloyd, OHA
Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA

CALL TO ORDER:

The virtual meeting was called to order by Co-chair Smith at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom Webinar.

Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice

Tonight's virtual meeting via Zoom is being recorded.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the June 15, 2021 meeting of the Historic Alexandria Resource Commission is being held electronically pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), the Continuity of Government ordinance adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2020 or Sections 4-0.00(g) in HB29 and HB30 to undertake essential business. All of the members of the Commission and City staff are participating from remote locations through Zoom. This meeting is being held electronically, as a determination has been made that it is not safe enough to be held in person at the Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA.

Electronic access is provided. The meeting can be accessed by the public through the link or phone number posted on the City calendar. Public comment WILL be received at the meeting by stating name and comment. Questions can be submitted to the committee through the Q&A feature on Zoom. This meeting will be recorded and posted on the alexandriava.gov/historic webpage. Zoom is compatible with assistive technologies such as screen readers and keyboard shortcuts.

Approval of Minutes for May 18, 2021

On a motion by, Paul Mazzuca seconded by Steve Stuart, HARC voted to approve the minutes from the May 18, 2021 meeting.

Chairs Update

- Co-chair Smith will send a get-well card to Gail Rothrock on behalf of HARC
- New Member, Tom Soule, representing Planning District 3
- In person meetings will resume in July at Lloyd House – limited opportunity for virtual attendance.

New Business

Deaccessioning Presentation (Gretchen Bulova & Kris Lloyd)

Due to technical difficulties Gretchen Bulova presented on behalf of Kris Lloyd.

Deaccessioning: Formally removing an object or several objects from a museum collection.

OHA Process: 1) Recommendation from HARC; 2) City Council approval. City Council makes final decision on objects that are accepted/removed from the museum's collection.

Opinion Regarding Living Legends Deaccessioning

- Received a request from Living Legends Organization, a 501(c)(3), to have 42 photographic portraits (of 120) in the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum collection be deaccessioned by transfer and returned to the Living Legends organization.
- The museum's holdings consist of the Legend's annual inductees from 2007 to 2018. These portraits were formally donated to the collection in 2015, 2017, and 2019.
- Living Legends proposes to give the portraits to the subjects photographed and/or family members who have requested them. In exchange, Living Legends will provide OHA with a complete digital collection of all portraits, and will continue to do so as future Legends are selected.
- OHA's Collections Advisory Committee would like HARC to submit a written opinion to the City Council as to whether the Living Legends organization's request should be approved and the entire collection (120 portraits) be transferred to the Living Legends organization in exchange for digital images.
- OHA plans to request this item for the September City Council docket. HARC would need to provide an opinion to City Council, if they chose, as part of the docket.
- In the future, if there is an exhibition OHA would make prints of the digital portraits.

Nina Tisara's Statement:

- Founder of Living Legends Organization - attended the meeting as a guest.
- Living Legends (incorporated in 2007) was intended to be an art history project.
- Concerned about the quality of the prints if digital copies are used for future exhibitions.
- No longer on the board, but as founder wants the collection to stay together under OHA's care.

Open Discussion:

- The Living Legends Organization feels it is important to give the portraits back to living legends themselves and/or their families. The 40 requested were promised to be returned.
- HARC members did not feel comfortable voting on the matter. They requested that Bulova invite the chairman of the Living Legends board to speak at the next HARC meeting.
- It costs approximately \$350 to print one portrait.
- Kris Lloyd will follow-up and provide the costs of printing photographs for an exhibit.
- The portrait donations were made with a standard Deed of Gift (gave up copyright).

Creating By-laws

- Co-chair Smith announced that Sam Hoffman is the official Chair of the Ad hoc By-Laws Committee.
- Steve Stuart, Michael Hobbs, and Linda Lovell have expressed interest in joining the committee.

Old Business

Justice Black House Update

- The Supreme Court of Virginia ruled that the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) does not have standing. HAF is not directly harmed by VDHR's decision.
- Martha Raymond spoke on behalf of Gail Rothrock stating that the word "aggrieved" should be taken out of the ordinance.
- Will wait to discuss further until Gail Rothrock returns.

Elks Lodge Update (Carol Black)

- T&ES, Code Enforcement, and Planning & Zoning have been a tremendous help:
 - Helped to remove the encroaching fence
 - Measured the alley
 - Will begin to repair the damaged curb, which will prevent water flow into the basement.
- Should hold a meeting at Elks Lodge to see the improvements – possibly in September. Need to discuss next steps and how HARC can serve as an advisory role.

GenOn Power Plant Update (Sam Hoffman)

- Community tours held (couple weeks ago) – shared preliminary plans.
- HARC should pay attention to the following issues:
 - Open Space – Will expand two acres of open space from Mount Vernon trail to the waterfront.
 - Density on Site - 19 acre site and 60% developable. Most of the building heights will be in the 10+ story range. How will the development fit in with the Old Town Small Area Plan.

River Farm Update (Danny Smith)

- American Horticultural Society (AHS) and Northern Virginia Parks Authority are having ongoing discussion.
- The AHS board is split between selling the property and holding on to it.
- There is optimism that River Farm will be preserved as a public property.

Standing Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee – Martha Raymond, Co-Chair

- Meetings will be held every first Tuesday of the month at 10am, in person. Bulova will work on getting draft notes from previous HARC meetings to committee prior to their meeting.
- Members include: Michael Hobbs, Andrea Tracey, Gail Rothrock, Sam Hoffman, and Martha Raymond
- Discussed follow-up letters at last meeting:
 - Torpedo Factory – HARC as stakeholder. Bulova contacted Diane Ruggerio and Emily Baker from City Manager’s office expressing HARC’s interest in being represented on the stakeholder’s group. Will follow-up.
 - Heritage Project – to BAR regarding their final concept review.
 - Justice Black House – Gail Rothrock’s letter
- Determined broad themes to study that affect historic preservation:
 - Zoning
 - Community consultation
 - Development models and effects on open space.

OHA Support Committee – Steve Stuart, Chair

Currently updating orientation manual.

Ad Hoc, HARC Composition – Richard Klingenmaier, Chair

- Met on June 3rd for 2nd meeting to further refine the sub committee’s recommendation for possible changes in membership composition.
- Proposed changes include:
 - Reduction in current membership
 - Redefining scope and purpose of current representation in order to improve the efficiency in the deliberative functions of HARC.

- Broaden the current membership in regards to overall cultural, social, and religious history of Alexandria. Broaden representation particularly in religious representation.
- Next meeting in a couple weeks, prior to July HARC meeting.
- Will provide a more concrete recommendation by next July HARC meeting.

Ad Hoc, Nominating Committee – Laura Lieberman, Chair

- Presented Slate:
 - Chair - Danny Smith
 - Vice chair - Linda Lovell
 - Secretary - Steve Stuart

On a motion by Laura Lieberman seconded by Carol Black, HARC voted by acclamation to accept the presented slate.

Board of Architectural Review Update – Bill Conkey

101 Duke Street

- Went to BAR for concept review. Will now go to Planning Commission and City Council, then back to BAR for Certificate of Appropriateness.

10 Duke Street

- Project is on hold. Currently trying to talk with owner.

Presentation to HARC from Planning and Zoning Development Staff

- Hopefully by September meeting.
- An attempt at balancing city priorities.
- The Planning & Zoning Development staff will first explain the development process and then explain where input from HARC can be useful.
- Will discuss how HARC can fit into the process.
- Will discuss how to better carry out historic preservation in context with all other priorities of the city.

1000 Queen Street

- Almost finished removing painted masonry

Legal Training Provided by Attorney's Office

- Will take place at next BAR meeting. Occurs approximately once a year.

OHA Report – Gretchen Bulova

- Great grant news last week: Institute of Museum and Library Services grant to digitize 4 collections at the Alexandria Black History Museum, Historic Alexandria Foundation grant to create a more accurate model of the slave pen at Freedom House, HAF grant for conservation of the Friendship Firehouse Museum pumper. Waiting to hear about the Save America's Treasures grant for Freedom House.
- Wayfinding signs update
 - 506 N. Overlook Site – starting the research and writing
 - 100th Anniversary of Parker Gray – 2 signs should be installed shortly

- Dedication of Suffragist Marker on August 18
- VDHR has created a state marker about the restored government of Virginia in Alexandria in 1863 (first at the City Hotel and then at 415 Prince Street), will be located at City Hall
- Pending: Duke Street at the Waterfront, Murray-Dick-Fawcett House, updating the timeline at the Torpedo Factory Walk way
- Historic Preservation Month Programming available on website. Held a number of programs that may be of interest to you, including a panel on equity in preservation.
- Juneteenth Programming includes:
 - *Making Reconstruction Count: The Era of Reconstruction*
Friday, June 18, 2021
11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Free Webinar on Zoom Register through Virginia Humanities
 Virginia Africana, Virginia Humanities and the Alexandria Black History Museum present a webinar with Ed Ayers and Annie Evans. This is the third webinar in the Virginia Africana series called Amplifying the Silences in African History. The era of Reconstruction is hard to teach, in part because it’s complicated and in part because it is habitually portrayed as a failure. Seeing the decade from the perspective of the four million Americans who made themselves free, however, opens exciting new possibilities for teaching and engagement. An array of tools from New American History—Bunk, Back Story, Seizing Freedom, Learning Resources, and Southern Journey—can help do that.
 - *Exploring the Alexandria African American Trail (AAAHT)*
Saturday, June 19, 2021
11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Free Webinar on Zoom
 The African American Waterfront Heritage Trail Committee is made up of volunteer community members and historians and is supported by staff from the Alexandria Black History Museum and Alexandria Archaeology.

A Special Award will be given by the Alexandria Historical Society to the members of the African American Heritage Trail Committee on Saturday, June 19 as part of the City’s Juneteenth Celebrations for their work on the new African American Waterfront Heritage Trail.

- *Our People: A Juneteenth Story*
Washington Revels Jubilee Voices
Saturday, June 19, 2021
2 – 3 p.m. Free Concert on Zoom

The Washington Revels Jubilee Voices ensemble is committed to the preservation of African American history and traditions — presenting songs and stories of struggle and perseverance, trials, and triumphs, as expressed through a cappella

music, drama, and dance. This concert will feature WRJV singing at sites important to Alexandria's African American history, blending history with performance. Established in 2010, the group now performs regularly throughout the Washington D.C. area, singing, sharing, and learning the stories of the people in those communities.

- Plus, we will be illuminating City Hall Friday through Sunday in honor of Juneteenth.
- Black Lives Remembered and Pandemic Collecting
 - Encourage you to visit the website and take a look at the online exhibits created by OHA staff.
- Freedom House Museum
 - Historic Structures Report is due to staff by June 30.
 - Next phase will be restoration design. Contract will go to bid this fall.
 - Hoping to open this fall with 3 new exhibits throughout the building.
- When we resume in-person meetings, Gretchen would like to have presentations by OHA staff on individual projects and sites. Perhaps we could start meeting at different sites and include a pre-meeting tour.

Commissioner Updates

Richard Klingenmaeir – Alexandria Association

Will hopefully resume meetings in October.

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House

- 1980s Trivia Night rescheduled.
- Trivia Night next week
- Special Tour – lives of free and enslaved African Americans
- Look at Calendar of Events for more events and special tours

Linda Lovell – Mortar & Pestle Society

Annual meeting will be held on July 22nd at 8pm at The Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum. Hybrid meeting – in person and virtual.

Monica St. Dennis – Public Records Advisory Commission

Several vacancies

Ivy Whitlach – Alexandria Archaeological Commission

- Received African American Civil Rights Network Award for Contrabands & Freedmen Cemetery Memorial. Will not be able to hold a celebratory event as expected. Trying to determine how to appropriately celebrate.
- Friends of Archaeology – Archaeology After Dark event on June 24th. Ben Skolnik will give a talk on the log book of the Schooner enterprise. Register online.
- Torpedo Factory event on July 9th as part of EJI remembrance – Archaeology students from VA Tech have been involved in a project to create a design for the two pillars in memory of Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Apasrin Suvanasai, OHA staff to the commission