

**Minutes
City of Alexandria, Virginia
WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting – Virtual
Tuesday, September 21, 2021
7:30 a.m.**

Commission Members

Present:

Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
Eldon Boes, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC)
Robert Cvejanovich, Old Town Civic Association (OTCA)
Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Owners
Beth Gross, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)
Charlotte Hall, VisitAlexandria
Judy Heiser, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Trae Lamond, Representative, Old Town Business and Professional Association
(OTBPA)
Nathan (Nate) Macek, Alexandria Planning Commission, and Vice-Chair, Waterfront
Commission
Lebaron Reid, Commissioner At-Large
Louise Roseman, Citizen, Park Planning District I
Barbara Saperstone, Citizen, east of Washington St. and south of King St.
Kathy Seifert, Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Scott Shaw, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Stephen Thayer, Citizen, east of Washington St. and north of King St. and Chair,
Waterfront Commission
Christa Watters, Citizen, east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.
Patricia Webb, Citizen, Park Planning District II
Robert Weinhagen, Historic Alexandria Foundation

Excused

Mohamed E. "Mo" Seifeldin, Member, Alexandria City Council

Vacancies

Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)
Citizen, Park Planning District III

City Staff

Alex Block, Principal Planner, Mobility Services, T&ES.
Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison, and Acting Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural
Activities (RPCA)
Victoria Caudullo, Dockless Mobility Program Manager, Transportation and
Environmental Services (T&ES)
Mike Durham, Assistant Dockmaster
Jeffrey Duval, Deputy Director for Operations, T&ES
Ann Horowitz, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)
Matthew Landes, Division Chief, Department of Project Implementation (DPI)

Catherine Miliaris, Principal Planner, P&Z
Katy North, Division Chief, Mobility Services, T&ES
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs (RPCA)
Terry Suehr, Director, Department of Project Implementation (DPI)

Guests

Brian Buzzell	Yvonne Callahan
Bert Ely	Stuart Fox
E. Mancias	Alyssa Miller
Carole Sieling	Patricia Washington
Ivy Whitlach	

Call to Order – Stephen Thayer, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Discussion Items for Action and Information

ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF JUNE 15, 2021 MINUTES

Hall moved and Macek seconded that the June 15, 2021 minutes be approved. Passed by unanimous voice vote.

ITEM 2 DOCKLESS MOBILITY UPDATE - Victoria Caudullo, Dockless Mobility Program Manager, T&ES

Presentation is posted to:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/Docklessv221Sep2021.pdf>

Caudullo reviewed actions since June 2021, her previous Commission briefing on the Dockless Mobility Pilot Program. Staff will recommend to Council in November that they renew the scooter pilot program as a permanent program and that scooter companies' licenses be renewed annually. Once the program becomes permanent any additional changes that are needed would be made during the annual license renewal process. The Ad Hoc Scooter Task Force approved the draft staff recommendation in August.

Details of the staff recommendation are found at the link posted at the start of this section.

Commission discussion - highlights

- ***Safety/sidewalk pedestrian safety and ADA accessibility*** Scooters parked on sidewalks are problems for all pedestrians and violate ADA accessibility requirements. How will the City enforce safety requirements when scooters are used or parked in inappropriate locations? A: The company is responsible for picking up or relocating devices and has three (3) hours to remove a scooter after receiving a complaint.
- ***Complaint process*** – All scooters should, but do not, clearly post where and how to report a violation, e.g. if a scooter is left on a sidewalk or is otherwise blocking access. A: The company phone number should be prominently displayed on each scooter. If a company doesn't respond promptly to a complaint, the City should be called via 311.
- ***Traffic safety/City-company coordination*** - The City should coordinate with scooter companies to specify clear safety-related actions companies must take. For example, all scooter companies

could be required to post City traffic regulations on each company's scooters. A: Staff will be setting specific requirements for scooter companies to follow.

- **Traffic safety/ City enforcement** – Better enforcement is needed. For example, scooters and bicycles regularly run the Duke/S. Union stop sign.
- **Traffic safety/ data** – Does the City track the number of accidents involving scooters? A: Yes. T&ES coordinates with APD on scooter-related crashes reported to APD.
- **Parking violations/City enforcement** - Do City staff monitor improperly parked scooters and report them to companies? A: No. Staff hopes to hire seasonal monitors along King Street and in the Waterfront area for the busy months.
- **Parking** - Can scooter parking be banned from the sidewalk on the 100 block of S. Union between Virtue and Starbucks near Wales Alley? A: T&ES will consider options. Scooters can be parked on City sidewalks except for the Waterfront and the 100 block of King Street as a pedestrian only zone.
- **Usage Data** –How many automobile trips are being replaced by scooter trips? A: The City has current data on scooter ridership, but not on which trips replace car trips. **Follow-Up:** Staff will send current data on scooter ridership to the Commission.

Public Comment

- **Callahan** emphasized the importance of scooter regulations being effectively enforced and that will require more than a \$50 ticket, the maximum civil fine currently allowed by state law. Callahan, a member of the Ad Hoc Scooter Task Force, noted the Task Force recommended the City Attorney work to amend the \$50 limit for civil fines included in the state law authorizing scooters.

Next Steps The staff recommendation will be submitted to Council in November 2021.

Motion: Baum moved and Macek seconded that the Commission authorize the Chair and Jack Browand to prepare and submit to Council a letter stating that the Commission supports the staff recommendation for proposed changes to the Dockless Mobility Program with the caveat that a requirement be added that company phone numbers must be prominently displayed on each scooter. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ITEM 3: 100 BLOCK OF KING STREET UPDATE/ BUSINESS RECOVERY PROGRAMS –

Ann Horowitz, Principal Planner, P&Z, Katye North, Division Chief, Mobility Services, T&ES, Alex Block, Principal Planner, Mobility Services, T&ES

Details are in the presentation posted to:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WaterfrontcommissionKing21sep21.pdf>

Business recovery programs – Horowitz explained that when Council approved closing the 100 block of King Street to vehicles at the outset of the pandemic emergency it was one of a package of temporary emergency programs designed to support businesses and let people safely access local businesses and services. That authorization was scheduled to expire on January 1, 2022. At its September 18 meeting Council extended the temporary authorization to April 1, 2022.

Permanent authorization – The Planning Commission will consider on October 5 and Council on October 16 a staff recommendation to make all the temporary business recovery programs, including closing the 100 block of King Street to vehicles, permanent.

Closure of 100 block of King Street

Katye North reviewed the block’s planned closure, including photographs. Details are found at the presentation link at the start of this section.

Long-term design decisions for the permanent closure will be made later. Short-term street improvements will be paid for by some of the City’s funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Barricades shutting the street to vehicles will be improved. Design planning for the closure will be coordinated with APD and AFD to ensure emergency access to the block. Several years of street design work would be needed for long-term changes and funding for those changes would be in the regular budget process.

Commission discussion - highlights

- **Safety** – Effective barricades are needed as soon as possible to keep vehicles from entering the pedestrian area while ensuring access for emergency vehicles.
- **Impact on businesses** – How will the closure affect truck loading/unloading on streets near King Street, e.g. S. Union Street? A: The impact on neighboring streets will be followed. P&Z has not received complaints from businesses about problems with their deliveries...
- **Prince Street cobblestones** - Concern about the closure’s impact on the 100 block of Prince Street’s cobblestones, noting that large trucks are now using Prince Street and there has been physical damage to the cobblestones. Better enforcement of “no trucks” is needed for the street.
- **Traffic** - Measures to direct traffic away from King Street should be explored.
- **Design** - Opinions were mixed as to whether businesses should be allowed to curate the design of their street spaces and the extent to which the block’s permanent closure should be a streetscape that fits with the Waterfront Plan’s landscape design.

Public Comments:

- **Whitlatch** – Damage to Captain’s Row/100 block of Prince Street cobblestones from traffic diverted from King Street may soon be irreversible. A: Staff has tracked traffic volume on each affected street before, during and after the pandemic and data has shown traffic to be below pre-pandemic levels.

Motion – Macek moved and Hall seconded that the Waterfront Commission endorse the Business Economic Recovery recommendation as proposed by staff with the addition of a Commission recommendation to add a barricade at the end of the closed 100 block of King Street to provide for the safety and security of pedestrians on the block and with the understanding that the Commission’s letter to Council conveying this action include Commissioners’ rationale for the security barrier as discussed at the meeting. **Vote:** The motion passed by voice vote with one no vote and one abstention.

ITEM 4 **FY 2022 COMMISSION MEETINGS - Stephen Thayer, Chair & Jack Browand, Staff Liaison**

The Chair reported that when the Commission resumes in-person meetings a room larger than the Commission's pre-COVID City Hall meeting room will be needed to ensure COVID-safe participation for the 22-member Commission, staff and other participants. The Chair and Browand will be reviewing possible alternative locations.

These in-person meetings would not be hybrid meetings, providing for both in-person and Zoom participation, but electronic access will be provided that is consistent with the Commission's electronic participation policy.

City Updates

PUBLIC SAFETY – Jack Browand, RPCA

Browand asked Commissioners to send any concerns they may have directly to Captain Bridgeman, APD. Thayer reported concerns about the lack of police presence on the 100 blocks of Union Street and King Street and Waterfront Park on weekends.

COMMUNITY UPDATES – Jack Browand, RPCA

No significant news.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT – Catherine Miliaris, P&Z

- **220 S. Union Street/Indigo Hotel** - Council has approved the Indigo Hotel's request for a DSUP amendment that lets the hotel make up to 45 spaces in its parking garage available for public parking.
- **101 Duke Street/Solo Parking Garage** – City Council has approved a DSUP for six townhouses to replace the Solo Parking Garage at 101 Duke Street.

FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT - Matt Landes, DPI

- **Flood Mitigation Committee** – The next meeting is October 4, 5-6:30 pm. Staff will also be briefing the Park and Recreation Committee on September 23 at 7 pm at Charles Houston Recreation Center. The meeting is in-person only.
- **Current field work** - Staff is working towards survey work and conducting geotechnical investigations in the Waterfront core area and in Founders Park. This field work is being done to collect data that will be used to calculate cost benefit analyses for the various flood mitigation options. It does not mean any decisions have been made on which options to pursue.

Commission Reports / Announcements

- **FY2023 budget recommendations** - Thayer reported that, in response to the City Manager's request that Commission recommendations for the FY 2023 budget and CIP be received by November 5, Watters and Macek will draft a Commission letter for consideration at the October meeting. Commissioners were invited to submit their recommendations on Waterfront-related budget priorities directly to Watters and/or Macek for inclusion in the draft letter they are preparing.
- **Vacancies** – The Park Planning III district representative, the area west of Quaker Lane, is vacant due to a resignation.

Public Comments - None.

October 2021 Potential Discussion Topics / Items of Information

- Discussion of the Commission's FY2023 budget recommendation was scheduled
- A Torpedo Factory update was suggested.

Next Meeting: October 19, 2021 – Virtual/in-person TBD

Adjournment – At 9:40 a.m. Macek moved and Cvejanovich seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.