

City of Alexandria, Virginia

Alexandria Beautification Commission

P.O. Box 178

Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 11, 2019

7:30 PM

Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron Street

Attendees: Kathryn Chiasson (Chair), Joseph Crowell, Donald Kent, Geoff Montross, Eleanor Quigley, Denise Tennant (Vice Chair) Emily Freeland, Richard Dorrier

Excused Absence:

Unexcused Absences: Cathleen Curtin, Kevin Dunne, Monica Murphy, Mellenie Runion, Christina Mazurkevich,

City Staff: Oscar Mendoza,

Community Members:

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM.

1. **Approval of June 13, 2019, Meeting Minutes** – A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Crowell and seconded by Mr. Montross. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes.
2. **Membership Updates** – Emily Freeland was introduced to the Commission.
3. **Commission Business**

A. FOIA conversation (Following up on last month' presentation)

- a. **Mr. Mendoza summarized:** Every subcommittee meeting needs to have minutes and an agenda. A short title will be okay along with a resolution of the meeting. It doesn't have to be detailed but we need to keep such records.
 - i. **Example: Title, subject, and conclusion.** Again, it doesn't have to be comprehensive. Please also capture any votes.
 - ii. Mr. Mendoza will send the subcommittee minutes to the Clerk. In 2-3 days, it will be posted.
 - iii. Ms. Chiasson suggested designating one person on each subcommittee to be the chair to take the minutes and then to send the meeting minutes to Mr. Mendoza. That same individual or someone else would also be

responsible for scheduling, sending a reminder via e-mail, and sending an agenda along with the minutes to Mr. Mendoza. Please also copy Ms. Chiasson in the e-mail. The other option is to have each subcommittee minutes be an addendum to the commission meeting minutes. At the commission meeting, the subcommittee can approve the minutes.

The Commission suggested the following people to be the Chair of each subcommittee:

1. **Award** - Kathryn Chiasson
2. **Outreach** – Kathryn Chiasson
3. **Sustainable Landscaping** - Monica Murphy
4. **Vacant Lots** – Denise Tennant

**** Please let Mr. Mendoza know if a meeting is going to be canceled so he can inform the Durant Center.**

Action item: Request an organization chart of subcommittees

4. Subcommittee Updates

A. Awards:

- a. Hopefully the subcommittee will have the full list of winners by July 24th. They get posted after the award ceremony.
- b. Mr. Crowell: It would be beneficial for the person who nominated the location to provide input on narrative that will be read at the ceremony.
- c. Ms. Frieland: Once the winner is informed, can that individual be informed so they can add additional information to the speech? Ms. Tennant suggested we add a generic text that asks them to say anything nice about their house but not promise that it will be added (e.g. two lines). It's best to keep it simple. Mr. Crowell also suggested that the Commission add those pictures in Instagram.

B. Outreach

- a. Mr. Crowell: Please post two posts in the following month. Use the winners as ongoing Instagram posts throughout the year.
- b. Facebook posts should be more education compared to Instagram post which should be more celebratory. Please text or e-mail Ms. Chiasson and remember to send her the largest picture, if sharing pictures.
- c. City Council has voted to re-open the Open Space Steering Committee. They would like additional people to serve on it to help review publicly open space. They are in the beginning stages.

C. Sustainable Landscaping

- a. Mr. Crowell spoke with the Chief Surveyor. The first idea is moving up the medians up to Quaker Lane, but they might belong to Arlington County. What does it take to plant everything? Where is the county line? If it's not necessary to determine the median, then, perhaps we can make it more communal. The subcommittee also looked at major entrances. There are

several big roads near Van Dorn, not necessarily at the entrances but at the closest median, which has high visibility.

- b. Mr. Dorrier: Down Kings St. has been delayed because it has been scheduled for storm water management. Contacted Bob Williams to replace the two trees. City has Scheduled to plant the trees for Sept. 15th. Ms. Quigley says plant in October.
- c. Ms. Quigley: Arlington and Alexandria tree stewards. We would need Arlington environmental folks to agree to it. We would be adding perennials and shrubs.

D. Vacant Lots

- a. Finished fundraising and got full matching funds from the City, at least \$4,500. The subcommittee is getting the plant list together to get bids on and see how far that money goes and to see if the subcommittee needs to do more fundraisings.
- b. Subcommittee went to the the City council's naming committee. The subcommittee ruled the silly ones out and put 6 names back to the community to vote. The proposed name of the park is Kettle Park, based on historic community cooking events, and is supported by the community survey. It still needs to go to the full City Council to vote
- c. **Next Project** – The subcommittee is still figuring out what will be their next project will be and is asking others for suggestions.
 - i. Ms. Quigley mentioned where the big underwater tunnel is being built -- a mural could cover the construction. It's worth looking into non-permanent structure. The ABC could collaborate with the Art Commission.

5. New Commission Business – None

6. Staff Reports - The Staff Report was electronically circulated.

A. The Commission asked where the new metro will go in Potomac Yard and brought up some environmental impacts. There are also growing concerns that the project development of the new metro is beyond the budget scope.

- a. Ms. Quigley shared that people have concerns with the lush wetlands. Those wetlands will be loss and will never come back, which may also increase the risk of flooding.
- b. Mr. Mendoza said there will be a public hearing on this topic in July. The Department of Environmental Quality Wetland Review. Find the information on the Alexandria homepage. It will be held on Tues, July 16th. 6pm is info session, public comment public hearing will be 7pm - both at the Durant center.
- c. Ms. Enschede inquired about the new horticulturalist and requested that Mr. Mendoza keep us informed.

7. Agenda Items for September 12th - 1) No meeting in the month of August. 2) Send subcommittee agendas and minutes to be reviewed/approved at commission meeting.

8. Public Comment/Discussion – Nothing further

Meeting was adjourned 8:54pm