

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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1-8-02

MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 30, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF THE GIFT OF LAND RECORDS FROM BERNARD R. CORBETT AND OTHERS

ISSUE: City Council acceptance of a gift of land records from Bernard R. Corbett and others to the City of Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council formally accept the gift of land records from Bernard R. Corbett and others to the City of Alexandria and thank Mr. Corbett and others for their generous gift to the City.

DISCUSSION: The documents included in this donation, known as the Davis & Ruffner - Donald C. Wells land records collection, consist of approximately 18,300 individual property files of great value to the City of Alexandria. Each file is a true, historic property chain of title and transfer information about City of Alexandria properties, including title listings, plats, and other communications between real property buyers, sellers, and the transfer agents for settlements which occurred from 1850 to the present. In many cases, the files contain information pertaining to transfers of the real property more than one hundred and fifty years ago. Some files have information relating to chains of title dating back to land grants of the early 17th-century. The documents included in this archive can be utilized in determining where property boundaries were historically set, who owned the property, and what its prior uses included.

The acquisition of this collection provides the City of Alexandria with a considerable asset. Significant numbers of researchers, including historians and title examiners, will benefit from the acquisition of these files in their work tracing the history of the Alexandria properties included in this archive. The records will be maintained by staff of the City's Archives and Records Center.

The Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC) has recommended the acceptance of this gift

FISCAL IMPACT: While the City does not appraise gifts, this collection is of significant value to researchers. The Office of Historic Alexandria will absorb the minimal cost (estimated at less than \$1,500) to store and maintain this collection.

STAFF: Jean Taylor Federico, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria
Jackie Cohan, Records Administrator and Archivist