EXHIBIT NO. 1

W.S.
1-13-04

# CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
# TO DISCUSS
# THE ALEXANDRIA VISITORS CENTER STUDY

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2004
6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL WORKROOM

## AGENDA

I. BACKGROUND

II. CONSULTANT STUDY FINDINGS

III. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

V. COUNCIL DISCUSSION

(Note: The Visitors Center Study is docketed for public hearing on Saturday, January 24th)

*Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the City Council Work Session may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 838-4500 (TTY/TDD 838-5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.*

di-WS
1-13-04

# Visitors Center

## City Council Work Session
## January 13, 2004

# Time Line To Date

- Consultant Study Period - September 2002 to April 2003
- City Council work session and consultant presentation - April 2003
- Final Report to City Council - June 2003
- Community Presentations and Input Meetings -- September 2003 to November 2004
- Staff Recommendations to City Council - December 2003

# Basic Questions

- Does Alexandria need a visitors center?
- What kind would it be?
- Where should it be located?

# Alexandria Tourism

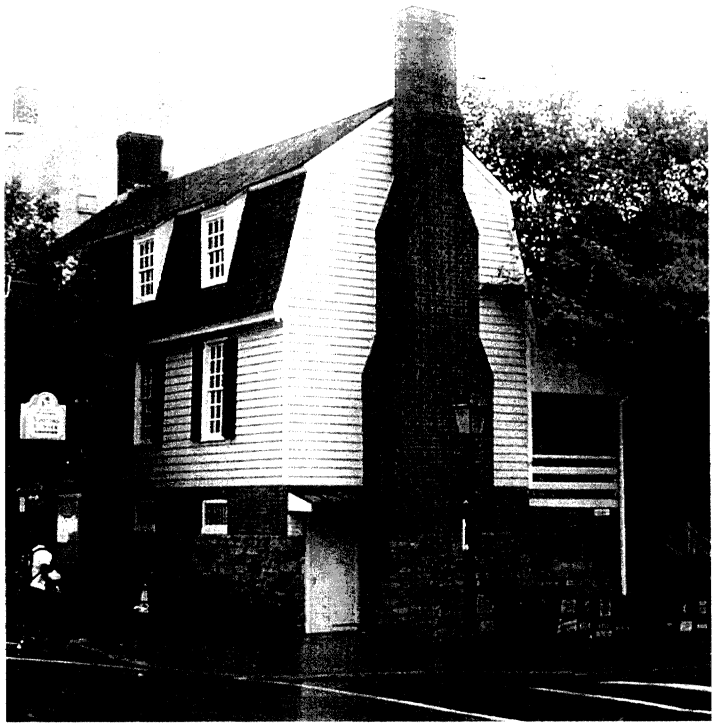
- Higher income than national median
- Attractive to cultural/heritage tourist
- High number of repeat visitors
- Majority of visitors stay at least 2 days
- Secondary destination to D.C.
- Highest visitor satisfaction rating
- Visitors center: lowest satisfaction rating

# SWOT Analysis

| Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Visitor domain<br>• Market access<br>• Unique product<br>• Condition of public environment<br>• High satisfaction<br>• Attractive to cultural/ heritage tourist<br>• Value to City | • Signage<br>• Parking<br>• Visitor/ tourism data with respect to day trippers | • New visitors center<br>• Tourism marketing<br>• Riverfront potential<br>• Partnering with Washington, D.C. and Mt. Vernon<br>• Moving tourists beyond Old Town<br>• Relationship with motor coach operators | • Conflicts between tourism activities and neighborhoods<br>• Change<br>• Traffic congestion<br>• Competition from other localities<br>• Terrorism |

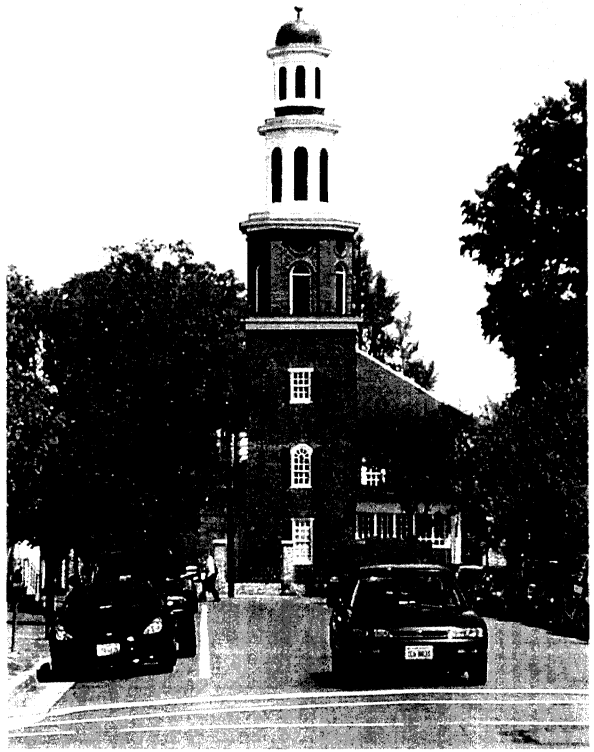
# Existing Ramsay House

- Good location
- Inadequate space
- Poor accessibility
- Concerns about parking and visibility
- Not historically accurate reproduction



# Types of Visitors Centers

- Information only
  - -- Ramsay House
- Information/orientation
  - -- Charleston, SC
- Interpretive centers
  - -- Colonial Williamsburg

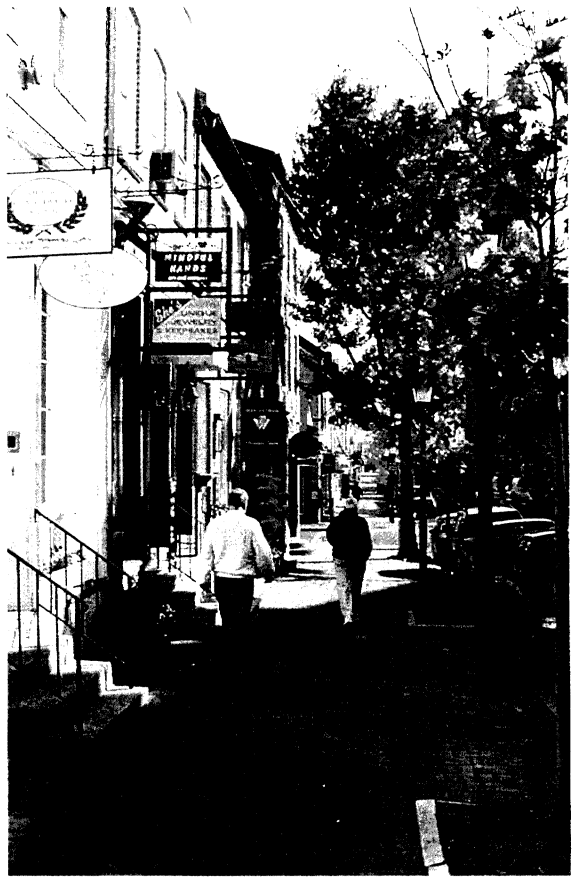


# Visitors Center Characteristics

- Within visitor domain or at gateway
- Staff and information to orient visitor
- Clean and accessible toilets
- Concierge services, retail, event promotion

# Location Criteria

- Strong relationship to tourist domain/King Street corridor
- High visibility and access
- Convenient to parking and public transportation



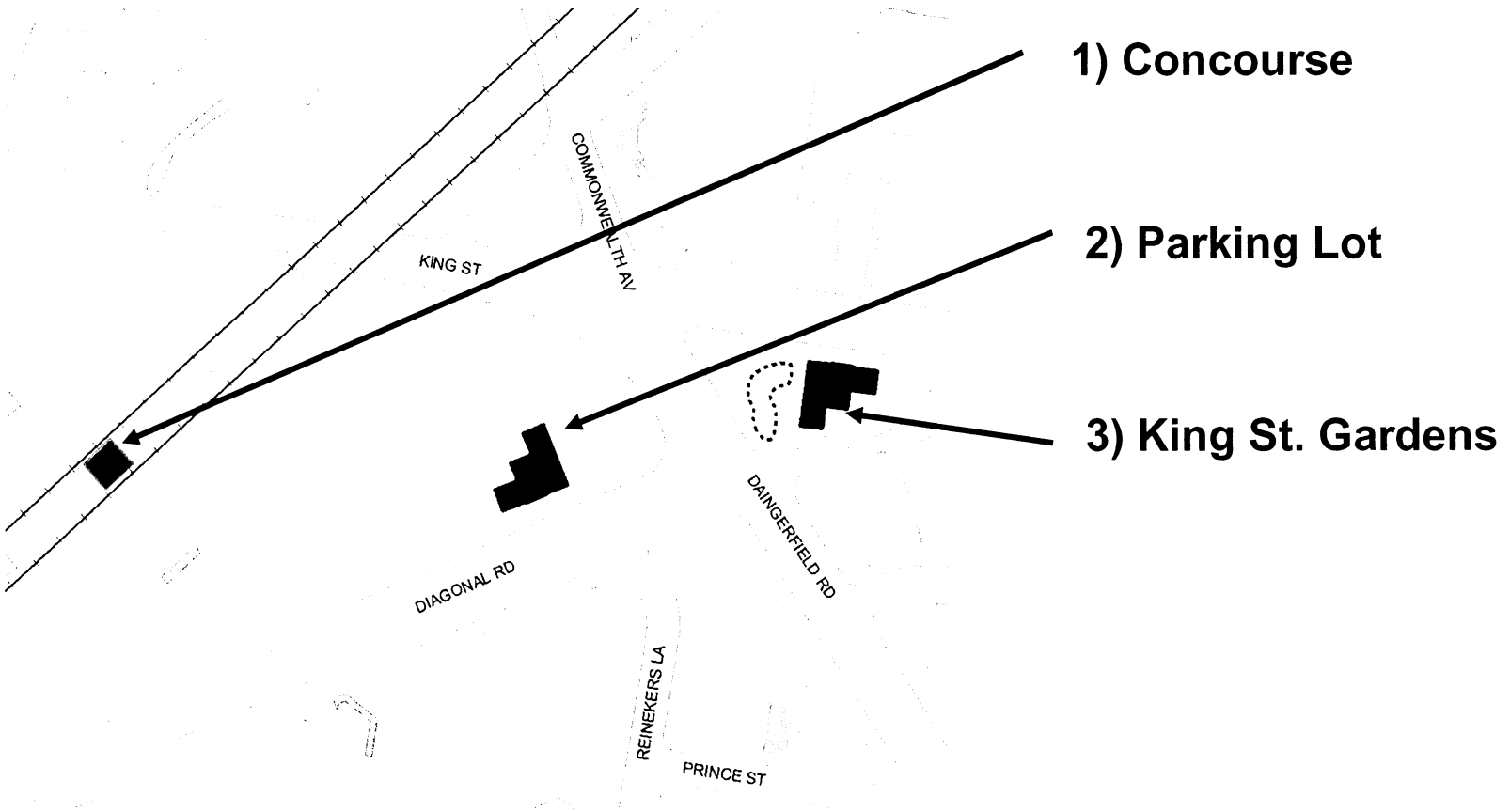
# Three Possible Locations

## Consultant Recommendations

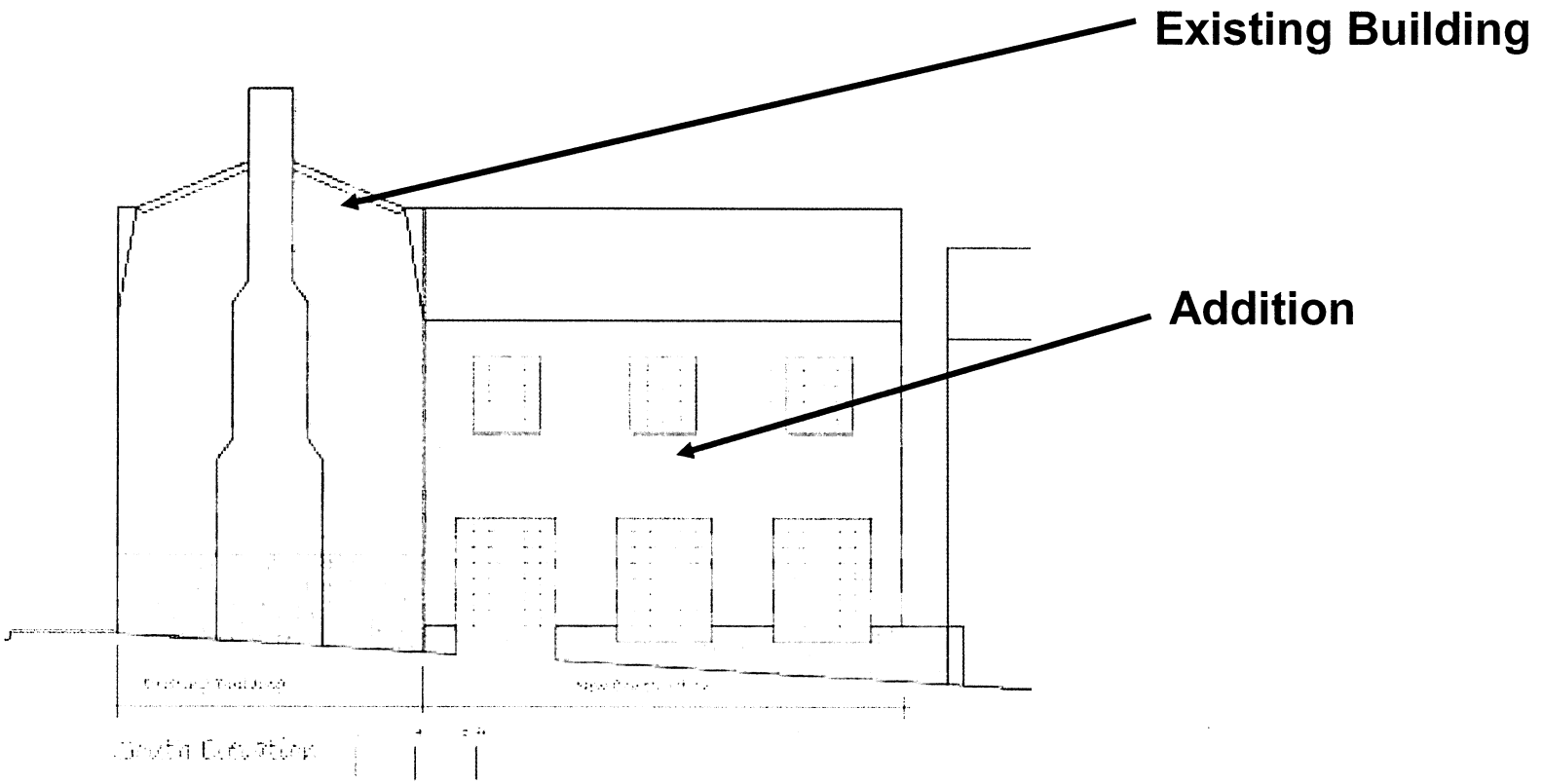
- Upper King Street/Metro Station
  – 3 scenarios
- Addition to Ramsay House
- Market Square

  – Satellite at King Street Metrorail Station

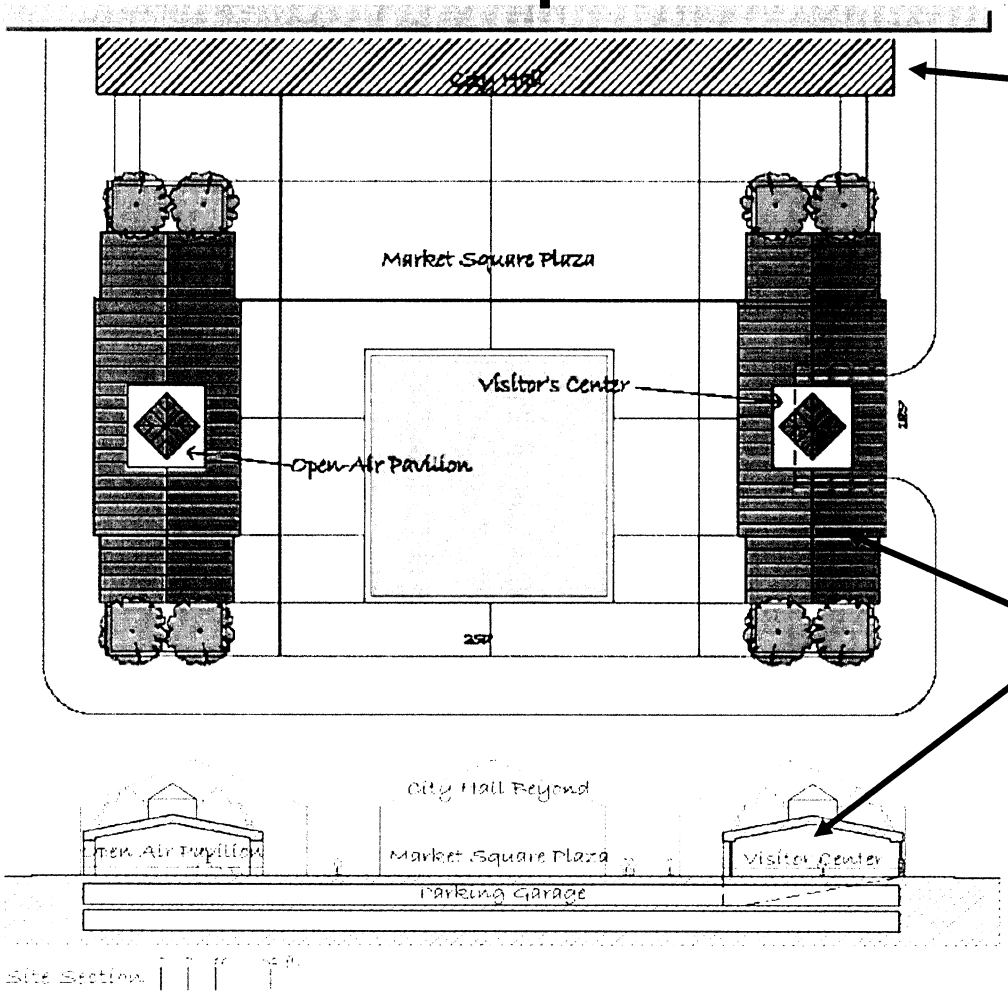
# Upper King Street/Metro Sites



# Ramsay House Addition



# Market Square




**City Hall**

**Pavilion on Market Square (garage roof)**

# Comparison/Ramsay House

- **Pro:**
  - **-- Existing Location**
  - **-- Historic image**
  - **-- Reuse of current space**
- **Con:**
  - **-- Limited auto/bus access**
  - **-- Inefficient program/two levels**
  - **-- Loss of open space**
  - **-- Cost**

# Comparison/Market Square

- **Pro:**
  - **-- Highest visibility and access**
  - **-- Good operational efficiency**
  - **-- Integrated with Market Square renovation**
- **Con:**
  - **-- Loss of Open Space**
  - **-- Technical coordination with existing garage**
  - **-- Impact on existing civic landscape**
  - **-- Cost**

# Potential Other Locations

- Lease ground floor retail space
- Market Square adjacency is key
- Lease and buildout costs substantial
- 401 King Street (Hannelores)
- 132 North Royal (Voter Registration/Elections)

# Other Visitor Issues

## Consultant Recommendations

- Signage, wayfinding and kiosks
- Motor coach management
- Marketing

# Public Process Findings

- Disparate Opinions about Tourism
- Need for a Visitors Center
- Importance of Open Space and Civic Space

# Public Process Findings (Cont'd)

- Location Options
  - -- Upper King
  - -- Lower King
  - -- Satellite site at Upper King
  - -- Lease sites in Market Square area
- Signage and Kiosks
- Parking, Traffic and Tour Buses

# Staff Recommendations

- Remove Market Square and Ramsay expansion from further consideration
- Maximize Ramsay House interior use
- Pursue signage, marketing, parking and tour bus mgt.
- Develop King Street Metro station satellite
- Not pursue leasing at this time

# Future Key Days

- Public Hearing - Saturday, January 24

- City Council Legislative Meeting
  on Actions/Next Steps - Tuesday, January 27