

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

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2-12-02

DATE: MARCH 20, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

FROM: SANDRA WHITMORE, DIRECTOR *SW*
RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: WATERFRONT SAFETY AT FORD'S LANDING

At the February 12 City Council meeting, Mayor Donley asked that staff review the issue of waterfront safety at Ford's Landing. Recently, at the Ford's Landing boardwalk a dog jumped into the river and the dog's owner went in after him. The owner found it very difficult to get out of the river and requested that the City review the safety of this area.

Staff has reviewed various methods of life saving devices and designs used on waterfronts. As a result, staff believe ladders from the boardwalk to the water would not solve the problem, unless a great many were installed, as the many angles of the boardwalk precludes one from seeing where a ladder is available. Staff also does not believe chains or other barriers are needed. Staff also talked with Joe Oliva, President of the Ford's Landing Homeowner's Association, and the Association has discussed various methods of providing safety equipment in case a person were to fall off the boardwalk into the river but they have not recommended any specific action.

Staff recommends that the City discuss installing flotation ring stanchions at two or three sites along the boardwalk with the Ford's Landing Homeowners Association. These would be similar to those used at the City Marina. We will report back to Council following our discussions with the Association.

cc: Michele Evans, Assistant City Manager
Richard Willsey, Risk Manager
Kirk Kincannon, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Thomas Hawkins, Fire Chief