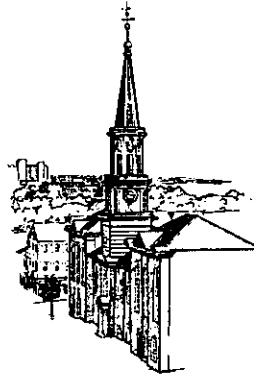


Reports (P)
2-26-02



Claire M. Eberwein
Member of Council



City Hall
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Colleagues,

As promised, here is the transcript of remarks regarding Windmill Hill Park from the Waterfront Committee meeting that I was unable to attend. I thought you might find them to be of interest, as I was called by committee members in regards to them.

Claire

**Transcript of Agenda Item: Update on Windmill Hill Park
Alexandria Waterfront Committee
February 19, 2002
Lee Center
7:30 a.m.**

Charlotte Hall:

"Let's move on to update on Windmill Hill Park."

Andrew Palmeiri:

"Unlike at the last meeting where I had a memo to give you, there wasn't really a need to give you a new memo. The Windmill Hill Park Committee met on January 10. We essentially reviewed a report prepared by the engineers Baker and Associates, that's reflective of the process that we followed and the recommendations that we're making. That report will eventually be submitted to City Council. We spent our last meeting working on an executive summary of the report and that executive summary is essentially, um reflective of the memo that I circulated to you all on November 20th, and so there really is no need to update that memo um and the executive summary is in a final draft uh reviewed, staged?, we basically during our meeting indicated the points we wanted in the executive summary and um that executive summary consisting of bullets points, will be e-mailed to the Task Force primarily for Scribner issues um rather than substantive. We've pretty much dealt with the substantive issues at this point. Um That pretty much brings you up to speed on what's been happening. There isn't much new to give you."

Charlotte Hall:

"Ross"

"First of all, I want to congratulate Andrew. Uh, I think you guys have done a fantastic job on the Ad Hoc Committee under some very - uh -uh I kind of want to state this, a very disgusting uh, agenda setting uh activities. Um, I don't know if everybody has been kind of reading what's been happening with the Post and several editorials that have gone out. But, I think the members of the Ad Hoc that were appointed by the City and made recommendations referred by Charlotte be put on there stuff and put in a very bad position that I don't think was very fair to them by some Council members, by some groups um and have been using issues that I don't think are really relevant um to the Windmill Hill Park discussion. I think the plan has made Windmill Hill Park I think the premier park on the waterfront - with they being developed the way it is. The only park I know that has a playground, the only park that I know that has several different courts in it. The only park I know that solves our dogs issue with the way the dog park separated from the other park areas. You don't have an off-leash uh running situation like you do at the waterfront um the parking issue is the same as Oronoco um, I think you guys put a kayak launch there so it made it equal to where the crew launch is and the schools have their stuff. They put an education facility in the sense that they have uh park benches set up in the shape of a boat I think it is. Uh so that you can have classrooms there. Uh they also put up

historical plaques which make it unique to the waterfront. Not many other parks have that kind of historic plaques. Uh, but I think that the problem has been and I feel bad here and I don't feel that the Council is going to approve the agenda as it is, because I think several Council members had objections to begin with because they had agendas that they wanted to get through. Um, I think that there is an objection that they want a building. Um, I think we should go on record very clearly that we support what the Windmill Hill People have done. Um, there was an objection in the (Post) paper in the EPC, memo, and I want to get this clear, on environmental impacts. Um, I wish Councilwoman Eberwein was here because she brought it up without attending a meeting and the environmental issues have been addressed not only just by where the dog park is, but by the new ordinance that was just passed on picking up after dogs. Um and the Council made it very clear if you're picking up after dogs you're not going to have the nutrient run off. Uh, since we've increased those fines. We've made it less likely, hopefully that people wouldn't leave their remains there. um, I'm very concerned with, and very upset with and I want to stress again that I think the Windmill Hill people have been put in a situation, where, and I'll be blunt about it, I feel there's race bait, and I think it was despicable. Uh, there was arguments made that if the park didn't have this stuff, it wasn't opened up to the other members of the community. If you read the editorials, it was very clear and I think that was unfair to everybody involved in the process because I don't see one case where anybody said that one group would be left out over another. Um, and I think many of the people in Old Town had been put on the list that they should be ashamed of what the Windmill Hill Park has done because it excludes people, and I don't think its done that. I don't think they ever had that on their agenda. Uh, I think it is a very open park and being used by all and I think it is unfair that the Windmill Hill people have been put in that position, and I just want to kind of make it clear I'm upset with it, um and I think that Andrew has done a lot of effort here along with I know Susan from EPC and uh, others who attend everyone of these meetings. I felt it is very unfair what's been placed on them and I hope that we can move forward with this, the plan that's there not have it where uh any more of this gaming going on with those Commission members and I'd hate to see that happen to our Commission or to other committees that have been appointed where we start getting in a position that we don't meet an agenda of the Council - that we're put in a position of being played as evil doers that are out to exclude people and I think that's kind of what of what happened here. I know I um kind of inferring from but if you read the editorials, I can give you this editorial again. Um, there are some pretty shocking ones the PTA in particular, wrote a very harsh one and I thought was very unfair to the people who were involved in the process."

Charlotte:

"Andrew, before I take my next question, would you like to respond?"

Andrew:

"I can respond or I can just go at the end. It doesn't matter. Uh, I, there really, I found working on this Task Force uh, to be a rather painful experience, um, on a number of levels. Uh, I think that there were a lot of agendas circulating from a lot of different directions. Uh, I didn't find the public debate and discourse to be uh cordial however, there were a lot of very good points that were made by the public, and I think that uh, members of the Steering Committee listened to what they heard deliberated fairly and reached decisions that you know they thought were appropriate for that park.

Uh, as far as the various and sundry newspaper articles and editorials, my solution to that was I just didn't read any of them so I don't even know what Ross is talking about. I think it just is a lot easier, to uh, deal with the facts and not the vitrial."

Charlotte called on Ken Foran who complimented Andrew's work. Charlotte asks for other questions and then called on Ross.

Charlotte calls on Ross:

Ross:

"Um, the input you know from the audience I thought was very good at the meetings. I just wanted to get that out there. That's how I viewed the editorials, I'm not saying anybody in particular, but I saw that happening. I just wanted to get that out there. I wanted to ask should we go on record endorsing the Windmill Hill plan so that when it goes before Council that this Committee - that the Windmill Hill activities. That were started upon??"

Members indicated they wanted to see the plan first (unclear who said it)

Andrew:

"We don't have a final executive summary yet. Um, un - - Sandra do you know when it's going, you have a better idea of when its going to Council, I guess the question would be whether there's an opportunity for us to see the executive summary prior to it being submitted to Council."

Sandra said it would go before Council in April. She indicated the executive summary would be available for next Waterfront Committee meeting.