

CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Public Hearing Meeting
Saturday, February 20, 2010 - - 9:30 a.m..

Present: Mayor William D. Euille, Vice Mayor Kerry J. Donley, Members of Council Frank H. Fannon, Alicia Hughes, K. Rob Krupicka, Redella S. Pepper and Paul C. Smedberg.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Mr. Hartmann, City Manager; Mr. Banks, City Attorney; Ms. Evans, Deputy City Manager; Mr. Jinks, Deputy City Manager; Ms. Harris, Communications Officer, City Manager's Office; Police Captain Ogden; Mr. Lerner, Deputy Director, Transportation and Environmental Services; Mr. McCobb, Transportation and Environmental Services; Ms. Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning; Ms. Wright, Planning and Zoning; Mr. Randall, Planning and Zoning; Ms. Contrares, Planning and Zoning; Fire Chief Thiel; Mr. Catlett, Director, Office of Building and Fire Code Administration; Ms. Orr, Director, Human Resources; Ms. McIlvaine, Deputy Director, Office of Housing; and Mr. Lloyd.

Recorded by: Jacqueline M. Henderson, City Clerk and Clerk of Council.

OPENING

1. Calling the Roll.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Euille, and the City Clerk called the roll; all the members of Council were present.

2. Public Discussion Period.

(a) Gary Carr, 216 Aspen Street, complimented the City on its snow removal, as it did a terrific job under very adverse conditions. Mr. Carr spoke of the restoration of the playing fields at Frances Hammond Middle School, noting that the children are playing in mud. He said they should not have park fields and school fields, they should have community fields, and he asked who the field at Ben Brenman Park would serve. He said he made the contingent that the criteria for selection was flawed and how should it select a field and which field is in worse condition and which serves the most children and has waited the longest, which is Hammond. He said any system that results in 1200 school children being unable to play outside has something wrong with it and if it lasts for a decade, there is something doubly wrong with it. He said the answer

is a single CIP for the playing fields and not separate ones for the school and the City. Mr. Carr spoke of the money for the fields in the budget and there are no synthetic turf conversions until 2017. He asked the Council to endorse the Park and Recreation Commission vote endorsing the restoration of the park at Ben Brenman Park.

(b) Reverend Duane Kay, 909 Queen Street, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, speaking as a representative of VOICE, Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Enhancement, said that over the last year, they have been engaged in an effort with residents of the Bland community in handling various maintenance issues that have been brought to the attention of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority and has continued with the redevelopment phase of the Bland community, particularly with phase I and how the relocation efforts have affected those residents who have now been displaced over the past few months. Reverend Kay said they believe there is great opportunity for City Council, as well as the City, to become involved in the effort, as it has greatly effected residents. He said they do not want to stop the redevelopment or the project, however, they want to help move the City toward a beloved community.

(c) Hattie Thompson, 1314 Madison Street, speaking for VOICE and for the Bland project, said this is important to the residents of Bland. She said she has lived in public housing for three years and has lived in Alexandria for twelve years and she has heard a lot of despair from her fellow residents at Bland, due to lack of communication through ARHA. She said when they first heard of the redevelopment, they welcomed it, but as time went on, things began to unravel. Ms. Thompson said they waited for information and were given a deadline of December 12 to move out, and that left them to scramble with their employers, their children's schools and everything that is involved in moving to a new place. Some residents who were downsized were given 72 hours to move. She said VOICE has helped them and are still helping them, but they need help from City Council in the next phase, noting that they would like to be better informed through the Housing Authority to what is going to happen with them and how they will be able to get it done in a proper manner, as well as getting respect during the time they are being moved.

(d) Janelle Jackson, 10208 Racquet Circle, Manassas, Nu Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., noted that the percentage of children and teens who are overweight has more than doubled in the past 30 years. She said that with Alexandria having such youth programs as track and field, football, boxing and volleyball, they are combating the issue and providing a venue to children to have physical activity, health and wellness, but they are also first in line with the First Lady's Let's Move campaign to curb childhood obesity. Ms. Jackson spoke about Project Discovery, which prepares and motivates low-income and first generation of college eligible students to access opportunities and higher education. She said their chapter has provided numerous opportunities to youth in Alexandria to do this, but if they can join together with Council, they can provide more opportunities for their youth to succeed. She said they hope to raise funds to promote community involvement and foster positive public relations via scholarships and youth programs through their foundation, the HAVE Foundation,

Helping Alexandria Virginia Excel. Ms. Jackson said they mentioned last month about Read Across America, and since then, they have expanded their focus to look at a child's sense of positive identity and they would like to change the self-image of the children in Alexandria.

(e) Wade Farris, 910 Slaters Lane, spoke for a group of concerned citizens over a project the City is proposing to build at Powhatan and Slaters Lane. He said the City is planning to put a group of 20 affordable housing units on the property, and they feel it is probably not the best thing for the City to do. It doesn't meet with the City's strategic goals, it is not fiscally the best use of the property, there are safety concerns and they think that area of the City is already saturated with affordable and section 8 housing. He said the plan does not meet the 2004-2015 strategic plan where it says the City government should be financially sustainable providers of excellent services that are valued by its customers, and engages the entire community as it plans for the future. He said it also doesn't meet the goal that says they should also be friendly to small businesses, establishing beautiful gateways to urban villages. Mr. Farris said the City has accepted an unsolicited proposal from the Alexandria Housing Commission that says they want to build affordable housing on the property, and they ask why they didn't go out for a request for proposal from developers, noting that there are many people who are interested in the property. He said it is not the best fiscal use of the property, there is a safety concern and it is probably not a good place for small kids to grow up next to Slaters Lane, they feel it is not the best use of the property and they asked Council to take another look at it.

Mayor Euille noted that there has been no City government or City Council action or decision made about the site, noting that Council authorized the City to proceed to have discussions with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Corporation to solicit their interest. He said nothing will happen until the community has an opportunity to respond.

(f) Roy Priest, 600 N. Fairfax Street, director, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, spoke about the Bland relocation project, noting that a lot of the schedules they operate under are driven by the source of the dollars they use and he explained where the funds come for in this project. He said they were relying on having to use their own inventory to re-house the 32 households and that has happened, and with the exception of one family, they are all still living in ARHA owned property. All of the families have been paid relocation benefits and in some cases have even assisted families beyond the payment. He said they are also looking at their protocols they use to issue to families for their notices, so they will be able to give them more specific information about timing and locations.

Mayor Euille said it is time to bring back to the forefront more frequent conversations relative to the redevelopment of Bland, so it can have a dialogue between public housing and City government. Council will be reaching out to the Board of Commissioners to bring that process back to the table.

Councilman Krupicka said he hoped they could schedule a meeting with the joint Council/ARHA Board so they can finish the work on the memorandum of understanding and shared goals that it started last Spring. He noted that there is a vacancy coming up on ARHA because one of the current members does not want reappointment, and traditionally that vacancy has been held by a member of the Landlord-Tenant Relations Committee, but there is no legal obligation that that position be a member of Landlord-Tenant Relations, and he encouraged his colleagues to join him in asking the City Clerk to advertise the position as an at-large position.

Vice Mayor Donley said one of the things that was significant about the presentation from VOICE is that there is agreement on the overall goal, which is redevelopment of Bland. He said that in the past, the Mayor and Vice Mayor and Chair and Vice Chair would meet regularly with senior staff, and they might consider resurrecting that meeting to go over expectations.

Councilwoman Hughes said she needed to reconcile, in order to move forward and be comfortable, is what could have happened differently, in looking forward to the next phases of redevelopment, what can it do differently to ensure that residents feel as if their needs are better met, they are better informed and there is better notice. In terms of the relocation and expenses, why would people say they are still paying that money for relocation if there were enough funds available and is there something they can do.

In response, Mr. Priest said they have legal requirements in terms of notice given to residents on relocation, and what they will be doing is expanding beyond a legal requirement of the notice and have a regular dialogue on an on-going basis with their residents. All residents are assigned to a staff person that works directly with them and that staff person has regular contact with those families and will do so on an on-going basis in the relocation phase. The Board and staff are open to meet with any resident. Mr. Priest said he didn't understand what the issue was with people having financial obligations, because they have people living in their property, their rents don't change, they have the same relationship with them they had before they relocated them, and they paid everyone their relocation payments, so he wasn't sure what the hardship was. He said that if there are individual cases, he is happy to meet with them and he can bring those to the Board.

Councilman Smedberg asked if a general communication was sent out to residents with a timeline.

Mr. Priest said yes.

Councilwoman Pepper said they had a storage facility for people to put their belongings if they were moving, and she asked what happened to that storage.

Deputy Director of Housing McIlvaine said that is now run by the Department of Human Services and it is for emergency evictions and other issues.

City Manager Hartmann said that may have suffered from a budget cut in the past couple of years.

Councilman Smedberg reiterated the need for a meeting with the ARHA Board, as today illustrates frustration because it has the issues out there and they have to focus on it.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

ACTION CONSENT CALENDAR (3-5)

Planning Commission

3. SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2009-0077
10 EAST GLEBE ROAD (Parcel Address: 2 East Glebe Road)
CHEZ ANDREE
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to allow outdoor seating at a grandfathered restaurant; zoned CL/Commercial Low. Applicant: Chez Andree, Inc.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend Approval 7-0

(A copy of the Planning Commission report dated February 20, 2010 is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 3; 2/20/10, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

4. SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2009-0079
654 SOUTH PICKETT STREET (Parcel Address: 640 South Pickett Street)
PARKING REDUCTION
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a parking reduction for a restaurant; zoned I/Industrial. Applicant: Seleshi Getachen

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend Approval 7-0

(A copy of the Planning Commission report dated February 20, 2010 is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 4; 2/20/10, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

5. TEXT AMENDMENT #2009-0009
AMENDMENTS TO ADOPTED RESIDENTIAL INFILL REGULATIONS
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for an amendment to the City's Zoning Ordinance regarding residential infill development. Staff: Development of Planning and Zoning

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend Approval 7-0

(A copy of the Planning Commission report dated February 20, 2010 is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 5; 2/20/10, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

END OF ACTION CONSENT CALENDAR

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilwoman Pepper, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes and carried unanimously, City Council adopted the consent calendar, as follows:

3. City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation.
4. City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation.
5. City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation.

The voting was as follows:

Pepper	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Hughes	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Krupicka	"aye"
	Smedberg	"aye"	

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITY MANAGER

None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES (continued)

Planning Commission (continued)

6. SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2009-0064
3401 MOUNT VERNON AVENUE
RESTAURANT
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to operate a restaurant and a request for a parking reduction; zone CSL/Commercial Service Low. Applicant: Jose Mario Cabero, Jose Guillermo Cabero and Marisol Gonzalez

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend Approval 7-0

(A copy of the Planning Commission report dated February 20, 2010 is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 6; 2/20/10, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

Planner Contrares made a presentation of the staff report and she, along with Deputy Director of Planning Ross, responded to questions of City Council

The following persons participated in the public hearing on this item:

(a) Mabel Tweddle, 7445 Gillingham Row, architect representing the applicant, spoke in favor of the application and said that in response to Council questions, wine and beer will be served at the table.

(b) David Fromm, 2307 E. Randolph Avenue, representing the Del Ray Citizens Association, spoke in support of the application, noting that they had a recommendation that the bike racks be in front of the building instead of in the back.

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilman Smedberg, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried unanimously, City Council closed the public hearing. The voting was as follows:

Smedberg	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
	Krupicka	"aye"	

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilman Smedberg, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried unanimously, City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation. The voting was as follows:

Smedberg	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
	Krupicka	"aye"	

7. SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2009-0059
516-A EAST HOWELL AVENUE
SINGLE FAMILY HOME
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a parking reduction and site plan modifications for construction of a single family home; zone RB/Residential.
Applicant: Douglas Drabkowski

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend Approval w/amendments 7-0

(A copy of the Planning Commission report dated February 20, 2010 is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 7; 2/20/10, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

Planner Randall made a presentation of the report and he, along with Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning Ross, responded to questions of City Council.

The following persons participated in the public hearing on this item:

(a) Douglas Drabkowski, 6828 Stoneybrooke Lane, applicant and owner, spoke in favor of the application.

(b) Ralph Crafts, Orlean, Virginia, project designer for Mr. Drabkowski, spoke in favor of the application,

(c) Robert Jones, 516 E. Howell Avenue, asked for a six foot side yard on his side of the property.

(d) David Fromm, 2307 E. Randolph Avenue, representing the Del Ray Citizens Association, spoke in favor of the request and recommended that anytime a house is allowed to be built on the property line, the appropriate conditions should be put in.

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Vice Mayor Donley, seconded by Councilman Smedberg and carried unanimously, City Council closed the public hearing and approved the original staff recommendation and to replace condition #1 as amended by the Planning Commission with the original condition #1 as proposed by staff. The voting was as follows:

Donley	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Smedberg	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Krupicka	"aye"
	Pepper	"aye"	

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES (continued)

DEFERRAL/WITHDRAWAL CONSENT CALENDAR

Planning Commission (continued)

None.

END OF DEFERRAL/WITHDRAWAL CONSENT CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE SESSION

8. Consideration of Convening a Closed Meeting to Discuss Land Acquisition.

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman Smedberg and carried unanimously, at 11:04 a.m., City Council convened in executive session, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2.3711(a)(3) for the purpose

of discussion and consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose or the disposition of publicly held real property. The voting was as follows:

Hughes	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Smedberg	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Krupicka	"aye"
	Pepper	"aye"	

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilman Smedberg, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried unanimously, at 11:45 a.m., City Council reconvened the meeting. The voting was as follows:

Smedberg	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
	Krupicka	"aye"	

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilman Smedberg, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried 7-0 by roll-call vote, City Council adopted a resolution pertaining to the Executive Session. The voting was as follows:

Smedberg	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
	Krupicka	"aye"	

The resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 2385

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council has this 20th day of February 2010, recessed into executive session pursuant to a motion made and adopted in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the city council that such executive session was conducted in accordance with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the city council does hereby certify that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters that were identified in the motion by which the executive session was convened, and that are lawfully exempted by the Freedom of Information Act from the Act's open meeting requirements, were heard, discussed or considered by council during the executive session.

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THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED, upon motion by Councilman Smedberg, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried unanimously, City Council adjourned the public hearing meeting of February 20, 2010 at 11:47 a.m. The voting was as follows:

Smedberg	"aye"	Donley	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Fannon	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Hughes	"aye"
	Krupicka	"aye"	

APPROVED BY:

WILLIAM D. EUILLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson
City Clerk and Clerk of Council