

DOCKET ITEM # 8 A&B
Master Plan Amendment #2011-0001
Text Amendment #2011-0005
Waterfront Small Area Plan

Issue: Initiate and consider an amendment to the City's Master Plan to include the Waterfront Small Area Plan chapter, and initiate and consider a text amendment to Section 5-500 of the Zoning Ordinance for the W-1/Waterfront mixed use zone	Planning Commission Hearing:	April 5, 2011 May 3, 2011
	City Council Hearing:	May 14, 2011
Staff: Karl Moritz, Deputy Director karl.moritz@alexandriava.gov Nancy Williams, Principal Planner nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov		

I. BACKGROUND

The Waterfront Plan proposed for adoption is the culmination of a great effort, over two years, and many people's involvement. The Department of Planning and Zoning began the planning process in April 2009. Extensive community outreach, including some 100 small group, community-wide, and staff meetings have occurred. There have been activities such as charrettes, tours, and topical nights on art, history, and the marina. The Planning Commission and City Council have conducted work sessions and briefings on the Plan's overall content as well as specific issues.

Technical expertise was also applied during the planning process in the areas of marine engineering; flood mitigation; architecture, park and public space design through staff and consultants; hotel and marina market assessments through consultants; preliminary regulatory and permitting analysis through consultants and communication with the District of Columbia, the Corps of Engineers, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the National Park Service (NPS) for pier and marina expansion; parking and traffic analysis through consultants; production of Art and History Waterfront Plans by the City's art and history communities; and more. The Plan also benefited from the *Old Town Area Parking Study*, the *Potomac River Waterfront Flood Mitigation Study*, and the *Waterfront Traffic Impact Study*, with results integrated into the Plan.

The public outreach meetings and activities along with technical expertise facilitated a vision to create a 21st century waterfront that meets the needs of residents and visitors alike and that is sustainable economically and environmentally. The vision then helped to shape a series of illustrative designs for redevelopment of the waterfront.

Although the Plan looks toward the future, it is also bolstered by past planning efforts, all of which share the goals of a publicly-oriented and accessible waterfront; multi-modal connectivity via a walkway and bicycle trail; creation of parks and open space; and redevelopment of remaining development sites through a mixture of uses to promote an active waterfront. While some objectives have been realized, the Plan's overarching goal is to enhance what has been accomplished to-date by:

- expanding the provision of open and public space;
- strengthening the visual and physical connectivity along the waterfront;
- generating more water-oriented and related public activity along the waterfront;
- fostering adaptive reuse of historic buildings; and
- guiding redevelopment of the limited remaining development sites.

II. ISSUES

During the planning process, several key issues were discussed, and remain critical to any conversation about the waterfront. Additionally, City Council, during a work session on February 8, 2011, highlighted a series of issues for further, more detailed review: flood mitigation, parking, a smaller scale Waterfront Park Building, and implementation issues such as costs/revenues and phasing. Information was released on March 23, 2011 to the public, regarding those items, and it is also provided in this staff report as Attachments II, III, IV and V, respectively. Summaries of these and other issues/solutions are included below.

A. Flood Mitigation

Participants in the planning process urged that a solution to the frequent flooding in Old Town be included in the Plan. The Plan reflects the flood mitigation approach determined to be the most cost effective, and it incorporates those solutions into improvements to parks and public spaces. Flood mitigation will be one of the first priorities for Plan implementation.

In 2007, the Transportation & Environmental Services Department conducted an initial assessment of flooding along the City of Alexandria's waterfront within the Potomac River watershed. That assessment led to the *2010 Potomac River Waterfront Flood Mitigation Study* to determine the causes of the flooding problem, identify potential solutions, analyze these potential solutions and recommend the best solutions. Three flood levels were examined in the study: [Nuisance (4 feet NAVD88), Intermediate (8 feet NAVD88) and Extreme (100-year, 10.2 feet NAVD88)].

The flood study area is bounded by Third Street to the north, Fairfax Street to the west, the Capital Beltway to the south, and the Potomac River to the east and, then, is further divided into four focus areas: Jones Point, King Street, Waterfront Commercial, and North Union.

Twenty-seven flood mitigation measures were identified and discussed in a series of public and staff meetings that occurred from October 2007 through November 2008. During that process, a numerical scoring system was developed to select mitigation measures to consider further. The following nine mitigation measures were selected for detailed evaluation using this scoring system.

- *Structural measures:* provide dry flood proofing; acquire properties; elevate structures; construct engineered structural barriers (i.e., waterfront floodwall and Jones Point berm); construct an elevated walkway that would also be a floodwall structure; and increase the inlet and road elevation in the vicinity of the Lower King Street area.

- *Nonstructural measures:* relocate internal supplies, products/goods above the flooding depth; improve the City's floodplain and zoning ordinances; and improve the sandbag programs or provide other temporary flood deterrents

A benefit-cost analysis (BCA) was performed for the six structural mitigation measures. A BCA was not computed for the proposed nonstructural mitigation measures. Therefore, nonstructural mitigation measures were evaluated only for applicability and technical feasibility. The historic nature of the City adds to the cost and complexity of the mitigation measures considered. Additionally, conceptual designs were developed for the floodwall, Jones Point berm, the elevated walkway, and roadway improvements.

After considerable analysis of different flood levels and a variety of potential flood mitigation areas, the study found that the most cost-effective level of protection is 6 feet NAVD88, which has a recurrence interval of approximately 10 years. At higher protection elevations, the physical size and cost of the work increases dramatically, and BCA drops quickly.

The study does not recommend a single flood mitigation solution, but rather a series of measures are recommended to provide protection against flood events on the Potomac River, including several of the structural measures that can be constructed by the City: (1) inlet and roadway improvements along King Street, Union Street and The Strand; (2) an elevated walkway approximately 1,280 feet in length; and (3) approximately 550 feet of floodwall. An additional recommendation involves flood proofing private properties that are currently vulnerable to nuisance flooding. This idea would require participation from private property owners, although the City can provide expertise and guidance.

The Plan incorporates the three recommended structural flood mitigation measures as follows: The first, inlet and roadway improvements include raising the roadway elevation and associated drainage structures in the vicinity of the intersections of King Street and The Strand and King Street and Union Street. The City encounters flooding in these areas due to storm drain and because of the low elevations of the catch basins. The improvements would raise the roadway by approximately a foot to one and a half feet, as well as raising storm drain manholes and catch basins, reducing the most frequent occurrences of flooding in this area. The frequency of shallow nuisance flooding could be reduced from over 150 times a year to about 10 times a year, depending on the roadway elevations that are achieved.

In the case of the second and third structural recommendations, namely an elevated walkway and floodwall system, the Plan includes a variation of these so that, instead of the full structures being located along the promenade, blocking the river view, they are in part naturally incorporated into the parks and landscape along this area. The layout of these structural elements is shown in concept in this Plan. The exact

locations will be developed in the implementation phase as more extensive engineering analysis and design takes place.

The effectiveness of the proposed flood protection up to Elevation 6.0 is dependent upon the entire limits of the mitigation being constructed. If the improvements are phased in over time, the flood protection will not be realized until the final phase is completed. More information regarding flood mitigation is included in Attachment II – Flood Mitigation Measures and Graphics.

B. Parking

Early in the planning process, many people identified parking as a critical issue that would have to be fully addressed for the Plan to succeed. The Plan includes a comprehensive approach to Old Town parking management.

In the past year, the City prepared a comprehensive study of Old Town parking supply and demand, developed recommended strategies based on the new information, worked through the summer with a community stakeholder group to prioritize solutions, and began their implementation. Enforcement has been increased, new parking wayfinding signs will be installed this spring, and new multi-space parking meters are being installed.

The Old Town parking initiatives have been conducted jointly with waterfront planning, which the Plan describes in some depth on pages 114-121.

A key finding is that – even at peak times -- there are many unused parking garage spaces within 3-4 blocks of the King/Union intersection. This finding made it clear that there is a big opportunity to improve Old Town parking by getting people to use garages, especially when parking for more than a few hours.

The Plan shows that, numerically, existing parking demand and capacity leave room to park any increase in cars attracted to the waterfront. There are more than 700 unused spaces available today at peak times in public garages; additional close-by private garages are willing to open for public parking when and if there is demand. Adding garage attendants and valet parking programs to the toolbox increases garage capacity even more.

Beyond its parking analysis, however, the Plan recognizes that having theoretical capacity is only part of the answer; action steps need to be taken and then continued into the future so that an assessment of parking can be made and steps taken to address parking on a regular basis.

Specifically, the Plan would formally extend and continue the progress made in the past year on Old Town parking issues through a Waterfront Parking Implementation Plan. The Parking Implementation Plan would be both a living document and a public

process to monitor conditions, evaluate options, and take action. The Parking Implementation Plan must include specific triggers, such as development activity or renewed utilization/capacity studies, with the necessary enhanced capacity that must be available. This level of detail and commitment by the City to the Plan's outline for the future is absolutely required. The Plan, on page 120, lists specific measures which, at a minimum, must be included in any Implementation Plan, including:

- Monitoring public garage capacity at peak times on a regular basis and using an 85% capacity measure to trigger the need to make additional capacity available;
- Requiring additional parking capacity at the point that new demand generators are constructed on the waterfront;
- Implementing a systematic valet parking program for Old Town, King Street and the waterfront core area;
- Protecting parking in residential areas after testing and monitoring the effects of waterfront development.

The Plan calls for an interagency team with support by affected stakeholders to create the Parking Implementation Plan. Additional summary information on parking is in Attachment III – Parking Summary.

C. Proposed Waterfront Park Restaurant Building

No Plan recommendation has inspired as much debate as the proposal to construct a building along the western edge of Waterfront Park. The Waterfront Park building was initially proposed for three main reasons:

- It would both *finance* and *hide* a replacement surface parking lot for the Old Dominion Boat Club...and, in the process, result in a larger amount of open space at the heart of the waterfront.
- Proposed for restaurant use, it would provide additional options for waterfront dining, something identified early on by Alexandrians as one of the things they wanted most from the Plan.
- It would activate Waterfront Park and connect King Street to The Strand redevelopment sites.

The Plan document proposes two options for a restaurant building within Waterfront Park. Both options yield approximately 30,000 square feet of development. Staff was asked to develop a smaller option.

The new proposal, developed at the request of the City Council and community, is for a much smaller scale building: narrower, not as long, and much shorter in height. The conceptual design is a largely glass structure, taking architectural cues from the Mount Vernon orangery, resulting in a low-slung market style building which activates Waterfront Park and is better integrated into the neighborhood fabric. The building's design creates a large roof top space suitable for seasonal outdoor dining, offering panoramic views of the Potomac River.

The proposed building is approximately 60 feet in depth and 175 feet in length along The Strand, yielding approximately 10,500 square feet. It would leave more than 180 feet of park depth from shoreline to the new building, thereby extending far less (35 feet less) into the park than earlier designs. The exterior façade of the building, with exception of two gable elements, is only 14 feet high above the adjacent walkway fronting Waterfront Park, and steps back to a maximum height of 18 feet at the roof parapet. This lower height mitigates most of the potential view blocking of rear-facing tenants in the adjacent buildings.

A building at this location is important because it would help connect the waterfront between King Street and points south and north along the waterfront by enlivening the area, drawing people into the park, providing them with opportunities for outdoor and indoor dining, and affording them great views of people along the adjacent walkway, Point Lumley Park, and the water and marinas. Finally, a restaurant would provide sufficient tax revenues to significantly contribute to the high level of maintenance required for expanded parkland and public space envisioned by the Plan. More information regarding the new smaller scale option for the Waterfront Restaurant Building is in Attachment IV - Waterfront Park Restaurant Building.

D. Plan Costs and Revenues

The great majority of recommendations in this Plan call for additions and improvements to waterfront public spaces, the shoreline, and the marina. Because there are few redevelopment sites on the waterfront, many people expressed concern that the potential revenues from new development would not be sufficient to support the Plan's recommendations.

The Plan is able to balance costs and revenues, including enhanced maintenance levels, by carefully calibrating permitted densities and land uses to be those which generate the greatest public benefits with the lowest neighborhood impacts. The following summarizes anticipated costs and revenues associated with the Plan, as does Attachment V – Waterfront Costs/Revenues and Phasing:

- The Plan balances costs and revenues.
- At build-out, a redevelopment scenario with a mixture of housing, hotel, and restaurant/retail yields net tax revenue of \$4.8 million in 2011 dollars

per year. With a phased build-out over 15 years, cumulative tax revenues at the end of 15 years will reach \$42 million in 2011 dollars.

- The park and public space improvements recommended in the Plan would cost up to \$39 million while flood mitigation would cost \$6.5 million (all in 2011 dollars). Even including flood mitigation, the Plan's projected revenues will exceed expenditures within 20 years.
- Once public improvements are made, \$1.0 million of the net tax revenue per year can be used to help the City maintain the new improvements and improve maintenance on existing parks.
- Hotels are a major reason why the Plan can pay for itself. On average, a square foot of hotel space generates six times the tax revenue of a square foot of housing.
- Over the past month, City staff extensively validated the cost estimates for the Plan with government and private industry experts. The analysis included comparisons to recent and current waterfront projects at National Harbor, Washington DC, and Arlington.
- Numerous figures were double-checked and some figures were adjusted, but only a few changes were substantial:
 - About \$4.7 million was added to the contingency fund and engineering cost estimates. In the interest of being extra conservative, City staff chose to increase the contingency fund from 15% to 30% of total cost and increase the expected design/engineering cost from 15% to 20%.
 - The proposed civic/cultural building rose in price from \$1.6 million to \$3.6 million. Smaller or less expensive buildings are possible; the new estimate shows the cost of a high quality 10,000 square foot building.
 - Completing flood mitigation at the same time as other improvements provide some cost savings.
 - Operating costs have been included in the cost/revenue calculation. The cost/revenue scenario contains an increase of \$1 million per year in operating costs over current levels by year 11. That figure would cover not only increased operating costs due to new facilities, but also an increased level of maintenance for existing parks, public spaces, and marina areas.

- The capital costs of the Plan include the purchase of a waterborne debris skimmer and the operating costs cover additional staff for its operation.

E. Plan Phasing Program

There is considerable flexibility in how waterfront improvements could be phased. The proposed phasing would prioritize flood mitigation, improvements that provide *both* public amenities *and* economic value, and improvements at the heart of the waterfront: the foot of King Street.

Staff divided the Waterfront into 10 “phasing locations.” Public Improvements that are logically completed at the same time were grouped into elements. The cost and relative timing of each element is estimated.

- The timeframes for phasing are: 0-3 years, 4-6 years, and 7-15 years.
- Flood mitigation is a high priority.
- The phasing analysis anticipates that the King Street/The Strand/Union Street flood mitigation work and the Point Lumley Park improvements, including floodwall elements, would be completed in the first three years, the Fitzgerald Square/Waterfront Park initiatives in years 4-6, and the balance of the recommended improvements in years 7-15. However, the timing of the phasing elements is very flexible and can respond to opportunities that may occur. For example, if agreement is reached on the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot issue, then the Fitzgerald Square and Waterfront Park initiatives could accelerate and Point Lumley Park initiatives could be scheduled later.
- Public art and historic interpretation could occur in any phase, but will also be considered as part of any of the proposed improvements.

For the mixed use redevelopment scenario noted under costs/revenues above, it is also anticipated that redevelopment will occur in the three identified phases as well: 0-3 years, 4-6 years, and 7-15 years.

- In years 0-3, anticipated redevelopment includes the Beachcomber, redevelopment of the Cummings warehouse at 220 South Union Street, and adaptive reuse of the historic buildings in that block.
- In years 4-6, anticipated redevelopment includes Robinson Terminal North and the balance of the redevelopable properties in the Cummings/Turner block.

- In years 7-15, the anticipated redevelopment is Robinson Terminal South.

More information on costs/revenues/phasing is contained in Attachment V – Costs/Revenues/Phasing.

F. Hotels

The Plan does not *require* hotels. The Plan would *permit* hotels, and would *encourage* hotels in locations where the public should feel welcome.

- The mixed use redevelopment scenario includes 625 hotel rooms spread over the three sites: 250 at Robinson Terminal South, 200 at Robinson North, and 175 in the Cummings/Turner block.
 - The actual number of hotel rooms constructed will depend on many factors, including market conditions, developer interest, and public participation in the development review process.
 - If built, the hotels could yield fewer rooms than anticipated or involve smaller hotels.
 - To help illustrate a potential hotel: a 250-room hotel on Robinson Terminal South could be similar to the Hotel Monaco near Market Square. The Hotel Monaco is a good neighbor: while there is cab activity at the entrance, King Street is not congested; hotel activity does not congest the nearby sidewalks; the hotel is quiet; and the hotel appears to accommodate the parking demand it generates.
 - Reducing the number of hotel rooms to 500 (replaced with housing) would reduce net annual revenues available to pay for the Plan from \$4.8 million to \$3.5 million per year. Reducing hotel rooms to 375 would further reduce net annual revenues to \$2.8 million.
- Hotel uses have reduced impacts on traffic and parking. Hotels generate fewer trips than many other non-residential uses (such as office and retail) and these trips are spread out over the day, rather than concentrated during rush hours. Hotels also demand fewer parking spaces, as a large share of guests arrive by means other than driving a car that needs to be parked.
- A 2011 *Hotel Technical Memorandum* prepared by W-ZHA is included in the Plan as Appendix 3; it covers an area defined for study purposes as East Alexandria; rooms for this area currently totals 2,780 according to Smith Travel Research. These properties maintained an effective 2009

occupancy of just over 70%, which is considered healthy by industry standards.

- There is only one hotel included in the Plan study area, namely the Crowne Plaza. Due to current zoning restrictions on land use, there is no opportunity to create high quality lodging along the Potomac River in Alexandria. The Plan and a rezoning as outlined in Section IV would allow hotels under the W-1 zone for development sites in the planning area with an SUP. This will allow access to this yet untapped and highly desirable feature of Old Town. Redevelopment sites identified the Plan will be afforded a geographic premium unavailable to any other property in the City.

More summary information on hotels is included in Attachment VI – Hotel Use Analysis.

III. KEY PLANNING ELEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT SITES

A. Planning Elements

There are several key planning elements which are integral to the Plan's ability to enhance past and present goals of expanding public access, parkland, and connectivity; improving public amenities to enliven the waterfront through water-based and land-based activity; incorporating the use of art and history; increasing the waterfront's financial and environmental sustainability; preserving historic structures; and completing the redevelopment of remaining development sites. These include:

- **Establishing the foot of King Street as the gateway to the City** by extending the King Street pier out into the water, creating a signature harbor for Alexandria's waterfront and a hub for water taxis.
- **Rediscovering The Strand as a place for fun** with new parks offering activities for families and individuals, new waterfront dining options, historic ships, and highlighting The Strand as one of several **cultural anchors** along the waterfront with new opportunities to learn about Alexandria's history.
- **Creating new places for people to get together and enjoy themselves**, by adding approximately five acres of public space, including new public piers, new parks and plazas, re-opened alleys, pedestrian-oriented streets, and a continuous walkway along the waterfront.
- **Making sure new development contributes to our quality of life**, by guiding the transformation of three remaining development sites in the core

of the planning area: Robinson Terminal North and South and the 200 Block of Union Street, so as to provide restaurants and outdoor dining, hotels, retail, a marina, and adaptive reuse of the historic warehouses.

- **Sustaining our shoreline and environmental resources** by creating a more natural shoreline, introducing native plants, fortifying the bulkhead, and integrating flood mitigation.
- **Incorporating history** through interpretative activities and uses that reflect the history of the waterfront, architecture that recalls the past, adaptive reuse of buildings, use of materials in creating or enhancing public spaces and buildings, marking historical places, and more.
- **Incorporating art** through an art walk; public art and features; and creative, fun and educational art and cultural activity and utilizing art and history as unifying features along the waterfront.

B. Remaining Development Sites

Very few redevelopment sites remain along the waterfront. The Plan identifies three private sites, as depicted on page 84, and includes Development Goals and Guidelines for each one. The sites are:

- Robinson Terminal North
- Robinson Terminal South
- Cummings/Turner Block

Beyond technical regulatory provisions, the adopted land use plans that now govern the waterfront have little guidance for redevelopment. The Plan, with its Goals and Guidelines and other tools, provides greater clarity regarding the City's expectations for redevelopment and greater certainty that redevelopment will address public expectations. The more refined approach for each development site focuses on design, historic importance and amenities and, most importantly, each site's physical connection with the new public open spaces and facilities in the Plan.

As to each site, the Plan proposes opportunity for a mixed use scenario with active ground floor uses. A system of active frontages is integral in connecting waterfront places, as illustrated on pages 86 and 87 of the Plan. Further, the Plan proposes some increase to what existing zoning already permits, but does so with additional requirements. Thus, increases in density are permitted but only with SUP approval, and only if the proposed development is found to comply with the specific Development Goals and Guidelines outlined below.

Each of the Development sites will continue to be subject to the W-1 zone, but, as Section IV outlines, the zone text is proposed to be modified to allow hotels with SUP approval; to allow additional density with SUP approval; and to require compliance with the Development Goals and Guidelines in the Plan. No height limits are proposed to change with the exception of the portion of Robinson Terminal North to the west of Union Street, which is proposed to increase from 55 ft. to 66 ft. This change will align the Zoning Ordinance with the Height Districts for this area.

As to Robinson Terminal South and the Cummings/Turner block, each are located within both the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Potomac River Vicinity Height District, making them already subject to design guidelines and standards in existing zoning regulations that will not change at sections 6-404 and 10-105(A)(4)).

IV. PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

The W-1 zone was adopted as part of the City's Zoning Ordinance in 1982. It has remained relatively the same since that time, with some few changes in 1992. The zone has provided the development rights for several of the private properties developed since that time along the River, including Fords Landing, Harborside and Rivergate. The Plan recommends amending that zone as to the three remaining sites on the waterfront for which future private development is anticipated.

As discussed in great detail at pp. 84 - 101 in the Plan, these sites are currently zoned W-1 which already allows some development opportunities, and are subject to certain BAR and height district regulations. However, under the current W-1 Zone, the particular type and design of development that is most conducive to coexistence with public parks, activity and access ways along the waterfront is not as clearly defined. If the W-1 Zone is not changed, those sites are likely to develop as private townhouses.

It is significant to note that the proposed zoning changes to W-1 do not delete any rights that exist today. To the extent a developer prefers the existing zoning, with its permitted uses and densities, the ability to develop in accord with those rules continues. The additional use and density are provided as incentives to achieve the particular development and design the Plan has outlined as most desirable.

The following specific W-1 Zone changes are recommended, consistent with the information about uses, density and height in the Plan document itself *and relying on the Development Goals and Development Guidelines listed in the Plan document.*

1. Hotel Use: Amendment to section 5-503 to add hotels as a use, provided a SUP is approved and the development is consistent with the Design Goals and Guidelines in the Waterfront Plan for the site. A central part of the Plan is to encourage hotels as opposed to private residential uses, especially townhouses because residential essentially makes the land closest to the river private. The design

guidelines do provide some flexibility for residential uses, already allowed in the W-1 zone, but they are best on the blocks away from the river. However, residential development could still be allowed along the river if there is a showing that it can coexist with the planned public activity, provide a welcoming presence to visitors, and preferably not include permanent owner-occupied units. (See, e.g, for Robinson Terminal North, Guideline #4 at p. 90.)

2. FAR Increase: Amendment to section 5-504 to allow increased FAR for the three development sites, provided a SUP is approved and provided the development is consistent with the Design Goals and Guidelines in the Waterfront Plan for the site. The current densities allowed in the W-1 zone are lower than the maximum permitted under the 1983 Robinson Terminal Settlement Agreement with the Federal Government and City, and lower than what will permit a quality development with underground parking to be built. Therefore, the proposed zoning allows FAR up to the maximums provided in the 1983 Robinson Terminal Settlement Agreement, and consistent with the amounts shown in the chart on p. 101 of the Plan. A more detailed chart with additional information, including a before and after comparison of FAR for each part of each development is included as Attachment VII – Chart. This table replaces the table located in the Plan document at p. 101. The table is expanded to show calculations for all of the individual parcels. In addition, it is expanded to show how the *entire* Cumming/Turner block could redevelop under the proposed zoning (the table in the Plan document assumed that some parcels would redevelop but others would not). The table is also revised to more accurately convey the potential for redevelopment under current zoning.

As an example, the chart shows that for Robinson Terminal North, current zoning allows a FAR of 2.0; the 1983 Settlement Agreement and proposed zoning actually allows an effective FAR of somewhat less than that, or 1.69. The lower number includes the entire land within the site in the calculation, although some of it may not be used for development. As to Robinson Terminal South, current zoning allows an FAR of 2.0; the 1983 Settlement Agreement and proposed zoning allow a bit more than that, or 2.32. For the Cummings Turner block, the proposed zoning increases the FAR from 2.0 to 3.0, but the increase is necessary to achieve a cohesive development of the block's separate parcels, as well as retention of the historic buildings. The physical model of the waterfront which has been on public display at City Hall for six weeks demonstrates the ability of these FAR numbers to result in buildings that are well designed, do not overwhelm the surrounding area, provide breaks through the blocks and significant open space, and otherwise work compatibly with the adjacent residential neighborhood as well as with nearby active open space areas.

In order to achieve the increased FAR, the zoning requires that the developments obtain SUP approval and comply with the long list of Development Goals and Guidelines set out in the Plan. Those Guidelines are detailed and tailored to address the multitude of issues at each individual site while at the same time providing the

City with an opportunity for enhanced development and quality design over what current zoning would produce.

3. Height Correction for one block: Amendment to section 5-507 to state that maximum heights throughout the W-1 Zone will be those that are shown on the height district maps. No height limits are proposed to change on any W-1 zoned land, with the exception of that portion of Robinson Terminal North that is west of North Union Street, which will change from 55 to 66 feet, consistent with the current height district map for that land and for the parcels nearby in Height District #4. (See Plan Figure 26, p. 85.) Nor does the zoning change the fact that, except for that one block, all the remaining developable land is within Height District #3 and is already required to obtain SUP approval for any height over 30 feet, and the process relies on certain design criteria and standards in the zoning ordinance at section 6-404.

4. Elimination of unsuitable uses: Amendment to section 5-503 to delete two uses: rooming house and tourist home. These uses, historically part of the City's Zoning Ordinance, including the W-1 zone, are not compatible or suitable for the City's waterfront. There are no existing developed parcels that would be appropriate for either a rooming house or tourist home; there have been no applications to use waterfront property for those uses in the last 30 years; and those uses would not be suitable or compatible with the development concepts for the future development sites.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of these zoning text changes because they allow reasonable development, compatible uses, and a design and scale of development particularly suitable for each of the development sites in the Plan.

V. SCHEDULE AND NEXT STEPS

The Planning Commission is scheduled to meet twice on this item, with the first meeting scheduled for April 5, 2011 and the second for May 3, 2011. City Council action is then anticipated in May and/or June 2011. Once adopted, there are a number of recommendations in the Plan which can begin immediately as the City prepares to undertake the phasing program outlined in Section II. Some immediate steps might include.

- (1) Working in partnership with the community on planning and organizational matters relating to implementation.
- (2) Continuing to interface with regulatory agencies to further discussion and processes regarding permitting.
- (3) Initiating the Parking Implementation Plan.
- (4) Preparing for solicitation of engineering and design studies.

- (5) Continuing to work with the art and history communities on implementation aspects of their plans.
- (6) Meeting with property owners regarding redevelopment sites.

VI. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Initiate and adopt by Resolution the Waterfront Small Area Plan as an amendment to the City's Master Plan; and
- B. Initiate and recommend approval of the proposed text amendment revising Section 5-500 of the Zoning Ordinance, W-1/Waterfront mixed use zone.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

Order of attachments:

- I - Waterfront Plan and Appendices
- II – Flood Mitigation
- III - Parking
- IV – Restaurant Building
- V – Costs/Revenues/Phasing
- VI – Hotel Use Analysis
- VII – Development Chart
- VIII – Letters

PROPOSED ZONING TEXT CHANGES

Sec. 5-500 W-1/Waterfront mixed use zone.

- 5-501 Purpose. The W-1 zone is intended to promote mixed use development with suitable public amenities along appropriate portions of the city's waterfront by permitting a mixture of residential, commercial, cultural and institutional uses and by allowing greater densities than would otherwise be permitted to the extent the proposed mix of uses, the design and the location warrant.
- 5-502 Permitted uses. The following uses are permitted in the W-1 zone:
- (A) Single-family dwelling;
 - (A.1) Two-family dwelling;
 - (A.2) Townhouse dwelling;
 - (B) Multifamily dwelling;
 - (C) Business and professional office;
 - (D) Public building;
 - (E) Public park, athletic field or other outdoor recreation facility;
 - (F) Public utility service yard and/or electrical receiving or transforming station, provided the use and/or structure was in existence prior to 1982 and the use has been continued thereafter;
 - (G) Accessory uses, as permitted by section 7-100.
- 5-503 Special uses. The following uses may be allowed in the W-1 zone pursuant to a special use permit:
- (A) Commercial outdoor recreation facility;
 - (B) Commercial shipping and freight terminal;
 - (C) Facilities used for docking or berthing of boats or ships, including public or private marinas and/or boat docks with related facilities limited to water and electricity connections;
 - (D) Health and athletic club;
 - (E) Home for the elderly;
 - (F) Nursery school;
 - (G) Outdoor food and crafts market;
 - (H) Personal service establishment;
 - (I) Privately owned public use building such as civic auditorium or performing arts center;
 - (J) Restaurant;
 - (K) Retail shopping establishment;
 - ~~(L) Rooming house;~~
 - ~~(M) Tourist home;~~
 - (N) Utilities, as permitted by section 7-1200.
 - (O) Hotel, consistent with the Development Goals and Guidelines for Development Sites in the Waterfront small area plan.

- 5-503.1 Prohibited uses. Any use which is not a permitted, special or accessory use pursuant to this section 5-500 is prohibited.
- 5-504 Floor area ratio. The permitted floor area ratio of a development in the W-1 zone depends on whether a single use or mixture of uses is proposed and whether a special use permit is sought.
- (A) *Single use.* If a parcel is developed for only commercial use or for only residential use, the maximum permitted floor area ratio is:
 - (1) Commercial: .75, or
 - (2) Residential: 1.0In the case of either (1) or (2), an additional .25 of retail use is permitted.
 - (B) *Mixed use.* If a parcel is developed for both commercial and residential use, and the residential use constitutes at least 25 percent of the floor space of the development, the maximum permitted floor area ratio is 1.0 plus an additional .25 of retail use.
 - (C) *Mixed use or residential/SUP.* If at least 50 percent of the floor space of the proposed development is for residential use and if the commercial use within such a development does not exceed a floor area ratio of .75, then, with a special use permit, the maximum permitted floor area ratio may be increased to an amount not to exceed 2.0.
 - (D) Development sites in waterfront plan/SUP. For property that is part of a development site identified in the waterfront small area plan, with a special use permit, the maximum floor area ratio may be increased provided the development meets and is consistent with the Development Goals and Guidelines listed in the Waterfront plan for the property.
- 5-505 *Density and lot requirements.*
- (A) *Density.* Gross density shall not exceed 30 dwelling units per acre.
 - (B) *Lot size.*
 - (1) Each structure containing multifamily dwellings shall be located on a lot with a minimum of 1,452 square feet of land area for each dwelling unit.
 - (2) Each townhouse dwelling shall be located on a lot with a minimum of 1452 square feet of land area.
 - (3) Each other principal use shall be located on a lot with no minimum land area requirement except that which occurs as a result of other applicable regulations, such as yards, floor area ratio and parking.
 - (C) *Lot width and frontage.*
 - (1) For multifamily dwellings, the minimum lot width at the front lot and building line shall be 50 feet.
 - (2) For townhouses, the minimum lot width at the front lot and building line shall be 18 feet for all lots except interior lots for which the minimum lot width at the front lot and building line shall be 26 feet.

- (3) For all other principal uses, there shall be no minimum lot and building line requirements except those which occur as a result of other applicable regulations.

5-506 *Yard requirements.*

- (A) *Front yard.* No front yard is required except as may be applicable pursuant to the supplemental yard and setback regulations of section 7-1000 and the zone transition requirements of section 7-900.
- (B) *Side yards.* No side yards are required except in the following cases:
- (1) Each interior end unit in a group of townhouses shall provide a side yard of at least 8 feet.
 - (2) Multifamily residential buildings shall provide two side yards based on a setback ratio of 1:2 and a minimum of 16 feet.
- (C) *Rear yard.* Each lot shall provide a rear yard of at least 8 feet, except that each multifamily residential building shall provide a rear yard based on a setback ratio of 1:2 and a minimum distance of 16 feet.

5-507 *Height.* The maximum permitted height of buildings is ~~55 feet.~~ the height shown in the applicable height district map.

5-508 *Open and usable space.* Residential uses shall provide a minimum of 300 square feet of open and usable space per dwelling unit, exclusive of any area required for off-street parking. The location and shape of such space shall be subject to the director's determination that it is functional and usable space for residents, visitors and other persons. Such open space may be located on landscaped roofs or other areas fully open to the sky which are not at ground level and which are accessible to all residents of the development if the director determines that such space functions as open space for residents to the same extent that ground level open space would. In addition, each use, development or project adjacent to the Potomac River shall provide an open space walkway and bike way adjacent to the high watermark of the Potomac River.

5-509 *Ground floor occupancy regulations.*

- (A) No room or space used for residential purposes or commercial purposes, other than restaurant or retail room or space, shall be permitted on the ground floor of any building.
- (B) The provisions of section 5-509(A) shall not apply if publicly accessible waterfront or waterfront-related amenities are provided in conjunction with a proposed building, subject to approval of a site plan for such amenities and building pursuant to section 11-400.
- (C) Publicly accessible waterfront or waterfront-related amenities may include, but are not limited to, pedestrians walkways and landscaped open space areas connected to the walkway/bikeway required along the waterfront by section 5-508, boat docking facilities, or similar improvements that enhance pedestrian access to and enjoyment of the waterfront area. The planning commission, or city council on appeal,

shall approve the site plan submitted pursuant to section 5-509(B) if the commission or council in its reasonable discretion determines that the amenities to be provided enhance the publicly oriented vitality of the waterfront area.

- (D) As used in this section 5-509, "ground floor" means that floor of a building which is approximately or most nearly level with the ground surface in the general vicinity of the building and includes the headroom above such floor.
- (E) The residential building exclusions of section 11-404(A) shall not apply to any site plan submitted under the provisions of this section 5-500. Nothing in this section 5-509 shall excuse compliance with the use regulations of this section 5-500, including any requirement for a special use permit of section 5-503, or with the floodplain regulations of section 6-300.
- (F) Any ground floor room or space used for residential purposes or commercial purposes other than restaurant or retail room or space, in a building for which a preliminary site plan was approved on or before June 28, 1988, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of this section 5-509.

5-510 Underground utilities. All developments containing new or replacement utility facilities within the development shall provide for underground installation of said facilities.

5-511 Use limitations. Health club use shall include health, athletic, and bath clubs or establishments, massage establishment, including facilities incidental to such uses; provided, however, that a special use permit granted for the operation of a massage establishment as defined in section 11-4-1 of the city code shall apply exclusively to the permittee named therein and shall not be transferable to any other firm or individual. *5-512* Additional regulations for single-family, two-family and townhouse dwellings.

- (A) *Lot size.* Each single-family dwelling shall be located on a lot with a minimum land area of 5,000 square feet. In the case of a two-family dwelling, the lot shall contain 2,500 square feet of land area for each dwelling unit.
- (B) *Frontage.* When measured at both the front lot line and the front building line, each single-family dwelling and two-family duplex dwelling requires a minimum of 50 feet of frontage, and a semi-detached dwelling requires a minimum frontage of 37.5 feet for each dwelling unit.
- (C) *Yards.* For residential uses the following yard requirements apply: Each single-family, and two-family dwelling shall provide a front yard of 20 feet; a rear yard based on a 1:1 setback ratio and a minimum of eight feet; and side yards based on a 1:3 setback ratio and a minimum of eight feet. Each interior end unit townhouse shall provide a side yard based on a 1:3 setback ratio and a minimum of eight feet.

- (D) *Mixed use.* When a development includes both residential and nonresidential uses, the residential lot size, frontage and yard regulations shall be applicable to the residential component of the development.

5-513 *Accessory apartments.* One or two apartment dwelling units, located on a floor or floors above retail or commercial uses, shall be permitted as an accessory use. Such apartments shall be categorized as nonresidential for the purpose of applying the area and bulk regulations of this zone, and each such apartment shall provide the parking required for a multifamily dwelling unit of equivalent size.

(Ord. No. 3606, §§ 6--9, 12-12-92; Ord. No. 3612, §§ 1, 3, 1-23-93; Ord. No. 3629, §§ 1--4, 5-15-93; Ord. No. 3753, § 1, 9-27-94)

RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2011-0001

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Department of Planning and Zoning staff initiated a process for creation of the Waterfront Small Area Plan as an amendment to the City's 1992 Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the boundaries for the Waterfront Small Area Plan consist of Daingerfield Island at its north end and Jones Point Park at its southern end (both national parks). In between, the plan is bounded to the east by the Potomac River and to the west by (from north to south) East Abingdon Drive beginning just north of Marina Drive to the railroad tracks, Continuing southeast along the railroad tracks to a point just west of Pitt Street, Continuing east along Bashford Lane to North Royal Street, Continuing south along North Royal Street to Third Street, Continuing east along Third Street to North Fairfax Street, Continuing south along North Fairfax Street to Queen Street, Continuing east along Queen Street to a point approximately 100 feet west of North Union Street, Continuing south about 100 feet west of Union Street to Wolfe Street, Following along the northern, western, and southern boundary of Windmill Hill Park until it meets South Union Street, Continuing south on South Union Street to Jones Point Park; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has held nearly 100 meetings and events since 2009 with the community, City staff, technical experts, and work sessions with Planning Commission and City Council to gather information and ideas, and to create a vision, goals, and guiding principles for the Waterfront Small Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, these efforts have resulted in the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan chapter of the City's 1992 Master Plan which, like past waterfront planning efforts, is designed to promote an expansion of open and public space, visual and physical connectivity, wider opportunities for water-oriented and land-side recreation, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, and guidelines for the limited number of remaining redevelopment sites along the waterfront; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the amendment to the City's 1992 Master Plan to create a Waterfront Small Area Plan chapter on April 5, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, harmonious, and sustainable use, development and enjoyment of the **Waterfront Small Area** section of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan; and

3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range and sustainable recommendations for the general development of the **Waterfront Small Area Plan**; and

4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the amendment for the **Waterfront Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The following amendment to create a **Waterfront Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in hereby adopted.
2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the **3rd day of May, 2011**.

John Komoroske, Chairman
Alexandria Planning Commission


ATTEST: _____
Faroll Hamer, Secretary


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 28, 2010

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

FROM: RICHARD J. BAIER, P.E., LEED AP, DIRECTOR,
TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 

SUBJECT: POTOMAC WATERFRONT FLOOD MITIGATION STUDY

This memo is an update on the ongoing Potomac Waterfront Flood Mitigation study, being conducted by T&ES. The flood mitigation study is complimentary to, and is being coordinated with the Waterfront planning process being conducted by P&Z.

The scope of the Flood Mitigation Study is to identify the flooding problem, determine the cause(s) of the flooding problem, identify potential solutions, analyze these potential solutions and recommend the best solutions.

A draft report has been completed and is available for public viewing on the City's website at alexandriava.gov/Waterfront. This memo summarizes the findings of the draft report and discusses the next steps.

Report Summary

For the purposes of the report, the study area was divided into four focus areas: Jones Point, King Street, Waterfront Commercial, and North Union.

Twenty-seven mitigation measures were identified and discussed in a series of public and staff meetings that occurred from October 2007 through November 2008. During that process, a numerical scoring system was developed to select mitigation measures to consider further. The following nine mitigation measures were selected for detailed evaluation using this scoring system.

Structural measures: provide dry floodproofing; acquire properties; elevate structures; construct engineered structural barriers (i.e., waterfront floodwall and Jones Point berm) construct an elevated walkway that would also be a floodwall structure; and increase the inlet and road elevation in the vicinity of the Lower King Street area.

Nonstructural measures: relocate internal supplies, products/goods above the flooding depth; improve the City's floodplain and zoning ordinances; and improve the sandbag programs or provide other temporary flood deterrents

Conceptual designs were developed for the floodwall, Jones Point berm, the elevated walkway, and roadway improvements.

A benefit-cost analysis (BCA) was performed for the six structural mitigation measures. A BCA was not computed for the proposed nonstructural mitigation measures. Therefore, nonstructural mitigation measures were evaluated only for applicability and technical feasibility. The historic nature of the City adds to the cost and complexity of the mitigation measures considered.

The report does not recommend a single flood mitigation solution, but rather a series of measures is recommended to provide protection against flood events on the Potomac River. Three structural measures are recommended: the elevated walkway, floodproofing, and the inlet and roadway improvements. These measures require significant capital expense and cooperation from private property owners. In addition, these projects call for significant effort to comply with applicable regulations.

Three flood levels were examined in this study, Nuisance (4 feet NAVD88), Intermediate (8 feet NAVD88) and Extreme (100-year, 10.2 feet NAVD88). The recommended solutions tend toward the lower end of these flood levels. *The most cost-effective level of protection and one which staff will be recommending is 6 feet NAVD88, which has a recurrence interval of approximately 10 years.* While “6 feet” sounds high, understand that high tide (mean high water) is 2.2 feet NAVD88, and that the Alexandria existing shoreline elevations range from 2 to 4 feet NAVD88. The flood prioritized solution to meet this level would entail creating low level grassy berms in parks, installation of “pop up” closure structures only several feet high in the unit block of a few streets and the installation of low seating walls into the park landscape. It would likely be difficult for the untrained eye to actually see these type structures as flood protective infrastructure. At higher protection elevations, the physical size and cost of the works increase dramatically, and BCA drops quickly. Also, higher protection would be visually obtrusive and effectively wall off the river from the shoreline which would damage the public’s beneficial use of the waterfront. These recommended solutions do not address the 100-year flood, and will not change the requirement or rates for flood insurance along the Potomac River waterfront.

It should also be noted that some of the most cost-beneficial measures, including nearly all manner of building floodproofing, would be carried out by private property owners, not by the City. The City role in these efforts would be public outreach and education.

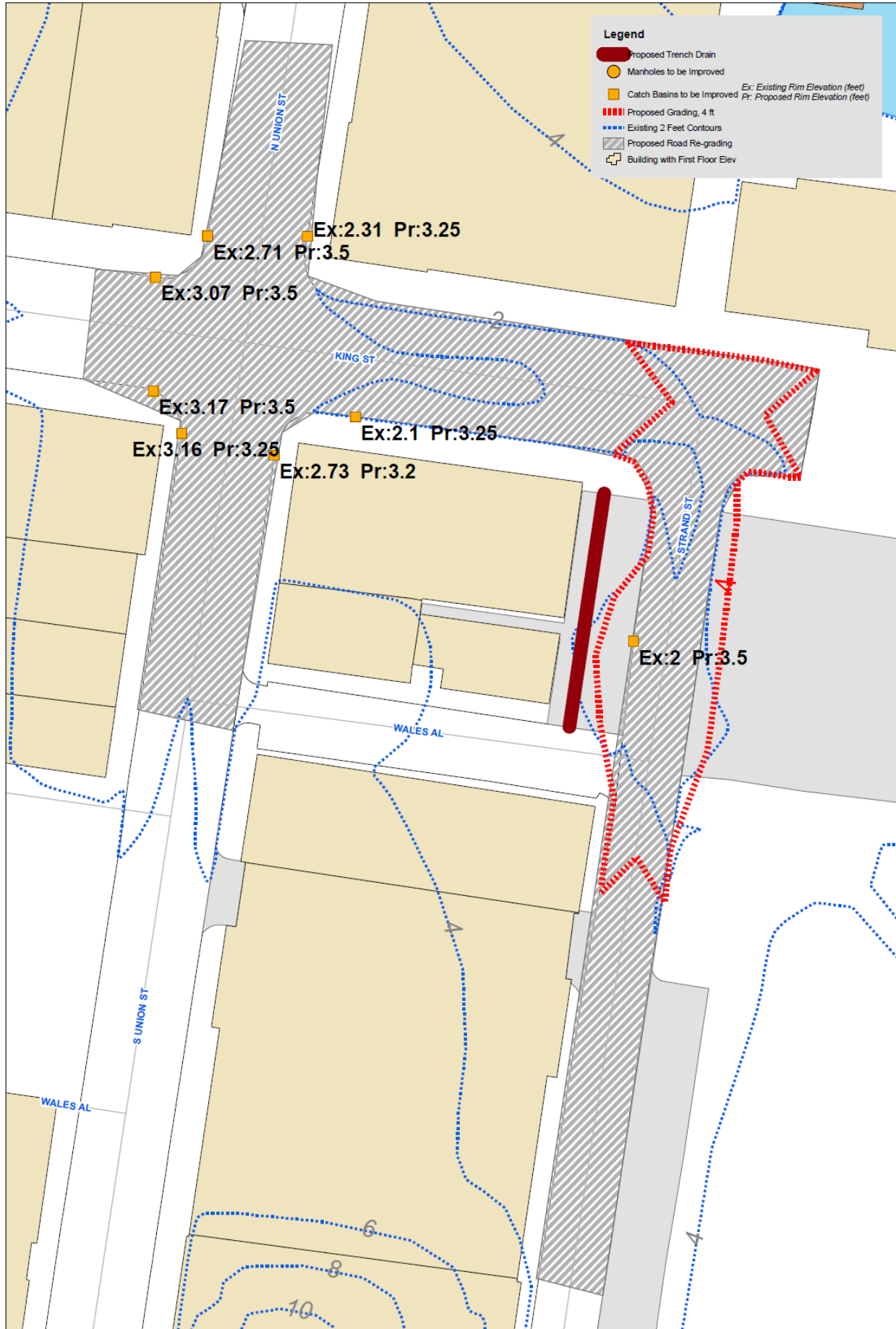
To further safeguard all properties, numerous nonstructural recommendations are made, which include improvement of the City’s floodplain ordinances and the existing sandbag program. Proceeding with implementation of the recommended flood mitigation measures is essential to reduce the extensive flood damage in the City.

T&ES held a public meeting on March 16, 2010 at 7:00p-9:00p in the Lee Center to discuss the study findings and educate residents about what they can do to avoid flood damages to their properties. In addition, the findings of this study will be integrated into the Waterfront Plan.

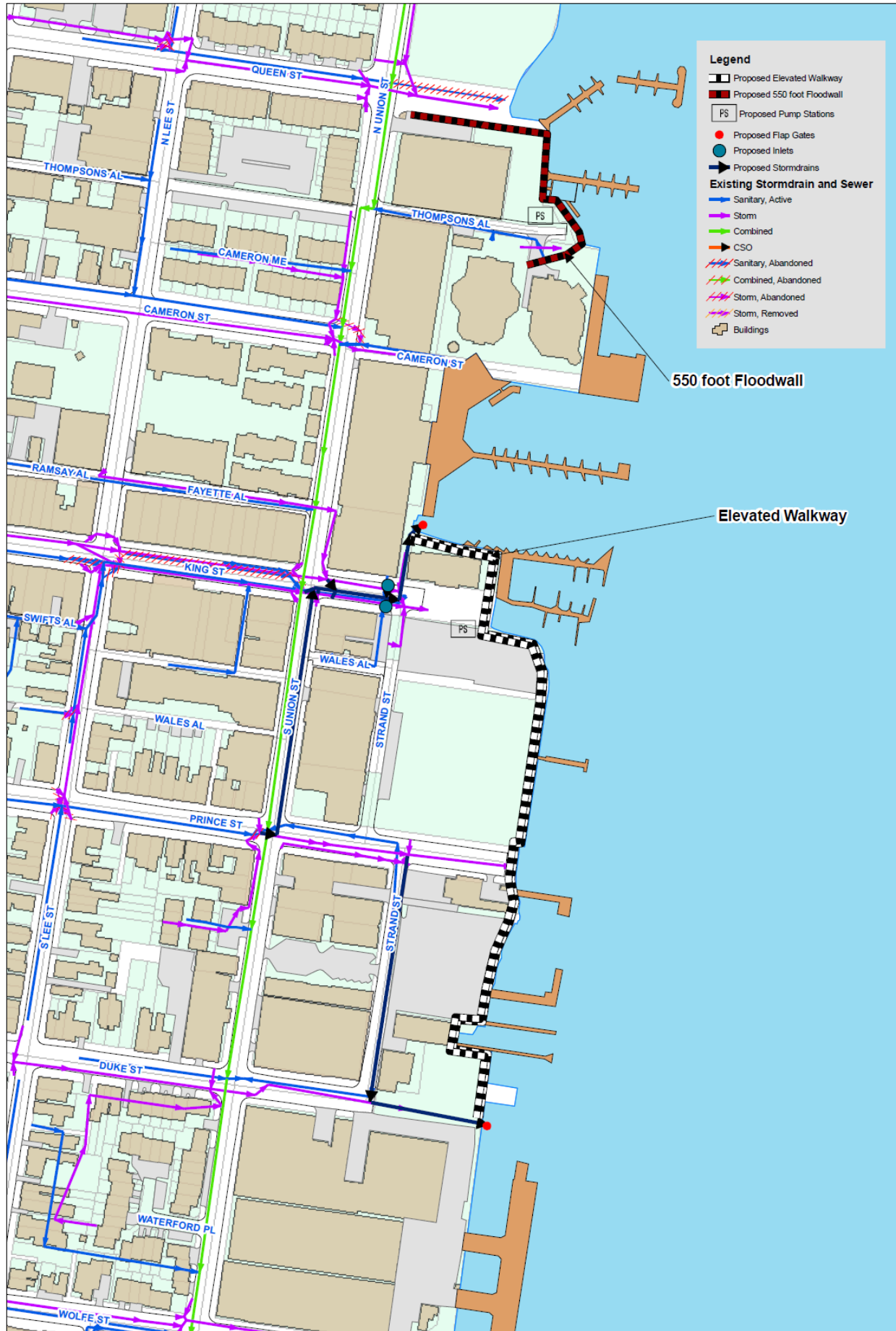
If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at 703-746-4025.

cc: Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Michele R. Evans, Deputy City Manager
Emily Baker, City Engineer, T&ES Engineering
Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning & Zoning

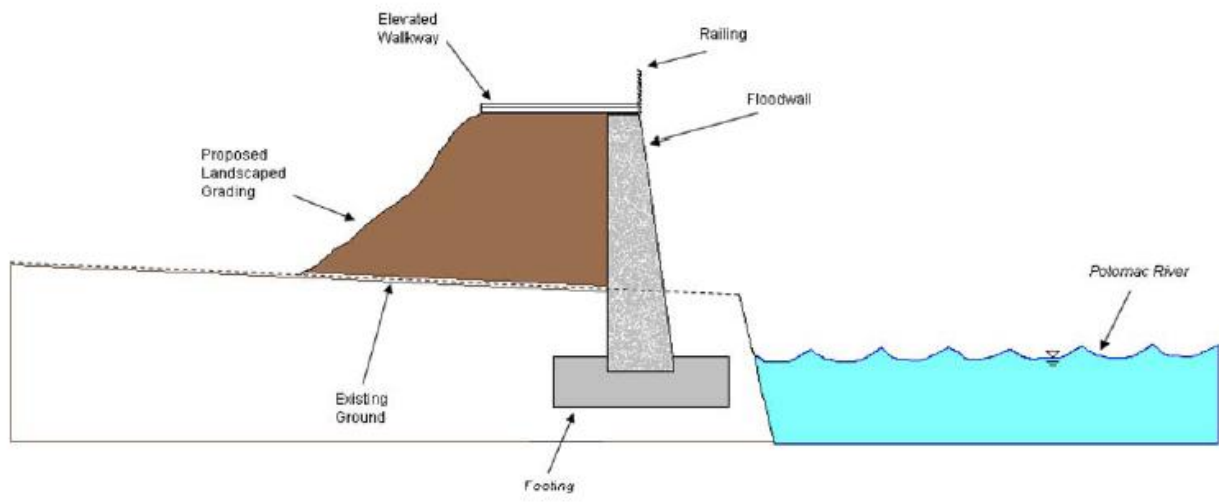
Elevated Pavement



Walkway and Floodwall Proposed by URS Flood Mitigation Study



Section and Perspective of the Elevated Walkway in Waterfront Park



Integrated Flood Control



On-Street Parking Spaces: 1428

Waterfront Parking Summary

Parking spaces today: 2,693
Parking spaces used today: 1,972
Parking spaces available today: 721

Added parking demand: 390
Surface parking spaces reduced: 171
Needed for the future: 561

Public garage valet: 633
Private garage spaces: 460
Private garage spaces (with valet): 337
Additional spaces: 1,430



Parking Recommendations:

4.33: The Plan recommends that a Waterfront Parking Implementation Plan be created in order to articulate those actions that must proceed in the future to support the Waterfront Plan and the events that are deemed appropriate triggers for such actions. It should include at least four specific categories of implementation measures both to create additional parking opportunities and to protect existing residential areas:

- a. **Public garage capacity.** Monitoring utilization in existing public garages, setting triggers for the need for specific number of new parking spaces to be added to parking capacity at peak times. For example, assuming full utilization of on street parking, when the utilization of public garages in the Waterfront Core area reaches a level of 85% use, then additional parking spaces would be added to the parking capacity during peak times, through the use of garage attendants, valet parking programs, and the opening of new private garages (supported with appropriate wayfinding signage).
- b. **Waterfront development.** Requiring additional parking capacity at the point that new parking demand generators are constructed on the Waterfront.
- c. **Valet parking.** Implementing a systematic valet parking program generally for Old Town and King Street, with specific emphasis on the Waterfront core area.
- d. **Protecting residential parking.** Testing and monitoring the effect of waterfront development on residential parking areas, with the understanding that additional protective measures should be taken to protect those residential parking areas.

The Parking Implementation Plan should be created immediately after the adoption of the Waterfront Plan. It should be led by a multi-agency team and also be assisted by the advice of stakeholders affected by parking issues in the waterfront area.

4.34: Before new restaurant uses that place significant new demand for parking are allowed through the SUP process, parking solutions to meet that new demand will need to be calculated, identified and discussed in the SUP report recommendations in order to ensure that sufficient parking is in place contemporaneously with the opening of the restaurant.

4.35: Continue to implement the City's wayfinding program to facilitate access to public parking facilities throughout the waterfront planning area.

4.36: Continue to implement the recommendations of the February 2010 Old Town Alexandria Area Parking Study and the 2010 Old Town Alexandria Area Parking Work Group, including those strategies designed to encourage use of on-street spaces in shopping areas for short-term visits, to encourage the use of parking garages for longer-term parking, and to protect residential areas from excessive parking impacts.

4.37: Consider implementing new parking technologies such as smart phone applications that show locations, rates, and spaces available in parking garages.

Proposed Waterfront Park Building

The Waterfront Plan recommends constructing a building along the western edge of Waterfront Park to achieve the following objectives:

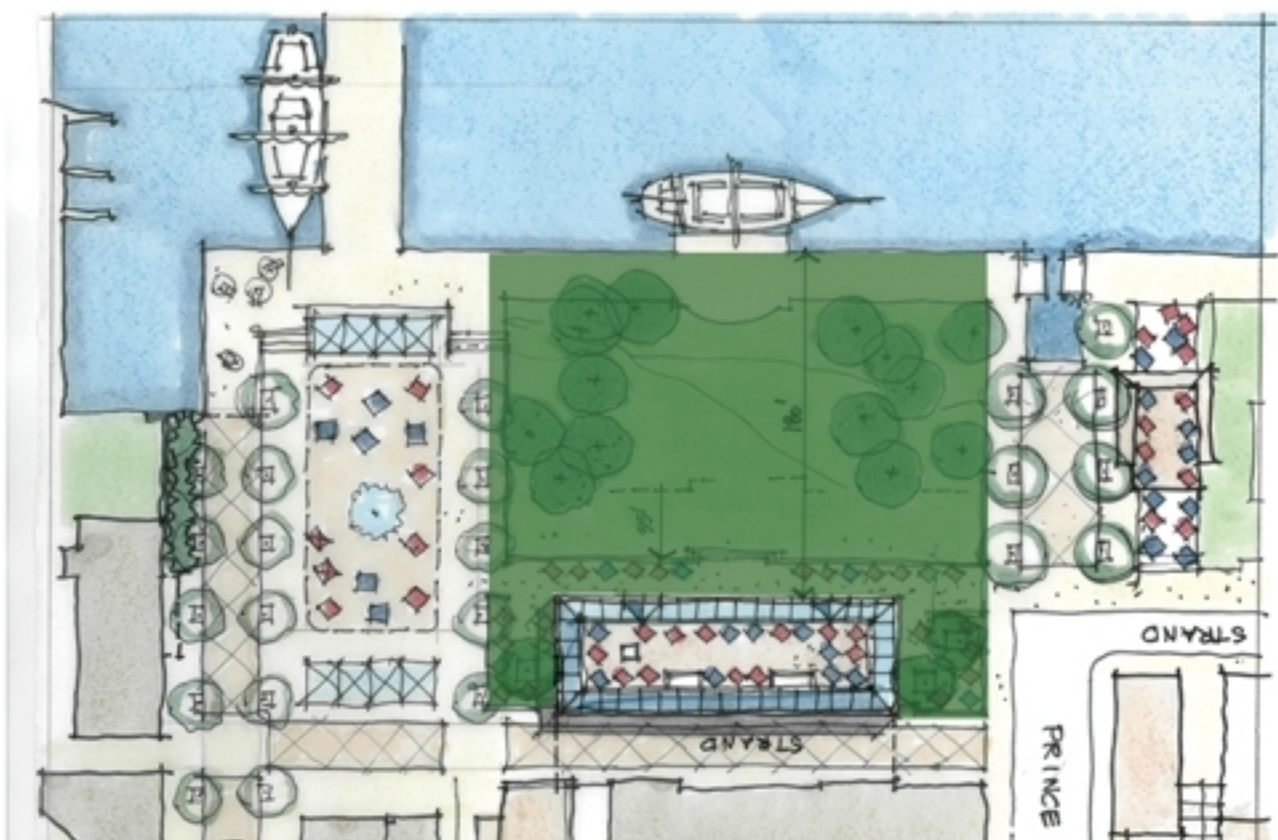
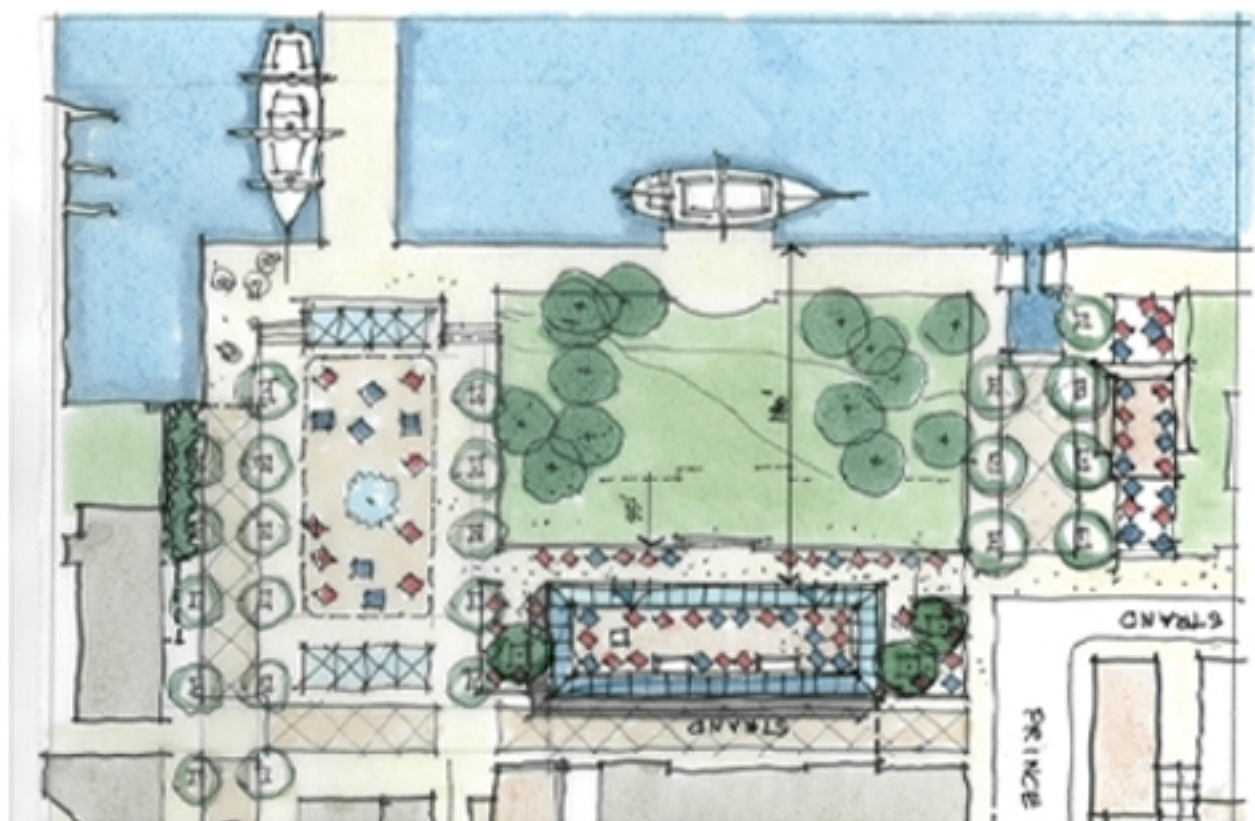
- A potential solution for the foot of King Street is to relocate the ODBC parking lot away from the water. A building in this location would both hide and pay for the parking lot.
- Waterfront Park is currently surrounded on three sides by parking, including the ground floor of the Strand building in the 100 block of South Union Street. The parking both hides the park and makes the park less inviting. A high-quality, well-designed building would increase the appeal of the park and attract more visitors, and provide “eyes on the park.” A more populated park feels safer, both night and day.
- A goal of the Plan is to link the activity of King Street to the Strand where redevelopment and a new park is planned.
- The building could incorporate elements of the flood mitigation strategy, including floodwalls and pumps.
- A restaurant could provide tax revenues sufficient for a very high level of maintenance in the new park area.
- It is important to remember that the Plan’s concept of a new Fitzgerald Square/Waterfront Park would *increase* the amount of park and public space at the foot of King Street.
- The main alternative to the restaurant building is a surface parking lot.

The draft Waterfront Plan includes two different options for a 33,000 square foot building; the City Council requested that staff look at a much smaller building. This document includes a proposal for an under-11,000 square foot building. In addition to being one-third the size of the original, the new proposed building has the following features:

- The new Waterfront Park building concept is approximately 60 feet in depth and 175 feet in length along The Strand, yielding around 10,500 square feet.
- Because the building would incorporate an existing strip of parking, the amount of existing parkland that would be used for the restaurant is reduced. The new building concept extends far less (by 35 feet) into the existing Waterfront Park than the previous design. The resulting Waterfront Park would extend 180 feet from shoreline to the walkway in front of the new building.
- As a result, the walkway in front of the new building lines up with the existing street (The Strand) to the south. This means that people walking toward King Street from Chadwick’s will not have their view blocked by a building.
- Parking to serve either the ODBC and/or new restaurant use could be provided at or below grade beneath the new building.
- The new concept is reduced in height and length so that it does not block most views from the existing Strand building. From Waterfront Park, the new building would mask the blank garage walls of the Strand building and about 8 feet (non-windowed) of the

new Virtue restaurant. The building would not block views to and from Wales Alley, and would allow a view of the majority of Waterfront Park from King Street.

- The new building concept is only one story in height and the exterior façade of the building, with exception of two gable elements, is only 14 feet high above the adjacent walkway fronting Waterfront Park, and steps back to a maximum height of 18 feet at the roof parapet. This lower height mitigates any potential view blocking of rear-facing tenants of the adjacent buildings.
- The conceptual design is one of a largely glass structure, taking architectural cues from the George Washington-designed “Orangery” or greenhouse at Mount Vernon, to create a low-slung market style building which activates Waterfront Park.
- The building’s design creates a large roof top space suitable for seasonal outdoor dining, offering panoramic views of the Potomac River.
- The building’s conceptual architecture and design respect the rear façade of the existing 210 South Union Street building, by maintaining a low height below functional window space, and incorporating thematic relation to that building’s architectural style. Sloped glazing echoing the glass mansard, divided light window openings, semi-circular arches, and other materials and detailing ensure compatibility with the 210 South Union Street building.







Waterfront Plan Costs, Revenues and Phasing

Waterfront Plan Costs

- The Waterfront Plan's recommended park, cultural, marine and shoreline improvements are estimated to cost up to \$39 million (in 2011 dollars).
 - About \$8 million would be spent to create a new 1 acre riverfront park – what the Plan calls an expanded Point Lumley Park – on the site of an existing parking lot.
 - Another \$8 million would transform the foot of King Street and the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot into Fitzgerald Square, linking King Street to The Strand and creating a new public pier extending into the Potomac River.
 - The Plan contains recommendations for the Torpedo Factory area, for the Thompsons Alley area connecting the marina and Founders Park, and for Oronoco Bay Park that are expected to cost approximately \$2.5 million for each area.
- Flood mitigation is estimated to cost \$6.5 million and includes elevating the foot of King Street and The Strand where flooding is most frequent, as well as integrating a low flood wall into the proposed park improvements between King Street and Duke Street.
- Over the past month, City staff extensively validated the cost estimates for Waterfront Plan with government and private industry experts. The analysis included comparisons to recent and current waterfront projects at National Harbor, Washington DC, and Arlington.
- Numerous figures were double-checked and some figures were adjusted, but only a few changes were substantial:
 - About \$4.7 million was added to the contingency fund and engineering cost estimates. In the interests of being conservative, City staff chose to increase the contingency fund from 15% to 30% of total cost and increase the expected design/engineering cost from 15% to 20%.
 - The proposed civic/cultural building rose in price from \$1.6 million to \$3.6 million. Smaller or less expensive buildings are possible, as is a developer-funded structure (the land is owned by Robinson Terminal); the new estimate shows the cost of high quality 10,000 square foot building.
 - Completing flood mitigation at the same time as other improvements provide some cost savings.
- To provide greater detail about phasing alternatives, City staff divided the Waterfront into 10 “phasing locations.” Public improvements that are logically completed at the same time were grouped into elements. The cost and relative timing of each element is estimated.
 - The timeframes for phasing are: 0-3 years, 4-6 years, and 7-15 years.
 - The phasing analysis anticipates that the initial flood mitigation work and the Point Lumley Park improvements would be completed in the first three years, the balance of flood mitigation and the Fitzgerald Square/Waterfront Park initiatives in years 4-6, and the balance of the recommended improvements in years 7-15. However, the

timing of the phasing elements is very flexible and can respond to opportunities that may occur. For example, if agreement is reached on the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot issue, then the Fitzgerald Square and Waterfront Park initiatives could accelerate and Point Lumley Park initiatives could be scheduled later.

- The most frequent flooding, at the foot of King Street and nearby areas on Union Street and The Strand, would be addressed in the first phase. This would reduce flooding events from more than 150 per year to 10-15 per year. The floodwall, which provides additional protection to about the 10-year flood, would be started in the first phase and completed before the end of the second phase (by year 6).
- Public art and historic interpretation could occur in any phase, but will also be considered as part of any of the proposed improvements.
- Operating costs have been included in the cost/revenue calculation. The cost/revenue scenario contains an increase of \$1 million per year in operating costs over current levels by year 11. That figure would cover not only increased operating costs due to new facilities, but also an increased level of maintenance for existing parks, public spaces, and marina areas.
- The capital costs of the Plan include the purchase of a waterborne debris skimmer and the operating costs cover additional staff for its operation.

Waterfront Plan Revenues

- At buildout, a redevelopment scenario with a mix of housing, hotel, and restaurant/retail yields a net tax revenue of \$4.8 million (in 2011 dollars). With a phased buildout over 15 years, cumulative tax revenues at the end of 15 years will total \$42 million.
- A redevelopment scenario that assumes that all redevelopment will be residential (with the exception of the Beachcomber and the Waterfront Park building) yields significantly lower revenues: \$1.4 million per year at buildout compared to \$4.8 million for the mixed redevelopment scenario.
- A redevelopment scenario that assumes the City would purchase the Robinson Terminal sites for open space would limit the potential tax revenues to two sources: redevelopment on the Cummings/Turner block and the Waterfront Park building. Net tax revenues would be reduced to about \$750,000 a year.
- On average, a hotel room yields about \$3,600 in net tax revenue annually while a housing unit of about twice the size yields \$1,200, despite the fact that a hotel room is about half the average size of an apartment or condo.
- City staff calculated potential revenues from a mix of new development on the three redevelopment sites: the Cummings/Turner block and Robinson Terminals North and South. The revenue scenario also includes a restaurant in a restored Beachcomber.
 - For analysis purposes, City staff used a development scenario that anticipates that half of both Robinson Terminals will develop as housing and half will develop as hotel. The scenario anticipates a mix of housing, office, retail and hotel on the Cummings/Turner block, with the majority of space being hotel.

- The development scenario used for revenue estimates includes 625 hotel rooms and 319 housing units; the scenario assumes housing units have twice the square footage as the average hotel room.
- Revenue estimates shared at the Planning Commission and City Council worksessions in early 2011 included a 33,000 square foot restaurant in Waterfront Park. City staff has recalculated new revenues using a much smaller restaurant of 11,000 square feet.
- The previous revenue estimates were based on a scenario that did not include redevelopment of the northern third of the Cummings/Turner block, including the buildings along Prince Street. The recalculated revenue estimates include redevelopment of those parcels.
- The mixed redevelopment scenario also anticipates that redevelopment will occur in three phases: 0-3 years, 4-6 years, and 7-15 years.
 - In years 0-3, anticipated redevelopment includes the Beachcomber, redevelopment of the Cummings warehouse at 220 South Union Street, and adaptive reuse of the historic buildings in that block.
 - In years 4-6, anticipated redevelopment includes Robinson Terminal North and the balance of the redevelopable properties in the Cummings/Turner block.
 - In years 7-15, the anticipated redevelopment is Robinson Terminal South.
- Anticipated revenues comes from the real property tax on new development; meals, sales and BPOL taxes on new restaurants; and transient lodging, sales and BPOL taxes on new hotels. All assumptions about market conditions –such as room rates, occupancy rates, and restaurant sales per square foot – are conservative.

Waterfront Plan Cost and Revenue Balance

The analysis of the financial impact of the Waterfront Plan is both simple but at the same time complex. Also, the variables are such that the analysis can only reasonably produce order of magnitude results, which is typical for land use related economic analyses of this kind. To answer the basic question: does the proposed Waterfront Plan pay for itself ? The answer even with using conservative and reasonable assumptions, and without counting the overall quality of life benefits for City residents and businesses, is clearly yes, even without counting secondary or indirect benefits to existing businesses, and the resultant new tax revenues to the City government from the increased business activity. In order to arrive at that conclusion, there are several levels of analysis to consider. The following analyses use conservative and reasonable assumptions about the future. To the degree the assumptions vary from these, future results will vary.

First, the basic building blocks of the analysis need to be reviewed (in 2011 dollars). Based upon a detailed recent re-review of the costs and revenues, the cost of the public amenities (parks, piers, shore-line improvements, the civic building, and other elements is projected at \$39 million (excluding the \$6.5million in stand-alone flood mitigation elements which would need to be done even if there was no Waterfront Plan), operating costs are projected at full build out to be \$1.0 million per year, and at full build out the annual new net tax revenues that are eventually

generated total \$4.8 million. The net new tax revenues are likely to occur without the flood mitigation elements being implemented. With the projected early phased-in implementation projections of the construction of the public amenity elements of the Waterfront Plan contrasted with the projected multi-year phase in of the private development contemplated by the Waterfront Plan, net new tax revenues and expenditures of public funds for the public improvements, results do not match on a year-to-year basis. This is because capital expenditures to implement the Waterfront Plan occur earlier than the growth of the net new tax revenues generated by the proposed Waterfront Plan. In year 7, annual net new tax revenues from the private sector exceed the contemplated annual public expenditures, and continue to exceed that on an ongoing basis. By year 20, annual revenues are projected to exceed annual expenditures by \$3.8 million per year.

The second level of analysis, using the data above (i.e., again without the stand-alone flood mitigation elements), involves using the same expenditure and revenue data from the first analysis previously described, and applying economic factors such as expected inflation and the time value of money. This requires the taking of public costs of improvements in 2011 dollars, and the projected net new revenues in 2011 dollars, and inflating them to future dollars, and then discounting those numbers back to produce a net present value result. In effect it is a leveling of the playing field in taking dollars spent or received in different years and equalizing them back to today's dollars in regard to investment value. The result is labeled "Net Present Value" or "NPV". This is a common method of business financial analysis.

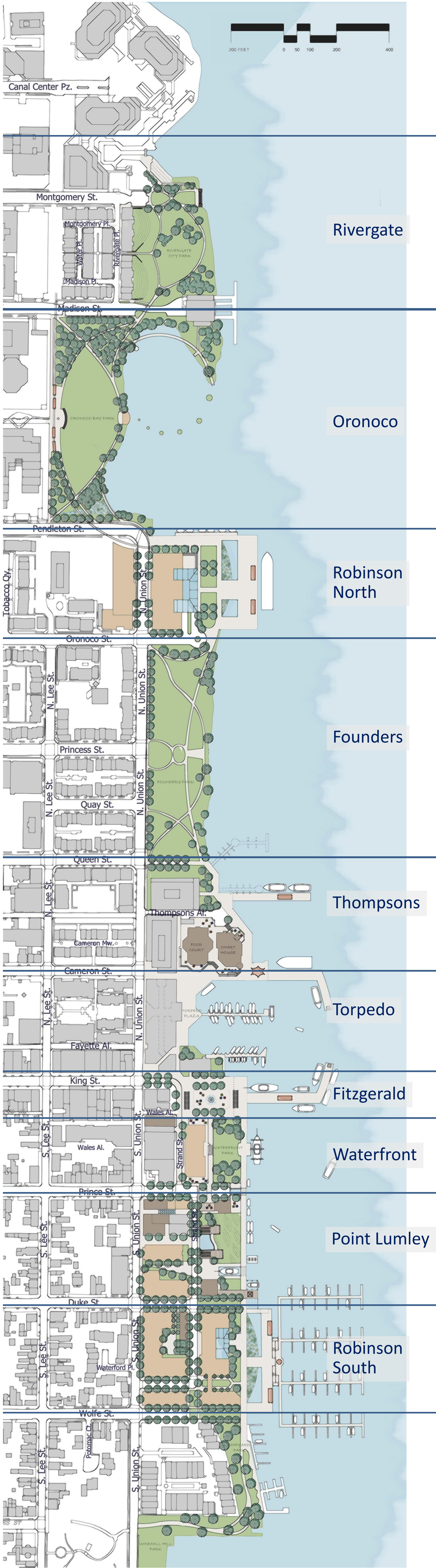
If one does the NPV analysis, the results are, when counting only direct net new tax revenues, that the Waterfront Plan pays for itself in about year 16. Although "underwater" on an NPV basis by \$7.5 million in year 15, the plan is \$22.8 million ahead by year 25 and \$36.8 million ahead by year 30. At the end of the day, the City's investment in the public elements of the Waterfront Plan produces a positive fiscal result. The Waterfront Plan can pay for itself.

An alternative analysis would be to include the \$6.5million (2011 dollars) in flood mitigation projects (which would have to be done even without the Waterfront Plan) into the above financial analyses. This increases the costs, but keeps the revenues unchanged. The results are that on a cash flow basis in today's dollars, and counting direct and not indirect benefits, the breakeven year on a cash flow basis increases to year 17. On a NPV basis the year 15 is negative by \$13.8 million, but by year 25 it is positive by \$16.4 million and by year 30, it is positive by \$30.4 million.

In conclusion, using a conservative analysis, the economics in regards to return on financial investment in the Waterfront Plan are positive over the long-term using conservative, reasonable analyses and assumptions. If elements of the Plan are changed (such as dropping the civic building as a Plan element), or the mix of uses changes, or the level of redevelopment changes, then the results described above would also change.

ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT PLAN

Phasing Locations



Hotel Use Analysis: Including Hotels in the Waterfront Redevelopment Options

- The Waterfront Plan shows redevelopment taking place on just three sites: Robinson Terminal North, Robinson Terminal South, and the Cummings/Turner properties in the 200 block of South Union Street. These properties are already zoned for redevelopment that can include restaurants, retail, offices, housing and more.
- The redevelopment sites have had the current zoning since 1992 and have not redeveloped. Redevelopment is key to opening access to the river to the public and to financing desired improvements to parks and public spaces. The sites will be expensive to redevelop, in part because of their waterfront location and in part because of the high level of quality that is desired.
- The Waterfront Plan's redevelopment strategy is to add guidance so that redevelopment provides the maximum benefit to the City – through direct improvements to the Waterfront and through ongoing financial (tax) support – while ensuring compatibility with our historic identity and our existing neighborhoods.
- The Waterfront Plan allows a mix of uses, and a likely redevelopment scenario would see the predominant uses as residential and hotel, with about the same square footage for both (42% and 45% respectively), with about 13% other uses, including restaurant, retail, and cultural.
- The Waterfront Plan does not increase the potential for restaurants on any of the three sites. (The Waterfront Plan recommends exploring restoration of the Beachcomber as a restaurant if financially feasible, and recommends a restaurant along Waterfront Park to pay for relocating a parking lot and to link King Street with the Strand).
- Museums and cultural institutions can be built on the redevelopment sites today, and the Waterfront Plan would not change that. Establishing a world-class museum on one of the redevelopment sites has some issues, however.
 - Major museums are expensive to establish and to operate. A museum costs between \$50-100 million to build and would also require ongoing financial support.
 - To be successful, a major museum would have to attract at least 100,000 visitors a year, and many of these visitors would arrive by motorcoach.
- The Waterfront Plan does not *require* hotels. The Plan would *permit* hotels, and would *encourage* hotels in locations where the public should feel welcome.
 - The mixed use redevelopment scenario includes 625 hotel rooms spread over the three sites: 250 at Robinson Terminal South, 200 at Robinson North, and 175 in the Cummings/Turner block.
 - The actual number of hotel rooms constructed will depend on many factors, including market conditions, developer interest, and public participation in the development review process.
 - If built, the hotels could yield fewer rooms than anticipated or involve smaller hotels.

- To help illustrate a potential hotel: a 250-room hotel on Robinson Terminal South could be similar to the Hotel Monaco near Market Square. The Hotel Monaco is a good neighbor: while there is cab activity at the entrance, King Street is not congested; hotel activity does not congest the nearby sidewalks; the hotel is quiet; and the hotel appears to accommodate the parking demand it generates.
 - Hotel uses have reduced impacts on traffic and parking. Hotels generate fewer trips than many other non-residential uses (such as office and retail) and these trips are spread out over the day, rather than concentrated during rush hours. Hotels also demand fewer parking spaces, as a large share of guests arrive by means other than driving a car that needs to be parked.
 - If 625 hotel rooms are built, it would increase the supply of hotels in eastern Alexandria by 22 percent. Although there are 2,780 hotel rooms in Alexandria east of the Metro rail lines (including Carlyle and Eisenhower East), there are no hotels directly on the water and one hotel within two blocks of the Potomac River.
 - The hotel rooms, if any, will not be built all at once, or in the same location. There is a 6-block distance between Robinson North and Robinson South, and Robinson North is likely to move to redevelop much earlier than Robinson South.
 - All redevelopment sites will have to go through the DSUP process for approval, so there will be opportunities for the public to shape specific development proposals.
- An option would be for the City to purchase the Robinson Terminal sites and create parks on those sites. The assessed value of the Robinson Terminal sites is \$30 million. To actually acquire these parcels for a park, the City would likely have to offer the current owners much more than that. In addition, these sites would require at least \$8-10 million each to create a park, and the loss of the tax revenue from these sites would mean that City would have to look elsewhere for the funds to improve and maintain the Waterfront in future years.

Attachment 1: The Alexandria Hotel Market

Figure 1: East Alexandria Hotels and Potential Future Sites



The current hotel market, identified in the W-ZHA Hotel Technical Memorandum as “East Alexandria” (see Figure 1, above) consists of the lodging submarket comprising the following fourteen properties located in or near Old Town:

Embassy Suites, Hampton Inn, Hilton Inn, Lorien Hotel and Spa, Hotel Monaco, Morrison House, Residence Inn, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn & Suites, Sheraton Suites, Westin, Residence Inn Carlyle, Holiday Inn, and Courtyard by Marriot.

Table 2: East Alexandria Hotels

<i>Name of Establishment</i>	<i>Rooms</i>
<i>Hampton Inn Alexandria Old Town King St</i>	80
<i>Hilton Alexandria Old Town</i>	246
<i>Holiday Inn & Suites Historic District</i>	178
<i>Residence Inn Alexandria Old Town</i>	240
<i>Kimpton Lorient Hotel & Spa</i>	107
<i>Residence Inn Alexandria @ Carlyle</i>	181
<i>Westin Alexandria Hotel</i>	319
<i>Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria</i>	254
<i>Kimpton Hotel Monaco Alexandria</i>	241
<i>Holiday Inn Alexandria SW Eisenhower Ave</i>	196
<i>Courtyard Alexandria</i>	178
<i>Embassy Suites Alexandria Old Town</i>	268
<i>Sheraton Hotel Suites Old Town Alexandria</i>	247
<i>Kimpton Morrison House</i>	45
<i>Total</i>	<i>2780</i>

This submarket currently totals 2,780 rooms according to Smith Travel Research . These properties maintained an effective 2009 occupancy of just over 70%, which is considered healthy by industry standards. It is important to note that the only hotel included in the study and in close proximity to the waterfront is Crowne Plaza. Due to current zoning restrictions on land use, there is no opportunity to create high quality lodging along the Potomac River in Alexandria. The Plan and subsequent rezoning will allow access to this yet untapped and highly desirable feature of Old Town. Redevelopments identified the plan will be afforded a geographic premium unavailable to any other property in the City.

Table 3: Private Redevelopment Sites: Density and Height Analysis

Private Development Sites			Settlement (1983)				Currently Allowed				Proposed (2011 Plan)			Change
Site	Land Area	Existing Development	Development	FAR	Max Height	Development	FAR	Max Height	Development	FAR	Max Height	Currently Allowed vs Proposed		
	sq. ft.	sq. ft.	sq. ft.		ft.	sq. ft.			sq. ft.		ft.	sq. ft.		
Robinson Terminal North	141,181	91,814	238,816	1.69	30/45/66	195,296	1.38	30/45/55	238,816	1.69	30/45/66	43,520		
Robinson Terminal South	163,696	NA	380,528	2.32	50	327,393	2.0	50	380,529	2.32	50	53,136		
Cummings/ Turner Block (Total)	62,380	70,732				124,760	2.0	50	187,140	3.0	50	62,380		
220 S. Union St.	21,299	21,240				42,598	2.0	50	63,897	3.0	50	21,299		
203, 205, 211 Strand	26,148	19,232				52,296	2.0	50	78,444	3.0	50	26,148		
204-206 S. Union St., 2, 6, 10 Prince St.	14,933	30,260				29,866	2.0	50	44,799	3.0	50	14,933		
Total	367,257					647,449			806,485			159,036		

Note: The Currently Allowed column depicts the maximum potential development on a site, taking into consideration current zoning, height restrictions, and other limitations. For Robinson Terminal North in particular, height restrictions do not permit development to reach the 2.0 FAR permitted by the current zoning.

Table 4: Private Redevelopment Sites: Uses

Private Development Sites: Uses				
Site	Owner(s)	Current Use	Required Uses	Preferred Uses
Robinson Terminal North	Washington Post	Warehouse	Ground Floor Retail	Hotel
Robinson Terminal South	Washington Post	Warehouse	Ground Floor Retail	Hotel
Cummings/Turner Block (Total)	Various			
<i>214-220 S. Union St.</i>	<i>Cummings</i>	<i>Warehouse with Art League Annex</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail</i>	<i>Hotel</i>
<i>203, 205, 211 Strand</i>	<i>Turner</i>	<i>Retail, parking lot, PRC office, Chadwicks</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail</i>	<i>Hotel</i>
<i>204-206 S. Union St., 2, 10 Prince St.</i>	<i>Cummings/Young</i>	<i>Historic warehouses, retail (gemstones, bikes)</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail, Civic, Cultural</i>	<i>Civic, Cultural</i>

From: Tom Russo [mailto:tomrusso@chadwicksrestaurants.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 2:35 PM
To: PnZFeedback; Cicely Woodrow; Graciela Moreno
Subject: COA Contact Us: Alexandria Waterfront Plans

COA Contact Us: Planning and Zoning General Feedback

Time: [Tue Apr 05, 2011 14:34:42] Message ID: [28963]

Issue Type: Planning and Zoning General Feedback
First Name: Tom
Last Name: Russo
Street Address: 203 The Strand
City: Alexandria
State: Va.
Zip: 22314
Phone: 202-494-9515
Email Address: tomrusso@chadwicksrestaurants.com
Subject: Alexandria Waterfront Plans

From first hand experience I can relate what an ill-thought out, short-sighted waterfront renovation plan can mean to small businesses, office building owners, tenants, employees, visitors and tax revenues.

The original Chadwicks is located on K St. at Wisconsin Ave. in Georgetown.

In January 2007 National Park Service closed the Harbour

Parking lot at the foot of Wisconsin Ave at K St. on the Potomac River in preparation of phase 2 of the Georgetown Waterfront project. The parking

Comments:

lot had over 600 parking spaces used regularly by monthly parkers, daily parkers, hourly parkers, visitors, tourists, movie-goers, diners, employees etc.

I was all for a beautification of the Georgetown waterfront as I am

of the Alexandria waterfront.
What the planners of the Georgetown

Waterfront failed to foresee was the absolute need for readily available, convenient and affordable parking. They based their estimates of parking needs on a 20 year old study and that the existing underground parking garages and the new movie theatre project (yet to be built - the plans

would see substantial revisions) would be able to absorb the loss of those 600+ spaces. The movie theatre project ended up having approx 20% fewer

parking spaces than originally planned because of needs/demands of the developer. It barely had enough parking for its own needs let alone helping make up the loss of the surface lot spaces. Daily traffic dropped, parking rates skyrocketed, (supply and demand), sales suffered, offices had

trouble attracting employees, office building owners had trouble keeping and attracting tenants – many moved to Rosslyn and Tyson's. The Georgetown

connector bus was started, connecting the closest Metro stops (Rosslyn and

Foggy Bottom) but that was discontinued on the lower part of Wisconsin Ave

because of lack of use. People aren't going to change their patterns, customers and diners are not going to take the Metro, then a bus or trolley to an area when it's too easy to go to suburban areas with convenient parking.

The planners could have incorporated surface parking in with the

waterfront design, kept the integrity of the "park", served the community,

both residential and commercial, and had some source of income from the parking spaces.

I, at Chadwicks/Georgetown, am still trying to reach

pre-2007 sales figures (over 10% drop) – a vast majority of that directly

attributed to the lack of convenient, affordable parking. I also get this

feedback from present and former customers who don't come to Georgetown as

much or at all anymore.

I see a similar situation brewing in Alexandria,

and as you are aware, I am speaking mainly of the surface parking lot on

The Strand, directly across the street from Chadwicks/Old Town. People

think about parking when deciding where to drive, eat, shop, visit. People

don't think in "core areas." They think in "convenience"

And the

“social-engineering” (trying to push people to use Metro, buses, trolleys)

usually has minimal positive results but substantial unintended

consequences.

On page 114 of the Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan the

Parking Strategy’s first principle lists “...to eliminate the Old Dominion

Boat Club parking lot”, “...to eliminate the surface parking lot on the

Strand” and “...to eliminate a few on-street parking spaces where King,

Prince and Duke streets meet the Potomac.” That’s a lot of

“eliminating”

Please don’t repeat the mistakes - the short sightedness of

the planners of the Georgetown Waterfront Park.

Plans always make grand

assumptions, massaged to meet certain desires. When reality sets in those

plans don’t mean a thing.

Please reconsider the parking needs of the

Alexandria Waterfront Project for the sake of everyone in the

community.

Respectfully,

Tom Russo

Owner

Chadwicks Restaurants

Attachment: 7bf306e5d29b018df26c08a454ccab6c.doc

ROBINSON TERMINAL WAREHOUSE CORPORATION

Established 1939

2 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314-3896

Mailing Address: PO Box 550 Alexandria, VA 22313-0550

Telephone: (703) 836-8300 ♦ Fax: (703) 836-8307 ♦ E-mail: RTWC@robinsonterminal.com

SHIP AGENT ♦ STEVEDORING ♦ WAREHOUSING ♦ TRUCKING

April 5, 2011

John Komoroske, Chair
Planning Commission
City of Alexandria
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Alexandria Waterfront - Small Area Plan
Comments of Robinson Terminal Warehouse Corporation

Dear Chairman Komoroske:

On behalf of Robinson Terminal Warehouse Corporation ("Robinson"), I write to comment on the draft Alexandria Waterfront – Small Area Plan. Our outside engineering, planning and development consultants are reviewing the draft plan with us. We will continue working with our consultants and provide more detailed comments shortly, but I do want to provide at this time general comments on several aspects of the plan.

We appreciate all of the hard work that went into the draft plan and believe that parts of the plan include constructive recommendations, but there are important aspects of the plan that very much concern us. These aspects of the plan could have unintended consequences, which, contrary to the interests of all parties, could significantly delay and/or impede the City's goals of having the Robinson properties redeveloped as first class and successful projects.

1. Settlement Agreements.

First, the plan should recognize in a more balanced way the settlements reached by the United States government, the City, Robinson and other land owners in the early 1980s in federal court. The settlements establish ownership and call for certain heights and densities and expressly allow a variety of mixed uses, and at a minimum provide an important piece of the context for the current planning effort. As part of the original settlements, Robinson was required to undertake many improvements along the waterfront. The improvements Robinson constructed included building a deck at the end of Oronoco Street, and construction of the current bulkhead that runs south from Point Lumley. After these improvements were completed, Robinson dedicated substantial areas of open space and parks at the end of both Duke Street and Wolfe Street, all which were accepted by the City as part of the settlements. Robinson incurred today's equivalent of millions of dollars in reliance on its understanding that its rights would not be taken away. If anything, fundamental fairness dictates that Robinson and its purchaser should not be subject to a process that essentially requires them to buy back agreed rights that Robinson already paid for in full.

2. Development Impediments.

Second, the plan should not restrict the flexibility of the City and its decision makers to assure successful redevelopment through the development approval process. The plan should take a long term and practical view of the future of the waterfront but instead makes very limited and narrow choices as to the required uses and burdensome amenities, which are not viable now, and are unlikely to be the right choices when redevelopment does occur. This will all lead to delays, perhaps indefinitely, of any interest in the marketplace for viable redevelopment of the Robinson properties.

Robinson consulted with Stephen S. Fuller of George Mason University to review the overall use recommendations in the plan in the context of his expert view of planning and market trends. On the subject of what best serves the long term interests of the City, Dr. Fuller advises:

The proposed development guidelines acknowledge the possible inclusion of a range of residential and commercial uses along the waterfront but continue to prescribe their location and limitations in the absence of any consideration of the market trends and changing land use patterns that ultimately will determine whether the waterfront plan establishes a favorable investment climate or becomes just another failed plan that is well meaning but ignorant of the market place.

The short term nature of the draft plan is illustrated by its essential prohibition of residential uses at the waterfront, reversing the City's preferences, in the current zoning ordinance which provides bonus density for residential uses, and the 1983 settlement deed, signed by both Robinson and the City, in which residential uses were expressly stated as among several permitted mixed uses. We cite the current zoning ordinance not to support it, but to highlight the mercurial nature of development trends which is especially problematic where standards are narrowly defined. The City's desire to avoid "privatization" of the waterfront area can be accomplished without, in practical effect, a ban on viable uses in areas that are otherwise developable.

As another example, the current draft of the waterfront plan will be read by potential purchasers as, in essence, requiring hotels at both Robinson properties. To review the hotel market and plan, Robinson retained Mr. Robert Mannon a former Marriott senior executive and an expert in the hotel development industry. Mr. Mannon has advised that a hotel simply is not a viable use, specifically at the Robinson sites, in the foreseeable future, and that the study circulated by the City (after substantial delay) does not support a contrary conclusion because the City's study uses data gathered from the completely different markets nearer to the Metro rather than addressing the obvious transportation and other development constraints at the waterfront. Even if the hotels could be viable today there is no reason to think the hotel use would be the best use at the—unknown—time of future development. The plan should include more flexibility to meet future requirements, while still attaining the overall stated goals. We do not object to hotels as a permitted use (and note that any necessary code amendments should be made at the time of the final plan); rather we object to the plan effectively requiring hotels.

Another concern is the plan's recommendation that the ground floor of any building be predominantly occupied with so-called "active uses" such as restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses. Robinson consulted retail expert John Asadoorian of Asadoorian Retail Solutions to examine the potential demand for the Robinson properties. Recognizing that King Street is the epicenter of Old Town's "active uses," neither of the Robinson properties is ideally located for such uses. Mr. Asadoorian states that it would be very difficult to find suitable users, for much of the ground floor space, in quality and quantity that would foster the activity contemplated, and the end result could be an environment that is anything but "active."

In addition to the use prescriptions, the draft plan includes technical requirements that make redevelopment infeasible. As just one example, the plan requires that parking for all new development be provided both on site and below grade. Similarly, the draft plan limits access and loading points, narrowly prescribing future building configurations. To support feasible development, we will request that these technical requirements be revised to be more flexible and practical in light of possible redevelopment scenarios.

3. Amenity Requirements.

Finally, the plan should be more realistic in its treatment of required amenities. The plan goes well beyond the legally permitted "essential nexus" necessary to mitigate the actual burdens on the City that would result from redevelopment of these properties. Obviously any redevelopment would address many of the amenities referred to in the draft plan, but the totality would make redevelopment infeasible.

As presently written, the requirements of the draft plan would be so burdensome as to make redevelopment uneconomical, and to make it much less likely that the Robinson properties would be redeveloped in the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, we very much appreciate the time and thought that went into the draft plan and we share the general goals of the City and the community, to assure a successful waterfront that respects Alexandria. By its nature, this letter focuses on what we see as negatives in the plan and not the many positive aspects of the plan. We hope that these comments will be well received by you and your staff in the constructive spirit we intend, with the ultimate goal of producing a waterfront plan that Robinson and the Alexandria community can support, that the Council will approve and that will be implemented in the years to come.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert W. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert W. Taylor

cc: Duncan W. Blair
Boisfeuillet Jones, Jr.
Eric N. Lieberman
David L. Miller

Comments from Waterfront Facebook Page as of 4.5.2011

[Alexandria \(VA\) Waterfront](#)

Supplemental Materials on Costs, Revenues, Phasing, and a new Waterfront Park Building Design have been posted to the website. Please take a look and share your opinions on the comment board!

<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Waterfront/CoverSupplemental%20Materials%20Full%20Page.pdf>

alexandriava.gov

788 Impressions · 0.13% Feedback

March 23 at 2:22pm · Like · [Share](#)

[Davina Sashkin](#) likes this.

[Alexandria \(VA\) Waterfront](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=1885121975554&oid=98072530756&comments>



[VIDEO :: What's New in Alexandria - Waterfront Plan \[HQ\]](#)

VIDEO :: The City recently released a draft small area plan to make the waterfront a more appealing place for both residents and visitors to enjoy. The plan was prepared with extensive participation from the Alexandria community, and there are still opportunities to provide input.

3:53

864 Impressions · 0.12% Feedback

March 14 at 12:06pm · Like · [Share](#)

[Dan Teaman](#) likes this.

[Bill Schreiner](#) What's this about private banking? Why would B of A or Burke & Herbert rebuild waterfront property that the City owns? How would the banks make money on the waterfront? Not clear at all to me why private banks would want to be involved with/invest in public land. Thanks,

September 30, 2010 at 5:45pm · Like

[Lisa Miller](#)

Stop wasting my money (taxpayer money). If this is a viable plan, let private banking do it. I consider this a "gift" to the elite but see little possibility of a net gain on revenue and a net loss as Alexandria City Council continues to im...See More

August 29, 2010 at 7:48am · Like · [1 person](#)

[Jay M. Atkinson](#) It's funny this picture has trees, now that the two trees by the G/H dock have been cut down. Without the benefit of shade, and the trees drawing your eyes up from the ground, the decrepit state of the hardscape between Founder's Park and the Seaport Foundation is shockingly apparent.

July 23, 2010 at 7:29pm · Like

[Joyce Thor](#)

I'm so happy that you are forward thinking re the water front. Also, thirled that you are including the arts which is a big draw to people--way to go!

March 4, 2010 at 11:07am · Like ·

[Larry White](#) I agree

February 20, 2010 at 4:07pm · Like

[Lisa Miller](#)

As a citizen of Alexandria I do NOT support this spending at this time. The citizens of Alexandria need to pay down debt, increase savings and better prepare themselves in an uncertain economy driven by Government spending.

Despite considerable expense in "economic" development in trolley's and the Waterfront, we are seeing rising vacancies and unemployment and should pause in our "pork" driven community.

December 27, 2009 at 4:04pm · Like · [1 person](#)

[Glenn Witucki](#)

Hear we are getting another Thai restaurant at 100 King....how many will that be in 3 blocks???

August 12, 2009 at 1:28pm · Like ·

Peter Pennington

Very good day. We saw how important it was, in at least three of the four parks we visited, to engage children. Attached photos give some ideas:



August 6, 2009 at 4:33pm · Like ·

Peter Pennington

We saw a very high standard of masonry, horticulture, lighting, security and maintenance. And then we saw these trash bins. Attention to detail will be important.



August 6, 2009 at 4:37pm · Like ·

Larry Askins

Great place to be and see! What exciting plans for Alexandria's waterfront. Larry Askins at Keller Williams Realty @ 607 S. Washington, Old Town. 703 850 8176 cell.

July 30, 2009 at 6:31pm · Like ·

WATERFRONT PLAN – COMMENTS FROM ONLINE COMMENT BOARD (AS OF 4.5.2011)

Comment #1 (Lord Fairfax)

For the city atty. did you secure permission from the owners of the properties that you have included in the plan? if not you are in copyright and ownership violation by enriching a concern by infringement. eminent domain has no bearing on infringement.

Lord Fairfax (199) | User | March 1, 2011 - 1:03 PM

Comment #2 (Audrey Przbylski)

I am against the Old Town Riverfront Project. This project would violate and destroy the character, history, of a great American city. The city is no ordinary city since it is full of our nation's connection to our history from Robert E. Lee to George Washington. In no way should this area be violated with the commercialism this development would bring.

Alexandria has so many areas of development that little is left of its original landscape. This Old Town Alexandria is sacred ground to our history, the historic townhouses, and those occupied by businesses would loose their charming environment by commercial buildings lined by the Potomac River. These townhouses represent our past and its environment and Potomac River are essential to achieve the historic colonial atmosphere.

Looking out from the townhouses to the Potomac River should create a sense of place, and this development would interfere with and destroy with that sense of place in our history.

I worked in Old town for over 13 years. And there is a strong undeniable feel to what it offers to all who visit or live there.

You cannot buy or manufacture what Old Town Alexandria is to the community and the country.

The plan is described as small, however the impact would not be small and it would increase the traffic, which the original streets would not be able to withstand. This could lead to widening roads which further violate the historic area. Once developments start small it could open up to a larger development in a domino effect.

There is good development and there is bad development and this is bad development. Old Town would loose the meaning behind the word "Old"

As such an historic area, I cannot believe anyone who serves this city would even consider this plan or let it go beyond where it is today.

Audrey Przybylski (200) | User | March 2, 2011 - 3:02 PM

Comment #3 (Andrea)

I would hate to see Alexandria lose it's charm to an urban redevelopment project. What makes Alexandria a draw for residents and visitors is it's sense of history, ambiance, and southern charm. It would be a shame if Alexandria lost what makes it so special and became another victim of urban redevelopment.

Andrea (201) | User | March 2, 2011 - 3:57 PM

Comment #4 (George Washington)

The plan sounds great. Thanks to the City for working this through. I don't know why there is so much resistance to improving the waterfront. Very strange to me. Why are so many stuck in the past and fearful of change?

Larger walking/biking area would be great. Restaurant over the river would be wonderful. A large pier south of King would be tremendous.

Can we get the power plant removed? That thing is a scourge on an area that is so rich in colonial history. Not only are the emissions not good, but the plant is noisy and an eyesore in an otherwise picturesque area. Why the heck is it there? I wish the owners of the plant would realize how out of place it is and simply shut it down. And I hear the power generated just goes into the eastern grid and is not essential for power needs of DC or anywhere else.

And if we can get the Robinson terminal converted to something much nicer, that would be great as well.

Thanks again.

George Washington (202) | User | March 5, 2011 - 6:19 PM

Comment #5 (Bill Hendrickson)

The new Alexandria Waterfront Plan proposes a dazzling public plaza, promenade, and pier with splendid views of the Potomac River in the area where King Street meets the river. It would certainly be the best public civic space the city has ever created and would provide a range of activities, from arts performances to ice skating.

Creation of this outstanding new public area is dependent on relocating the parking lot of the Old Dominion Boat Club. The city has made what appears to be a reasonable, even generous, offer, including money, to the boat club for its permission. But the club has resisted, for reasons that remain unclear.

The city has proposed moving the club's parking lot to a location in the ground level of a new restaurant/retail building that would frame a redesigned Waterfront Park—a location that is immediately adjacent to where the lot is now located. The city has also offered to give the boat club a portion of the revenues from the new restaurant/retail uses. The boat club would also benefit in another way. The new public space would dramatically improve the aesthetic appearance of this area, and in the process, would elevate the boat club to a much more prominent position on the waterfront.

Of course, a key part of this aesthetic improvement would come from removing the club's surface parking lot, which hardly seems an appropriate use for one of the most historic spots of one of the nation's most historic cities.

I would provide the boat club with even more benefits in return for the parking lot relocation. The city should offer to restore the exterior of the boat club building to its historic architectural appearance.

Given what would appear to be obvious benefits to the boat club, why is it resisting the city's plan?

Since learning about the club's public-spirited charitable activities a number of years ago, I have thought very highly of the club. I hope that club members will once again summon up their civic pride to support this important project to revitalize our historic waterfront.

Bill Hendrickson

Bill Hendrickson (140) | User | March 15, 2011 - 11:03 AM

Comment #6 (Bill Hendrickson)

Alexandria's waterfront isn't a particularly exciting or compelling place to visit today, but that would change dramatically if the city implements an extraordinary proposal made by a committee of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts.

The Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal would create a 1.5-mile Art Walk along the waterfront. The overarching goal is to make the waterfront an arts destination and cultural anchor.

The Art Walk proposal skillfully and imaginatively integrates the visual and performing arts. It is illustrated with many color photos of inspired public art from around the world. The proposal is intended to be an integral part of the city's developing waterfront plan. But some of its key features could be implemented even without a plan, particularly in the area north of King Street.

PCL XL error

Subsystem: TEXT

Error: InternalError 0x50

Operator: Text

Position: 1090



April 4, 2011

Alexandria Planning Commission
John Komoroske, Chairman
City Hall, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

RE: Docket Items 8A&B, Master Plan Amendment #2011-0001 and Text Amendment #2011-0005
Waterfront Small Area Plan

Dear Chairman Komoroske and Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP) please find attached a resolution passed unanimously by the Board on February 24, 2011 **in support** of recommending adoption of a Waterfront Small Area Plan.

The AEDP was pleased to participate in the kick-off the Waterfront Small Area Plan process back in April of 2009, and our Board and staff actively participated throughout the process. As the economic development organization focused on attracting and retaining businesses to the City of Alexandria, AEDP has long identified the Waterfront as an important asset. In fact, AEDP's mission specifically mentions the waterfront:

The mission of the AEDP is to promote the City of Alexandria as a premier location for businesses by capitalizing on its assets including multiple Metro stations, historical character and riverfront location, in order to enhance the City's tax revenue and increase employment opportunities.

The Board and staff at AEDP are focused on the opportunity to move Alexandria forward as a smart City, attuned to the benefits of economic development while keeping a close eye on our special assets like the Waterfront. As a community, we were smart to spend the last two years during the economic downturn focusing on the creation of an aspirational yet balanced plan that will bolster Alexandria's economic future while truly capitalizing on one of our most underutilized assets.

Should the adoption of a plan be delayed, we will slow new investment in our City and we will increase the risk that newly available capital will be placed in our neighboring competitive communities instead of in Alexandria.

The AEDP Board of Directors supports the Economic Sustainability Work Group's recommendations and feels that the plan considered each and that the plan has been crafted to promote their inclusion.

At the onset of this process we encouraged that the planning for the Waterfront should be forward-thinking, and embrace, not limit, opportunities that might present themselves in the future. The plan before you provides a clear vision as well as certainty for all stakeholders.

We respectfully urge you to recommend approval of this Small Area Plan in May.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Val P. Hawkins", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Val P. Hawkins
President & CEO

cc: AEDP Board of Directors
Faroll Hamer, Director, Department of Planning & Zoning
Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning



Adopted by the AEDP Board of Directors -- February 24, 2011

The Alexandria Economic Development Partnership Board strongly believes the City needs to have a plan for one of its most important and distinctive assets- the Alexandria Waterfront. While Small Area Plans (SAP) serve as guides for land use, zoning, transportation improvements, open space and other capital improvements they also serve as important marketing tools, outlining the City's desire for new investment and development.

We believe it is important to approve a Small Area Plan this spring that provides a clear vision for one of our most important assets and provides stakeholders certainty with respect to appropriate redevelopment and adaptive reuse of properties within the plan area.

The Mayor's Economic Sustainability Work Group recommendations focused on the importance of the Waterfront. We support the Work Group's recommendations, quoted as follows, that specifically called for:

- Mixed-use vibrant development should be encouraged along the waterfront in the remaining opportunity parcels with commercial, retail, restaurant, arts and hotel development opportunities targeted;
- existing warehouse sites have high visibility and represent a major obstacle to completing the enhancement of the waterfront with world class redevelopment, so they need to be addressed in the process;
- water uses such as kayak and sailboat rental and additional marina slips should be encouraged;
- major existing docks should be maintained so that ships (such as the Coast Guard Eagle tall ship and small passenger ships) can still be accommodated;
- further expansion of water taxis and water shuttles should be encouraged;
- the food court at the City Marina should be rethought and revitalized; and
- if feasible, retail on South Union Street, the Strand and other areas should be expanded as part of the waterfront redevelopment plan.

We continue to support the Work Group's recommendations, as well as the evolving draft waterfront plan that has been crafted after almost two years of planning and community input meetings. The Waterfront is an economic asset belonging to the entire City and it is time to encourage smart development and redevelopment of this asset.

From: Susan Stafford [mailto:sstafford26@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 3:25 PM
To: William Euille; Nancy Williams
Subject: Waterfront Development Plan

Dear Mayor Euille and Ms. Williams,

As 10-years resident of Old Town Alexandria, eight of those in Ford's Landing, the proposed Waterfront Development Plan does not appear to be either well-conceived or beneficial to the City of Alexandria and its residents. We urge the Planning Commission and the City Council to take a strong stand against the plan in its current form for the following reasons:

1. The commercial development of sites such as Robinson's Terminal at Wolfe and Union will only bring unwanted and unnecessary congestion of pedestrians and cars to Old Town. It risks ruining the attractiveness of Old Town as a destination rather than enhancing it. There is little or no reason for Old Town to turn itself into a carbon copy of National Harbor; visitors to National Harbor come to Old Town because of its historic sites, excellent restaurants, and unique shopping opportunities which now stand in sharp contrast to those at National Harbor. There are a plethora of hotels located on King Street and at the northern and west end of town, as well as the Hotel Monaco, Lorien Hotel, and the Morrison House. There does not seem to be any compelling reason to clutter the waterfront with additional ones.
2. The Waterfront Development Plan seems to disregard the fact that the City does not currently have control of some of the property mentioned for development, i.e, the Old Dominion Boat Club and its parking lot and Robinson's Terminal, nor does it have rights for its planned expansion into the Potomac River with an extremely intrusive pier. I am bothered by the fact that the City seems to think that it has the right to chase private property owners off the water and turn the property over to developers who may or may not have the City's best interest at heart.
3. There is also the not minor issue that the Potomac River is, in parts, owned by the District of Columbia, and that the river's deep channels and ports (such as at the Robinson South Terminal) have historically been an important part of the defense of Washington. The Wilson Bridge is a drawbridge precisely because warships need to be able to navigate the river. Very little consideration seems to have been given to the fact that the City does not have rights to the river nor has it consulted with any of the parties that do, including the U.S. Government. Blithely assuming that an intrusive pier can be built into the river is short-sighted at best.
4. Residents of Old Town recognize that it is a very special place for its beauty and its historical value. People who restored homes in the area or who live in the communities along the waterfront chose to do so because of the quiet and peaceful neighborhoods, as well as their convenience to the already vibrant shopping and entertainment district of Old Town without having to go into Washington, DC. The southeast quadrant of Old Town is particularly sought after because of these qualities and residents living along the waterfront pay a premium and very high taxes to do so. Had we wished to live in a town full of chain stores, hotels, and entertainment centers, we would have done so.

Alternately, we can always visit National Harbor where there is little that is unique or appealing. The waterfront is currently a peaceful place to walk and enjoy the beauty of the river. Adding more congestion of any sort to the area can only detract from its desirability as a residential area.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our views on this issue.

Best regards,

Susan and David Stafford
701 Kahn Place
Alexandria, VA 22314

McGuireWoods LLP
1750 Tysons Boulevard
Suite 1800
McLean, VA 22102-4215
Phone: 703.712.5000
Fax: 703.712.5050
www.mcguirewoods.com

Kenneth W. Wire
Direct: 703.712.5362

McGUIREWOODS

Land Use and Environmental
kwire@mcguirewoods.com

April 4, 2011

VIA EMAIL TO kendra.jacobs@alexandriava.gov

Chairman Komoroske and Members of the Planning Commission
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

RE: Draft Waterfront Plan

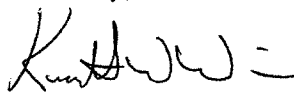
Dear Chairman Komoroske and Members of the Planning Commission:

On behalf of our client, the Sheet Metal Workers' National Pension Fund ("Sheet Metal Workers"), we are writing to request a minor amendment to the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan (the "Plan"). The Sheet Metal Workers' currently own the building located at 601 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia (the "Property"). While the Sheet Metal Workers do not currently have any plans to redevelop the Property, it is likely that such an opportunity will be possible in the foreseeable future and certainly prior to the next update to the Plan. Therefore, we request that the following provision be incorporated in the recommendations section for Oronoco Bay Park on page 44 of the Plan as recommendation 3.39:

If the Sheet Metal Workers building were to be redeveloped, such redevelopment shall provide a high level of pedestrian and visual connectivity between the redeveloped property and Oronoco Bay Park. Provided that the redevelopment is compatible with the uses in Oronoco Bay Park, a rezoning may be considered.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



Kenneth W. Wire

cc: Mayor Euille and Members of City Council
Faroll Hamer, Director Planning and Zoning
Stephen M. Rosenblatt, Chief Counsel, Sheet Metal Workers

U30308988.1

From: William Savage [mailto:whsavage@orchidom.com]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 2:06 PM
To: PnZFeedback; Cicely Woodrow; Graciela Moreno
Subject: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan hearing 04-05-2011

COA Contact Us: Planning and Zoning General Feedback

Time: [Mon Apr 04, 2011 14:05:30] **Message ID:** [28931]

Issue Type: Planning and Zoning General Feedback

First Name: William

Last Name: Savage

Street Address: 314 Franklin Street

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22314

Phone: 703-683-5625

Email Address: whsavage@orchidom.com

Subject: Waterfront Plan hearing 04-05-2011

To the members of the Alexandria Planning Commission:

While the

Waterfront Small Area Plan has some very commendable features, the proposal

to develop hotels on the sites of the Robinson Terminal's north and south

warehouses is misguided and contrary to what should be basic precepts

regarding the preservation of our historic heritage. This unfortunate

Comments: aspect of the Plan appears to reflect a reaction to the National Harbor

development across the river in Prince Georges County. The preservation of

our heritage will not be promoted by elements of the Waterfront Plan that

seek to mimic, although on a small scale, what we see across the Potomac.

Offering facilities in Old Town to compete with National Harbor will be

counterproductive in the long run.

Let's preserve Old Town, not

"National Harborize" it. I urge you to develop other and more compatible uses for the Robinson Terminal sites. It is not in the interest of the preservation of our historical heritage to bring "a little of National Harbor" to our City.

William H. and Ilona S. Savage
314

Franklin Street

Kendra Jacobs

Subject: FW: COA Contact Us: waterfront plan

From: Bill Hendrickson [mailto:whendrick@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 10:27 AM
To: PnZFeedback; Cicely Woodrow; Graciela Moreno
Subject: COA Contact Us: waterfront plan

COA Contact Us: Planning and Zoning General Feedback

Time: [Fri Apr 01, 2011 10:27:10] **Message ID:** [28873]

Issue Type: Planning and Zoning General Feedback
First Name: Bill
Last Name: Hendrickson
Street Address: 304 E. Spring St.
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22301
Phone: 703-549-7365
Email Address: whendrick@aol.com

Subject: waterfront plan

Dear members of the Planning Commission:

Here are my views regarding the

proposed waterfront plan, which I strongly support. Thank you. Bill

Hendrickson

Comments: 1. The new public spaces planned where King Street hits the water and extending south (the new Fitzgerald Square through the redesigned Waterfront Park to the new Point Lumley Park and Robinson Terminal South) are absolutely vital parts of the plan. The boat club parking lot must be moved, and it must be moved next door into the ground level of the proposed restaurant/retail building that will occupy part of the existing Waterfront Park. This new building is important for defining the park space and bringing life to it (a key urban design principle is being employed here). Waterfront Park is now physically and visually cut off from the rest of the waterfront (perhaps this is why some of our homeless population likes it). Despite the loss of some of Waterfront Park, total open space in this area would grow significantly. Because it will be directly connected with other open space, Waterfront Park would effectively become much larger.

2. I see the debate about the plan fundamentally about whether the waterfront will become a much more public place, with increased public uses and activities, or a more private one. Despite public access along much of the Potomac River, the waterfront is now largely a private enclave. In the process of gaining the public access, the city allowed mostly office buildings and pricey townhouses, with limited public activities. There are also no hotels and only one restaurant on the water. Although parts of the waterfront can be enjoyable to walk along, there are few other reasons to actually visit. With a few exceptions, such as the boat dock area, the word vibrant does not describe the existing waterfront. The

proposed plan is very much a public—not a private—development plan. It includes a wide range of public uses, including new and expanded public parks, piers, and promenades and a variety of civic, cultural, and recreational activities. The plan requires that development on the limited private development sites respond to and be compatible with the public activities; for example, hotels and restaurants instead of primarily more town houses for the well-to-do. If these publicly oriented uses are scaled back from what is proposed, more townhouses and or office buildings are inevitable. And the evolution of Alexandria's waterfront into mostly a private preserve, with public access to the water but limited public activities, will be largely complete. Thus, if the Planning Commission concludes, for example, that two hotels rather than the proposed three are more suitable, it needs to substitute other public-oriented uses in the plan. Time-shared condos might be an acceptable substitute for a hotel, for example, and a pavilion for tasting Virginia wines could replace a restaurant.

3. The waterfront plan is a master plan and thus aspirational in nature. It's a very specific vision of what the future waterfront could be and how it can be achieved. So certain key decisions, including how much hotel and restaurant space to allow, need not and should not be cast in stone now. The hard work will come when detailed planning begins for the three development sites remaining on the waterfront. Then we will see whether the proposed amount of hotel and restaurant space is actually viable. We will see to what degree hotels and restaurants can be integrated into buildings that are designed to look like historic Alexandria warehouses, as is required in the plan. But to make specific decisions now about the amount of allowable hotel and restaurant space, without substituting other public-oriented uses, would be a grave mistake. One other point related to this plan as master plan: I have heard attacks on the plan because it proposes certain things that are not currently allowed, such as building a 200-foot-long pier into the Potomac and building on part of Waterfront Park. If these things can't be done, they won't be done. The debate at this point should be whether they are good ideas, and I think they are.

4. The development sites remaining on the waterfront are very limited. Most of the development would be on the two blocks between Wolfe and Prince Streets and the rest at the Robinson Terminal North property. Up to three hotels and 100,000 square feet of restaurant space doesn't seem like much on a more than two-mile-long waterfront, considering that we have no hotels now and only one restaurant actually on the waterfront. It would be helpful to know how this level of development would compare with waterfront projects elsewhere. How much of an impact will this really have, especially if the hotels and restaurants are integrated into carefully designed buildings that are similar in appearance to what we have seen historically on the Alexandria waterfront, and if residences are being proposed to buffer existing uses from the new hotels and restaurants?

5. We don't want the Alexandria waterfront to become like a National Harbor, with its overly commercial orientation. We couldn't do it in any event because there's not enough property. But National Harbor is a much more vibrant place today than the Alexandria waterfront, and it's becoming more so as it adds more and more activities. Alexandria has to find its own unique way of becoming a distinctive destination, for residents first but also for visitors. The proposed plan has many ideas for doing so. For example, it incorporates the imaginative ArtWalk proposal, which carefully integrates the visual and performing arts along a 1.5-mile stretch of the waterfront and includes things like an outdoor performance space at Oronoco Bay Park and a sculpture garden and café on the roof of the Torpedo Factory. These are the sorts of things that can truly make the waterfront a distinctive and special place to visit.

ALEXANDRIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
COMMENTS TO
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT SMALL AREA PLAN

March 31, 2011

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”) commends the City of Alexandria Staff on its production of a comprehensive plan for redevelopment of Alexandria’s most treasured and under-utilized resource – the Potomac River Waterfront.
- The Chamber generally supports the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan dated February 25, 2011 (the “Plan”) and urges the Planning Commission to approve the Plan and the City Council to adopt and implement the Plan.
 - The Chamber notes that the Plan is the result of a two-year, comprehensive, community-based planning process, which consisted of numerous charrettes, focus groups, presentations and analysis of proposals including a previous concept plan. Consequently, civic, business, arts and preservation groups, to name a few, have had ample opportunity to express their respective visions for Alexandria’s waterfront.
 - As a consensus-based document, the Plan will not satisfy the specific desires of all interested parties; however, the Chamber maintains that respecting the planning process is paramount to facilitating future consensus-based projects in Alexandria.
 - If the Planning Commission or the City Council rejects or substantially changes the Plan, it will discount two years, and countless hours, of volunteer work by Alexandria’s constituents.
 - Thus, while the Chamber may find deficiencies in certain aspects of the Plan, the Chamber accepts the Plan and respects the process through which the Plan has been conceived.
 - The Plan attempts to balance historic preservation, environmental remediation, flood mitigation, public art, enhanced and varied activities that will introduce and engage residents and visitors with the river, and commercial uses, in an effort to foster a culturally, ecologically and commercially sustainable waterfront that is accessible to all of Alexandria’s residents and its visitors.
 - In noting certain deficiencies, the Chamber is concerned that, in striking a balance among these values, the City has understated the importance

commerce in Alexandria's past, present and future. In this regard, the Chamber maintains that commerce deserves prominent status among the articulated goals of the Plan. Commerce was the foundation for the establishment of Alexandria as a thriving port city, and a commercially viable waterfront is critical to charting the next half-century for Alexandria.

- However, there will be ample opportunity to address specific concerns during the implementation stages of the Plan. Now is the time to embrace Alexandria's future by boldly adopting the Plan's vision for a vibrant and viable waterfront.
- Finally, the Chamber respectfully reminds the Planning Commission and the City Council of the basic tenets of the Economic Sustainability Work Group Report, which was adopted by the City Council (the "Sustainability Report"). The Sustainability Report specifically recommends vibrant, mixed-use re-development of the waterfront in a manner that is quite consistent with the Plan. Thus, a reduction of the contemplated uses set forth in the Plan to passive use would be contrary to policies previously adopted by the City Council and would have a detrimental impact on Alexandria's economy. The actions taken in 2011 will have far-reaching implications for Alexandria's future, and the Chamber urges the Planning Commission and the City Council to embrace Alexandria's potential and adopt the Plan.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

CHAMBER SUPPORTS:

- The proposed uses for Robinson Terminal North and Robinson Terminal South are appropriate. In particular, the Chamber supports hotel development at these sites. Ideally, the height and density at these sites would be greater, but the Chamber acknowledges that the City is applying standards established under settlement agreements that impose development limitations on these sites. In this regard, the Plan embraces a compromise between business and residential interests, while preserving rights of the existing commercial property owner to increase property value and enhance waterfront amenities.
- In recommending three potential hotel sites, the Plan should encourage ancillary meeting space for small conferences of up to five hundred people. This may be accomplished, without reducing the volume of hotel rooms and in the context of the public arts theme, by permitting a performing arts center with re-adaptive meeting space adjacent to a hotel site.
- The Chamber supports the proposed limitations on introducing new residential uses along the waterfront. The City's past practice of permitting waterfront communities has limited public access to the river and created a perceived privatization of public areas.

- The Chamber supports the City’s parking strategy in connection with the Plan and, in fact, encourages the City to immediately implement many of its strategies through pilot programs to demonstrate that they will mitigate parking concerns for residents.
 - The Chamber also supports the creation of a north-south trolley route along Union Street to support increased use of existing parking garages in North Old Town and transport visitors to points of interest along the newly developed waterfront.
 - However, the Chamber opposes “resident-only” parking zones without the preservation of adequate flex parking for short term patrons of Old Town’s retail and restaurant establishments. A proper balance can be met through (i) way-finding to garage parking facilities; and (ii) increased use of multi-space parking meters in the residential streets extending from King Street that permit zone-resident parking without charge.
- The Chamber supports the rights of existing businesses to lawfully operate their business on their property. In this regard, the Chamber supports the Old Dominion Boat Club’s lawful property rights. It is undeniable that the waterfront would be improved by relocating the ODBC’s parking lot to a western location in the Waterfront Park area, such as the proposed structured parking lot and restaurant building contemplated by the Plan. However, such a solution should be accomplished through good faith negotiations between the City and the ODBC. The Chamber encourages these parties to measure their respective interests and reach an amicable accommodation that appropriately preserves parking and boat launch rights for ODBC members while enhancing public space and commercial opportunities in this critically important area of the waterfront.
- The Chamber supports the commercial and recreational marina concepts outlined within the Plan. Clearly, the Plan contemplates an expanded marina that cannot be accomplished without consent of various third parties. If this consent can be obtained, the marina depicted in the Plan would be quite impressive and would, once again, enliven Alexandria’s port.
- The Chamber supports the re-adaptive use of the Beachcomber building as a restaurant. If such use of the building is not economically feasible, the building should be replaced with a new building that retains commercial activity on this site or the equivalent amount of commercial space should be added to other areas of the Waterfront Park or Strand developments.

CHAMBER CONCERNS:

- The Chamber is concerned that the height and density requirements for the Cummings/Turner Block will only accommodate a very small hotel. Given the on-site parking requirements, the existing water table and the limitations imposed by the Plan, this site will not achieve its optimal commercial value.

- The Chamber is concerned by the Plan's disproportionate dedication to the notion of public art throughout the waterfront without a clear articulation of the funding mechanism. While the Chamber agrees that public art would provide a beneficial amenity on the waterfront, the Chamber would oppose imposition of burdensome fees on developers to fund these enhancements. The Chamber encourages the arts community to establish a charitable organization and seek private donations from corporate and personal patrons to fund at least fifty percent of the proposed arts projects.
- The Plan is reliant on hotel use to achieve projected economic sustainability for the waterfront. If these hotels do not materialize due to either market conditions or lack of commitment in the face of special interest opposition to economic principles set forth in the Sustainability Report, the Chamber is concerned that the Plan will fail to generate the projected levels of tax revenue required to support the waterfront's passive uses and generate much needed revenue.
 - Increased commercial uses along the waterfront will increase the City's tax base and lessen the City's reliance on revenue derived from residential property taxes. This inures to the benefit of businesses, residents and the City.
 - Hotel use will have less vehicular traffic impact than office or residential use and will generate significantly more revenue for the City to maintain the waterfront parks and public space in a first class manner.

CONCLUSION:

- The Plan is not perfect. It is largely a reflection of the protracted planning process and the input of Alexandria's diverse, and frequently disparate, constituencies. However, it is clearly a result of community involvement in which all interested parties have had an opportunity to be heard.
- The Chamber requests consideration of its comments and concerns in the course of the Plan's implementation; however, in no event should the Plan be amended to impose greater restrictions, increased passivity or lesser commercial use and density than currently contemplated.
- It is time for action. The Chamber urges the Planning Commission and the City Council to take action and transform Alexandria's waterfront into a world-class venue through broader uses, vibrant amenities and increased public access, while generating sustainable revenue sources that will maintain the operation of the new waterfront and fund critical City services.

Kendra Jacobs

From: Cicely Woodrow
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:16 AM
To: Mindy Lyle
Cc: Graciela Moreno; Kendra Jacobs
Subject: RE: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan
Attachments: Cicely B Woodrow.vcf; image001.jpg

Ms. Lyle,

Thank you for providing comments on the Waterfront Plan. We will add your email to the official file and you are welcome to speak at the Planning Commission public hearing, which is scheduled for April 5th.

Cicely B. Woodrow
Department of Planning & Zoning
Management Analyst III

(703) 746-3810 Work
cicely.woodrow@alexandriava.gov
301 King Street, #2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
www.alexandriava.gov/planning

From: Mindy Lyle [mailto:mindylyle@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 7:57 AM
To: PnZFeedback; Cicely Woodrow; Graciela Moreno
Subject: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan

COA Contact Us: Planning and Zoning General Feedback

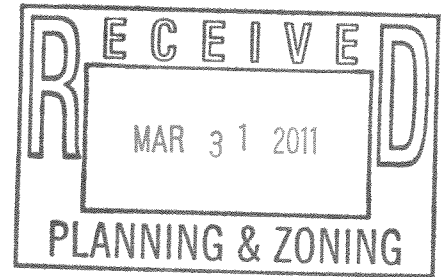
Time: [Thu Mar 31, 2011 07:57:16] Message ID: [28851]

Issue Type: Planning and Zoning General Feedback
First Name: Mindy
Last Name: Lyle
Street Address: 5235 Tancreti Lane
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22304
Phone: 703-566-7113
Email Address: mindylyle@comcast.net
Subject: Waterfront Plan

After too many years of discussion on the Waterfront Plan, the results are not sufficient to meet the needs of this City or provide needed tax
Comments: revenue. Public officials have allowed Old Town and the Old Town Civic Association to once again derail what could be a vibrant destination which

could bring dollars into the City of Alexandria. 800,000 square feet of development falls far short of what should be considered to develop a waterfront that attracts people not only from the region, but out of town visitors as well. We are competing with National Harbor, Georgetown and the new waterfront development in the District of Columbia. The Waterfront

Plan as proposed will not even attract residents from Alexandria's West End. I urge you to look across the river and add additional retail, hotel rooms and commercial space to the plan. An accessible, vibrant retail/restaurant/hotel promenade can be the catalyst for increased tax revenue. Please do not cave to a few residents without vision.



"Don't Rezone the Waterfront"

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

301 KING ST.

ALEXANDRIA VA 22314

"I am opposed to changes to the 1983 Waterfront Agreement that would allow hotels and to changes to the 1992 W-1 zone that would allow more density. I would prefer a waterfront based on arts, *open space*, culture and history, as opposed to private commercial development. Please vote "NO" on rezoning the waterfront."

John A. Kuper Smith (signature)
Name JOHN KUPER SMITH Address 214 S. ROYAL

- Opens District 1 to increased density in a residential area already saturated. We need Open Space
- Plan does not demonstrate net revenue - it ignores added infrastructure costs
- Diminishes my property value by undermining the residential character of my neighborhood
- More trash trucks, service trucks, employee and visitor cars - every day will be Saturday!
- Will take business away from existing establishments
- This is not Georgetown or the Inner Harbor - I don't want my home to become an antique shop. Enough is enough!

H. Talmage Day
113 North Fairfax Street
Ramsay Alley Entrance
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

March 29, 2011

To the Planning Commission

Re: APRIL 5, 2011, DOCKET ITEM # 8 A&B:
Master Plan Amendment #2011-0001, Text Amendment #2011-0005,
Waterfront Small Area Plan

With critical amendments, a clearer articulation of development goals, and further assurances of feasibility, the Waterfront Small Area Plan should be approved as an amendment to the City's Master Plan. For a number of reasons, this is the right time for Alexandria to be planning for its waterfront, and the plan under consideration gets a number of things right. Amendments can address the balance.

The plan is correct that appropriate commercial development is a means to make the waterfront more accessible and that "by-right" development of more residences and offices exclusively would defeat that goal. It also correctly aims that the development contemplated should be maintainable and not vulnerable to decay through lack of resources to maintain what is done.

In addition, without planning, the likely outcomes along the Old Town waterfront will be a further decline in the quality of restaurant choices - trending toward "fast food;" an end to any prospect for a revival of retail in Old Town that might even begin to equal the range and quality of specialty retail shopping that distinguished Alexandria's Old Town in the Seventies and early Eighties, and a default to "by-right" residential and office development under current zoning that would deaden the psychological accessibility of the waterfront, even if some sort of access should be nominally preserved.

Because of the planning processes underway for waterfront in other parts of the region, e.g., along the Anacostia, this is a particularly propitious time to be thinking about Old Town's waterfront as one part of the waterfront in the region. New York City now is planning for its waterfront as a "Sixth Borough".

The waterfronts of the Anacostia and the Potomac are likewise parts of a region. However, the proposed plan fails fully to take into account the distinctive significance of Old Town's waterfront as part of a regional scheme. As a result, the ways that development envisioned under the plan could have both positive significance for Old Town and economic value for the City are not given sufficient attention. The plan should consider to a much greater degree the features that make Old Town distinctive within this region.

Hotels:

The failure of the present plan to give sufficient weight to the features that make Old Town economically, historically and architecturally distinctive within the region is particularly pronounced in the planning for hotels. The root of the deficiencies likely lies in the limitations of the hotels analysis produced by the Department's consultants. In terms of a very simplified basic industry multiplier analysis, the consultants project just how many more hotel rooms could be

built in the area with occupancy at a projected 70 percent vacancy rate. The analysis proffers the prevailing per diem rate for government employees as the pertinent constraint on room rates.

The assumptions are inappropriate and the methodology is too limited to furnish any useful guidance for analyzing how development of commercial lodging along the waterfront could enhance the commercial diversity in Old Town or capitalize on what makes Old Town unique and distinctive as a neighborhood attractive to tourists and residents. Hotels conceived in the terms articulated would be little more than generic competitors to the hotels around Key Bridge or across the river in National Harbor. The analysis methodology could as readily be deployed to justify generic hotels in Landmark, Mark Center or Potomac Yards.

None of these sites - nor South Street Seaport for that matter - is an appropriate comparison. A more appropriate planning comparison is Stonington Connecticut, a community which like Old Town is uniquely coherent and architecturally distinctive within its region for its 18th and 19th Century architecture. Stonington is also, like Alexandria, adjacent to sites attracting mass market tourists: two casinos near Ledyard, a few miles away, and the Mystic Seaport complex a little closer to New York along the shore.

Lodging in Stonington is available at higher rates that do not compete on price with the hotels and motels serving the casinos and Mystic Seaport. Patrons of those inns are customers for the distinctive restaurants in the community and also for its shops. A more appropriately dynamic analysis of the Old Town waterfront would have examined how hotels serving a market more attracted to the unique features of Old Town within this region could provide an additional base of support for specialty retail shopping and restaurants of quality in Old Town.

Such hotels would surely be smaller in scale, would charge higher rates and would as well impose less of a footprint and corresponding burden on residents. In addition, hotels smaller in scale would make more space available for other purposes in the areas proposed for hotel development, sites that could be alternatively developed as performance space, workspace and administrative offices for the City's cultural organizations as some have proposed.

Hence, while an amendment of W-1 zoning to permit hotels is desirable, the plan should be amended so that the hotels contemplated under the amended plan with associated changes in zoning should be significantly smaller in scale, with no more than 225 rooms total.

Other issues:

Flood Control: While it is true that the physical structures that would most directly benefit from enhanced flood control are the commercial buildings constructed in the flood zone, improvements in flood control would have benefits for public health that will inure to the welfare of visitors and residents alike. It is noteworthy that the measures contemplated in the plan would preserve water views from streets at all times except when mobilized to prevent flooding.

Parking Lots and Infrastructure for Water Taxis: The plan is correct that the existing parking lots along the waterfront south of King Street must be restored as parkland. The lots along the waterfront are eyesores, and the parking they provide can be accommodated elsewhere. It could be possible as well through further planning expressly for water taxi infrastructure even to reduce parking demand. A further step, not discussed in the plan, is to foster development of longer term parking elsewhere in Alexandria that would afford safe longer-term parking for visitors outside the immediate vicinity of Old Town.

So far as water taxi service is concerned, the base of King Street is the appropriate site for redevelopment of infrastructure to support water transport. In that regard, it is telling that the land acquired by the Old Dominion Boat Club was originally the site of a ferry. From my conversations regarding the conclusions of investors interested in financing additional water taxi services, however, any further development of regional water taxi services serving Old Town's waterfront will remain infeasible without redevelopment/development of additional infrastructure for water taxi services.

That said, if the regional significance of water connectivity as urban infrastructure should be given more express emphasis in the Waterfront Plan, the City would possibly be able look to other funding sources for implementation of these features of the plan.

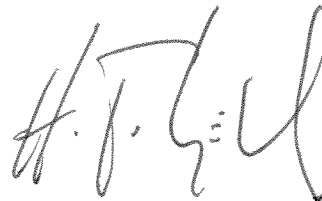
Viewing the piers proposed at the base of King Street ("Fitzgerald Square") more in terms of infrastructure for waterborne regional transit and to a lesser degree as an amenity – a parking lot for boats – should draw attention to other sources of funding for the improvements. Such a view is consistent with the general objective to reduce the dependence of both tourists and residents on automobiles as the default mode for transportation within areas that greater capitalization on water transport could serve.

Waterfront Park: The revised scale of the Waterfront Park building proposed in the Plan Supplement resolves a significant limitation in what was originally proposed. As revised, the Waterfront Park building and associated landscape development would provide better sight lines along the waterfront without any visually meaningful encroachment on the viewscape of neighboring buildings and without any psychologically significant intrusion into the Park.

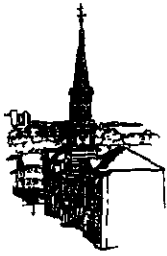
Museums: Neither as a cost nor technical matter are museums feasible anchors for the Waterfront. Museums much larger than might be envisioned along the Waterfront are in the throes of reenvisioning their missions to continue to draw visitors. These established museums are investing millions of dollars in new facilities and dynamic programming, e.g., Mount Vernon, Monticello, to avoid becoming dated. There is no reason to believe that Alexandria waterfront museums would attract the visitor attendance required to be self-supporting when more prominent museums are struggling. If constructed and not self-supporting, the proposed waterfront museums would divert public resources from other City museums and from historic Fort Ward Park, all of which are already under financial stress.

Redevelopment of the Food Court: The suggestion in the Waterfront Public Art Proposal that the first level of the Food Court be redeveloped as an enclosed market is inspired. *See* Waterfront Plan App. 5 at 28. Any such redevelopment of the Food Court should be designed with rental incentives to increase availability of local foods and specialty foods as opposed to crafts. Crafts and fine arts are already well-served by the Torpedo Factory galleries.

Alexandria should not sell its heritage cheap. The City's planning at this time, as exemplified in the Waterfront Plan, is an opportunity to further development of Alexandria's waterfront as a regionally distinctive cultural and economic resource for the 21st Century. Preserving Old Town's historic integrity while encouraging development of quality should be central to that goal. With critical changes and proper implementation, the Waterfront Plan has the potential to make life more interesting and attractive for Old Town residents and should also draw to Old Town the tourists who would find the distinctive character of Old Town a reason to visit and a desirable place to stay.



Cc: Alexandria City Council
James K. Hartmann, City Manager
Karl Moritz, Department of Planning and Zoning
Nancy Williams, Department of Planning and Zoning



City Hall
Alexandria, Virginia

Alexandria Waterfront Committee
Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314



March 23, 2011

Ms. Faroll Hamer, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning
City of Alexandria
City Hall
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Ms. Hamer:

This letter summarizes the position of the Alexandria Waterfront Committee on the Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan recently circulated by the Department of Planning and Zoning for public review and comment. The Waterfront Committee recommends that the Draft Waterfront Plan and the concepts it proposes should be amended as described in this letter and formally adopted as a study by the Planning Commission and City Council, with further community discussion before adoption of Zoning Ordinance text amendments and incorporation of the Waterfront Small Area Plan chapter into the City's Master Plan.

The Waterfront Committee believes that a new Waterfront Plan is necessary to guide future development and civic investments. The Committee has long advocated for development and enactment of a new Waterfront Plan, and believes it is essential to establish guidelines for future development before any specific development is proposed. Today's Waterfront does not meet its full potential to serve residents or improve the City's economic vitality. Existing infrastructure is aging and needs to be revitalized for the area to be competitive with neighboring waterfronts. A Waterfront Plan will assist in addressing these shortcomings.

The Draft Waterfront Plan, as proposed, will renew the Alexandria Waterfront over the next 30 to 50 years. The Plan successfully accomplishes several key objectives urged by the Waterfront Committee and other interested stakeholders. Notably, it creates a continuous pedestrian pathway along the entirety of the City's Potomac River frontage. It seeks to integrate nuisance flood mitigation measures in vulnerable areas with sensitivity, and it conforms to existing Chesapeake Bay watershed development guidelines. It comprehensively incorporates the Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal prepared by the Public Art Committee of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Alexandria Waterfront History Plan developed by the Alexandria Archaeological Commission. It balances new areas of economic vitality with quiet places for contemplating the water.

However, the Waterfront Committee believes that there are four key issues that must be adequately resolved before this Plan is legally adopted and implemented by the City:

- What are the ramifications of extending piers into the Potomac River? Are such structures technically feasible; will they withstand the pressure of the river flow and will they negate the current dredging problem rather than add to it? Is the proposed design for the new pleasure craft marina appropriate?

- Can we achieve the parking plan?
- Are the proposed locations of hotels appropriate, will such use be permitted by the National Park Service (NPS), and by what methods will the City influence the ultimate build-out of these sites?
- Is the proposed Waterfront Park Building—including its proposed use, height, and scale—appropriate?

In addition to these major issues, we have concerns about other elements of the Plan, as proposed:

- The apparent continued delay to the implementation of the Windmill Hill Park Plan
- Utilization of the existing Food Pavilion
- Proposed attractions for children and families
- Programming and management of the Waterfront

Failure on these points would severely impact the outcome of the Plan; therefore, the Committee advises that more should be done to resolve these uncertainties before the Plan is legally adopted in the form of text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and incorporation of the Waterfront Small Area Plan chapter into the City's Master Plan. Adoption of the Plan as a study at this time will formally endorse key concepts expressed by the Draft Waterfront Plan, continue the forward momentum of Plan development, and permit adequate time to address major issues before legal adoption.

We further advise that its authors distinguish between concepts integral to the Waterfront Plan and elements that are merely illustrative of potential implementation approaches. As presently drafted, it is often not clear where concepts end and implementation approaches begin.

We offer these constructive comments in an effort to improve the comprehensiveness and completeness of the overall Plan. The Plan must have broad-based community support, and resolution of these issues is essential to achieve buy-in from the community at large. We have previously noted that compromise and discussion are required to achieve a Waterfront Plan that may be supported by all Waterfront stakeholders, and remain optimistic that we can find common ground. We look forward to collaborating with City staff and fellow stakeholders in the months ahead to address these points.

Waterfront Extension and Marina

The Draft Waterfront Plan proposes two major extensions into the Potomac River, including piers at the foot of King and Cameron streets and a pleasure craft marina off the current Robinson Terminal South location. Notably, a potential legal obstacle to extension of pierheads was resolved when the District of Columbia Office of Planning determined that the City of Alexandria is not required to obtain District permissions to construct structures located inside the pierhead line, thanks to a 1945 Congressional act that states that the D.C./Virginia boundary follows the “present established pierhead line” and that “wherever the location of the pierhead line along the Alexandria Waterfront is altered, then the boundary shall follow the new location of the pierhead line.”

We note, however, the significant expense involved in constructing and maintaining these structures when the case for expansion into the waterway—instead of better utilizing frontage shoreward (westward) of the existing shipping channel—has not been made. We are concerned by the significant financial liability the City may encumber to maintain a Potomac shipping channel eastward of the existing natural channel just off the existing pier head line. In addition, the ease with which the City will achieve the necessary permits and permissions from relevant federal agencies—including the U.S. Department of Interior and the Army Corps of Engineers—remains somewhat unclear.

Currently the City spends several millions of dollars on a regular basis dredging the approaches to the existing City Marina berths. The financial ramifications—including construction costs and ongoing maintenance expenses—for the proposed marina designs are not clear. The Waterfront Committee is concerned that the proposed “horseshoe” shape for the commercial marina might attract even more silt into the central area and so it is recommended that more research be undertaken to examine this issue.

The Plan envisages a new marina area off the current Robinson Terminal South. The Waterfront Committee has two concerns regarding this structure. The first concern is about the technical feasibility of such a structure in a river that can surge from meteorological events and can carry large tree trunks and, at times, ice floes. The second concern is about the economic feasibility of the structure. Whereas the management details are for future discussion, the Waterfront Committee’s own research suggested a minimum size of 150 berths before a marina can become viable. The same research also showed that a marina of such a size would require storage areas and proper transfer points for families to load and transition from land vehicles to watercraft.

Similarly, increased commercial traffic will require storage facilities for boat operators.

Parking

The Draft Waterfront Plan cites the Old Town Area Parking Study, which found that “issues with Old Town parking relate to proximity, rate, and availability and not to overall capacity.” The study—and the Draft Waterfront Plan—recommends better management of the existing supply to serve present and future demand for parking in Old Town. If this indeed the case, we urge the immediate implementation of the recommendations of this chapter, including wayfinding, valet parking, and shuttle services aimed at maximizing existing parking capacity, coupled with enhanced enforcement of existing parking policies in adjacent residential areas. Such a pilot program will mitigate existing parking issues, and provide a model as implementation of the full Waterfront Plan unfolds. There is no reason to wait for further development of the Waterfront to address the presently existent parking issues. Let us test this concept during the spring and summer of 2011 to see if it works.

As the Plan is implemented, we note the importance of careful timing of improvements that would impact the supply and demand for parking. As an example, the parking lot on the Strand (often referred to as Dandy’s parking lot) is shown in the Old Town Area Parking Study as the most heavily utilized parking lot in Old Town. It currently serves Dandy Restaurant Cruises, Chadwick’s Restaurant, and the Union Street Public House, plus several merchants and other attractions in the area. This spring it will also serve the new Virtue Feed and Grain gastro pub under construction in the former Olsson’s building at 106 South Union Street, which was recently approved by the City without requirements for additional parking. Any future restaurant and hotel developments in this vicinity will place further demands on this lot and other parking facilities in this area. Therefore, before the existing parking along The Strand is redeveloped into parkland, detailed study to ensure adequate supply in this area will be warranted.

Hotels

The Plan will support commercial land uses, which activate the Waterfront and help to pay for the Plan. A key consideration, however, is what types of commercial uses are appropriate, as the Plan proposes hotels for a significant portion of developable Waterfront areas. Existing Settlement Agreements between the City, NPS, and the property owner allow both Robinson Terminal sites to be developed as waterfront commercial mixed use. At present, these agreements specifically exclude hotel uses from these locations. However, the Draft Waterfront Plan proposes a hotel on each of these sites. The Draft Waterfront Plan also proposes increased density at the Robison Terminal sites—consistent with the respective Settlement Agreements, but greater than

permitted by existing zoning. The Committee recommends that NPS be approached to see if it would modify existing Settlement Agreements to permit hotel uses.

Careful consideration must be given to whether any of the major Waterfront redevelopment sites—Robinson Terminal North, Robinson Terminal South, and the Cummings/Turner Block—should be developed as hotels. The challenge is to carefully balance residential, commercial, and visitor-oriented Waterfront development, including civic and cultural attractions for both visitors and residents. Too much residential development may give the Waterfront the feel of being a private area primarily for residents, while too much commercial development may leave the area vacant at night. The Waterfront Committee would not wish to see the area suffer from blight as a result of overly prescriptive planning.

The Committee also requests clarification regarding controls over the design quality of these sites. Will design guidelines be enforced by the Board of Architectural Review, Planning Commission, and City Council using existing development approvals processes, or will additional oversight apply? The relationship between guidelines and governance is crucial, as both policy and process will ultimately determine the City's success influencing private development to achieve the Plan. The Waterfront Committee recommends that the City link increased density on these sites with enhanced control over design quality.

Waterfront Park Building

We appreciate that the land swap with the Old Dominion Boat Club resulting in Fitzgerald Square is facilitated by the construction of parking on a portion of Waterfront Park, and are very supportive of the resulting public plaza at the foot of King Street that results. We hope that negotiations between the City and ODBC succeed in achieving this outcome. We question, however, the need to construct a restaurant building on top of the re-located ODBC parking area. Alternate options for the proposed Waterfront Park building include covered parking with a green roof offering additional passive recreational open space; space for cultural institutions; a smaller restaurant or targeted retail; or a surface parking lot tastefully landscaped. We are not convinced that a restaurant building at Waterfront Park is in order.

Windmill Hill Park

The Draft Waterfront Plan reaffirms the plan for Windmill Hill Park adopted by the City in 2004. To date, however, none of this plan has been implemented, and unfortunately it is not addressed in the draft Plan's implementation chapter. Furthermore, compared to the City's approved FY11 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the proposed FY12 CIP reduces funding for the Windmill Hill Park Bulkhead project from \$5.5 million to \$4.0 million in FY16 and FY17. We suggest that active implementation of the languishing plans for this park be integrated with the Plan's implementation strategy for the Waterfront's core area, and that proposed improvements be fully funded and constructed in a timely manner.

Food Pavilion

The Draft Waterfront Plan does little to address the current state of the Torpedo Factory Food Pavilion at 5 Cameron Street, other than to point to the current master leaseholder's plans to refashion the facility to house two sit-down restaurants. Its present quick-service restaurants serve an important segment of Waterfront users that may be lost if the entire facility is converted into upscale, sit-down restaurants. We encourage the City, as the owner of this facility, to engage in proactive negotiations with the Food Pavilion's present master leaseholder to consider short- and long-term strategies to improve the economic vitality of this deteriorating asset that balance Waterfront dining and retail offerings. This facility would be an ideal home for an Eastern Market-style food hall or small-scale retail, and should not be permitted to continue to languish.

Children and Families

The Plan proposes a play structure for children at the north end of Oronoco Bay Park, as well as a model boat basin in the proposed park area east of the 200 block of The Strand. However, these are the only explicit mentions of facilities for children, and we are concerned that the proposed Oronoco Bay Park location, in particular, is too close to existing residential. We note that attractions for children may encompass more than conventional playground equipment. Ideally, Alexandria's Waterfront would integrate public art and historical interpretation in a manner attractive to children. We underscore the importance of making the Waterfront an interesting place for children and families as their interest is likely to drive return trips to the Alexandria Waterfront.

Programming and Management

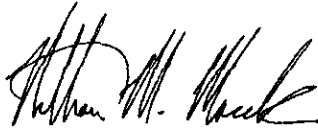
The Plan describes the creation of a special entity for management of the Waterfront. Indeed, the Waterfront has many different objectives that do not neatly align with the City's present organizational structure for serving the Waterfront. Consideration of a one-stop, cross-functional entity for managing core Waterfront areas would facilitate the City's stewardship of this asset, and improve the experience of Waterfront residents, businesses, and visitors. We are eager to engage in further discussion with the City regarding this concept following adoption of a Waterfront Plan.

We note, too, the importance of programming and other activities to make the Waterfront an interesting place. The Plan is silent on the role of programming and the associated costs. The Plan should also address the maintenance of existing assets, some of which will reach the end of their useful lives within the horizon of this Plan.

* * * * *

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Waterfront Plan. If you should have further questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 202-365-2927 (mobile) or natemacek@hotmail.com. On behalf of the Alexandria Waterfront Committee, thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Nathan M. Macek, Chair
Alexandria Waterfront Committee

CC: Alexandria City Council
Alexandria Planning Commission
James K. Hartmann, City Manager
James Spengler, Director, Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities
Karl Moritz, Department of Planning and Zoning
Nancy Williams, Department of Planning and Zoning
Jack Browand, Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities
Jim Hixon, Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities
Alexandria Waterfront Committee

THE WASHINGTON POST COMPANY

1150 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20071

BOISFEUILLET JONES, JR.
Vice Chairman

phone: 202-334-7141
fax: 202-334-1081
e-mail: jonesb@washpost.com

March 22, 2011

The Honorable William D. Euille
Mayor
City of Alexandria
301 King Street, Room 2300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Re: Alexandria Waterfront – Small Area Plan

Dear Mayor Euille:

With the City's planning department now having issued the draft waterfront small area plan, I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of Robinson Terminal, to tell you that we remain willing to continue our involvement in the planning process. As you suggested when we met two years ago, we still agree that it is beneficial for both Robinson Terminal and the City to work cooperatively, as opposed to renewing litigation which was suspended by our Tolling Agreement of April 2009.

We believe there are parts of the plan that are positive steps towards creating a successful waterfront for the Alexandria community as you envisioned when we met. There are other aspects of the plan, however, that are problematic and, contrary to the interests of all parties, could have the unintended consequence of imposing substantial impediments to achieving the City's goals of having the properties redeveloped as first-class and vibrant mixed-use projects. The plan should guide the long-term future of the waterfront without overly restricting not just the future developers but also the flexibility of the City to assure successful redevelopment.

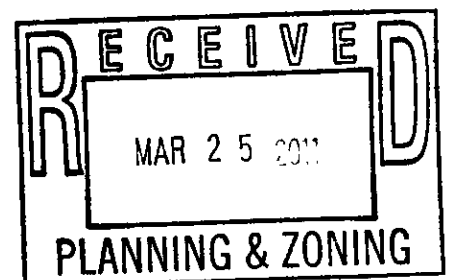
We would hope that the plan could be refined to be more flexible in its development requirements and more realistic in its treatment of required amenities. We also believe that the plan should recognize in a more balanced way the settlements reached in 1983, which at a minimum provide an important piece of the context for the current planning effort. We are working with our outside engineering, planning and development consultants to produce more specific comments which we of course will share with City staff. We hope we can continue to engage with the City productively.

A meeting has been requested with Faroll Hamer and her staff to convey our thoughts and continue the constructive working relationship that has developed over the past two years. I hope this effort will address our concerns. When the planning process is at a point that you believe a meeting will be helpful, we would be pleased to meet again with you and your staff.

Sincerely,



cc: James K. Hartmann, City Manager
✓ Faroll Hamer, Planning Director
Christopher Spera, Esq.
Robert W. Taylor
Eric N. Lieberman, Esq.
David L. Miller, Esq.
Duncan W. Blair, Esq.





Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association
421 King Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
t: 703.746.3300 | f: 703.746.3314

Alexandria Visitors Center at Ramsay House
221 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
t: 703.746.3301 | toll free: 800.388.9119

March 21, 2011

City Hall
321 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council, and City Manager:

The Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association (ACVA) supports the Waterfront Small Area Plan and encourages its immediate adoption as an essential element for achieving the City's stated goals for economic sustainability.

A lengthy and comprehensive process for community input has resulted in a plan that reflects the goals and ideas of the community at-large. The plan:

1. Maintains public access to the waterfront, increases green space and pays for desirable public amenities
2. Provides an appealing attraction with tourism infrastructure that will enhance visitor spending, both on the waterfront and throughout the city
3. Establishes a vision for development that will encourage highest and best use development of private property.

We hope that the plan is adopted in its entirety, allowing existing regulations and processes to continue to influence development and providing continuous community input. We would like to highlight several aspects of the plan that we believe are especially important to the successful development of the waterfront from a tourism perspective.

• **FITZGERALD SQUARE, ART AND HISTORY PLANS**

Fitzgerald Square and the extended pier are key elements in connecting the King Street corridor and the Waterfront – a stated goal of City Council's Strategic Plan and a fundamental priority outlined in our April 2009 position statement.

We applaud the excellent work of citizen volunteers who created plans for the Art Walk and historic preservation and interpretation. These elements are essential for creating a vibrant and meaningful experience for visitors that distinguishes Alexandria's waterfront from competing destinations. A higher level of engagement lengthens the time visitors will spend in Alexandria and encourage the exploration of more businesses and experiences.

Corporate Sponsors
Dandy Restaurant Cruise Ships
George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens
Potomac Riverboat Company
Alexandria Hotel Association

Currently, these initiatives are endorsed by the Waterfront Plan, but lack a funding mechanism. We propose that project costs be revised to include at least a first phase of implementation for both the Art Walk and the History Plan. A modest investment could attract more visitors who stay longer and generate spending that pays for the improvements.

- **REVITALIZATION OF CURRENT ASSETS**

Current assets should be revitalized as soon as possible as a catalyst for private-sector improvements. The Marina should be managed as a professional, revenue generating operation. Of course, we fully support improvements to the Food Court and Torpedo Factory.

- **COMMERCIAL BOATING EXPANSION**

Increasing the City's capacity to receive visitors by boat provides the lowest impact opportunity to generate revenue for the City with no corresponding demands for parking. On average, day visitors from the region spend \$216. If only 100 more people arrived by boat daily for six months of the year, \$3.9 million of spending would be generated.

- **HOTEL DEVELOPMENT**


Hotel development on the waterfront is a low-impact strategy for revenue generation that will pay for the amenities the community desires. On average, an Alexandria hotel generates \$1 million annually in business and excise taxes. The City should seek the highest quality hotel development possible to elevate the City's room inventory, attracting a sought after demographic of shoppers and diners to the city, maximizing spending and enhancing related development.

After the completion of the plan, many in the community have expressed interest in developing one or more museums on privately-owned parcels. Museums could certainly be a desirable asset for attracting visitors to Alexandria. A large venue to support meetings and conferences would enhance our ability to attract groups to existing hotels.

Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that funding a museum with public resources would create a positive return on investment. Further, the transportation and parking demands for a museum are much greater than any use currently in the plan. And, the opportunity cost of replacing hotels with non-profit museums would add even more to the cost of such a use.

We congratulate the City on a leading a process of community input that has led to a successful plan that will enhance Alexandria's waterfront for residents and visitors while adding to the economic sustainability of the City.

Sincerely,



Hubert Herre
Acting Chair

Kendra Jacobs

From: Faroll Hamer
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2011 2:43 PM
To: Kendra Jacobs
Subject: FW: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan
Attachments: ATT00001..txt

From: Rose Boyd
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 4:33 PM
To: Mark Jinks; Michele Evans; Faroll Hamer
Subject: FW: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan

From: Jon Rosenbaum [mailto:hjrosenbaum@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2011 11:04 AM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; delpepper@aol.com; Del Pepper; paulcsmedberg@aol.com; Rose Boyd; Jackie Henderson; Elaine Scott; Rob Krupicka; Linda Owens; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: COA Contact Us: Waterfront Plan

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Sat Mar 12, 2011 11:03:33] Message ID: [28412]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
First Name: Jon
Last Name: Rosenbaum
Street Address: 421 North Saint Asaph Street
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22314
Phone: 703 836-7877
Email Address: hjrosenbaum@comcast.net
Subject: Waterfront Plan
I live in Old Town and LIKE the waterfront plan. Yes, there are residents of Old Town that support the plan. The Old Town Civic Association does not represent more than 450 people. Only 150 of its members responded to its poll solicitation and 50 percent of the respondents live within two blocks of the river. The plan is restrained and the result of numerous meetings, all of which my wife and I attended - unlike

some of those now

arguing for a new plan. I attended the recent OTCA meeting on the

waterfront and did
not hear any specific ideas other than to eliminate

the restaurant building and build museums that we
cannot afford. The

organization wants to stall consideration until the fall to build

opposition. Many believe
that the current rights of property owners can

be ignored.

I do have two suggestions - which I raised during the

planning process. Frankly I wish that the city would
expropriate the

boat club parking lot and compensate the owners. The lot not only is

unsightly but denies
the public access to the river at a crucial spot.

Since some of you are members of the boat club (which
has 700 members but

few boats and has a web site saying it has the cheapest beer around), I

realize that
you are unwilling to use expropriation. But at least

pressure the club to move the lot as suggested in the
plan by threatening

to close lower King Street and Prince Street to traffic.

I also do not

feel that the old Beachcomber Restaurant should be kept in the plan. The

cement block
building was constructed in the last 50 years and keeping it

for "historic preservation" makes a mockery
of that term. The

building was purchased with open space funds. If it is to be retained the

money used to
buy it needs to be returned to the open space fund.

LAWRENCE N. BRANDT, INC.

1054 31ST STREET, NW, SUITE 110, WASHINGTON, DC 20007
Phone 202-965-1221 FAX 202-965-1331

March 17, 2011

Honorable Mayor William D. Euille
City of Alexandria
Suite 2300, City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Alexandria Waterfront Plan

Dear Mayor Euille:


My name is Robert Brandt and I live at 401 Duke Street. I am fortunate enough to both live and work in Old Town Alexandria. As a resident, I appreciate the thought that goes into all development in our City, and as a developer I appreciate it as well. There is a consistent mission to achieve the "best-possible" projects that are sympathetic to existing neighbors, both buildings and people, to make our City a place where people would want to live and work. This consistency is paramount, in my opinion, for achieving "good" development. This all starts with a plan, and in the case of the Waterfront, a long-awaited plan.

In 1990, wearing my developers hat, I worked with the City to try to develop a portion of the waterfront and was unsuccessful. At the time I felt that I should wait a year or two until the City decided how they wanted to proceed. Now in 2011 a comprehensive plan has been proposed, and it is a clear, concise plan with a consistent vision for Alexandria's waterfront.

- It provides a blueprint that is not rigid, but a guide that is sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood.
- It connects the Waterfront north-to-south and east-to-west.
- It breaks the trend of "privatization" of public space.
- It adds significant public space for people and eliminates parking lots that line the existing waterfront.
- It includes a parking strategy and parking implementation plan.
- It is a plan that is sensitive to the historic character of Alexandria's waterfront.

This plan provides a "direction" that will enable developers, citizens and City Staff to work together on projects outside of a vacuum that currently exists. Surely there will be deviations on specific buildings, but the Waterfront Plan provides direction that did not exist 21 years ago, and still does not today. For all of these reasons I hope that the City Council will adopt the Alexandria Waterfront Plan, so that this vital part of our City can move forward.

Sincerely,



Robert S. Bratdt
President

cc: Ms. Faroll Hamer

3/17/2011

Dear Bill,

I have been continuing to follow the waterfront plan. I have had grave concerns with the plan with respect to its benefits and costs to ordinary Alexandrians and expressed these to you and Faroll, when we met last summer.

I have reviewed the portion of the Waterfront Small Area Plan that has been recently released, and many, if not most, of my concerns expressed in the past remain. The purported **benefits are very weak** and marginal at best and **do not justify a plan of this magnitude and potential cost**, and the negatives are virtually ignored. Some of my major concerns that are still unresolved are as follows:

- a. **No overarching need for the plan has been clearly expressed.** Why does this have to be done, and why the high priority, particularly given the continuing financial problems facing the City and the continuing tax increases that we are facing? Given budget reductions at our schools, libraries, and with other public services, it is questionable whether even the money spent developing this plan was warranted.
- b. A clear set of prioritized requirements have not been developed; instead a set of vague and in many cases low priority or unnecessary "goals" have been presented.
- c. No justification for the plan is presented through coherent and rigorous **cost-benefit analyses**. What alternatives were considered; what process was used to evaluate them; and why this particular plan? You and Faroll promised this would be done when I met with you last year, and it is still not forthcoming. **Such an effort is a fundamental part of early stage concept development, not something to be done later as part of implementation.**
- d. **No costs are presented** beyond the same general numbers seen at recent presentations. It is stated that the cost estimate is under review and will be released soon; however, this plan is **incomplete** without it and should have not been released. Also, the preliminary costs presented prior to this point appear unrealistically optimistic.
- e. No effective **risk assessment** evaluating technical and business/cost risks has been done. An example is that work along a shoreline is fraught with unknowns, and even this plan obliquely recognizes this through the use of vague wording and qualifiers. From a cost perspective we certainly do not want a repeat of the boathouse, where construction costs well exceeded the early publicized estimates. There are also a number of legal issues and unknowns associated with prior agreements that present significant risks with respect to costs and basic feasibility.
- f. It is little more than a sales document primarily filled with pretty pictures. Why does it have over 70 pages dedicated to an appendix on public art containing a great deal of hyperbole and irrelevant material; e. g., photos of New York and Tokyo, and **little to nothing on value, justification and cost?**

I really do not see this as a plan but as a shopping list or Chinese menu. I cannot envision how a realistic and supportable cost estimate can be developed based on the open issues and lack of clear definition in this document. It is filled with vague words, such as "... could increase substantially...", "... future City capital Improvement Program (CIP) decision making...", "... may be eligible...", "... for some the availability is unknown...", etc. These indicate a great deal of uncertainty, which would result in an open checkbook for the City after approval and during implementation.

Fundamental flaws also still exist in some of the logic presented. For example, one of the goals is to increase citizen access to the waterfront, but the additional development being relied upon to pay for the plan will obviously further hamper access to the waterfront area. More linear footage may be open at the water's edge; however, it will be measurably harder to get there. The section on parking implicitly recognizes this in that it attempts to rationalize an already difficult situation.

I am also curious about the attention given to the development of The Beachcomber. I understand that the City bought this property and intends to reach an agreement with a developer to reopen it as a restaurant. This is fraught with the potential for conflicts of interest and deserves special scrutiny as do other elements of the plan.

The part of the plan that I thought **reasonable** was the section on implementation. It recognizes the possibility and advantages of deferring public investment until revenues from private development begin to come in at a substantive rate. I do not believe that the City should be putting up-front money into creating a stage set for subsequent private development. Let the developers build in accordance with zoning policies that protect the openness of the waterfront and respect the quality of life of the people who live in downtown Alexandria, while the City bides its time and its citizens' money.

A major question is when does the public comment period on this plan end? Since the cost estimate is still under review, the clock cannot start until it is released. I hope someone isn't delaying it until only a minimal period is available for its review.

In conclusion, I urge you to do the following:

- a. **Delay any vote on this plan** until it is complete with costs, and we all have the time to review it in its entirety and provide meaningful comments. Any vote by the Council before this and before some other major questions can be answered is irresponsible. I recognize that some proponents would probably like to get this underway with a minimum of public exposure and hard review, but that is inconsistent with the public trust placed with the Council by us ordinary citizens.
- b. **If a vote is held, reject this plan** and task the Planning and Zoning Department to rework it into something that is less costly and risky and is limited to the most basic

essentials. Voting yes on this plan is not something I would like to have as baggage if I were running for political office.

William Rogalski, Jr.

Old Town Civic Association
P.O. Box 1213
Alexandria, Virginia 22313

March 12, 2011

Mayor William D. Euille
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

Re: Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan

The OTCA recently conducted a member survey to gauge reaction to the recently released Waterfront Plan. As Old Town is the community most impacted by the plan, it is critical that you are made aware of the key finding from our over 152 responses.

The survey revealed that almost 8 out of 10 (79 percent) of our members have an unfavorable view of the plan. Their top concerns are as follows:

- Unsettled legal issues could dramatically increase costs
- No real plan alternatives have been developed or vetted
- The plan is too ambitious; too much commercial development will create negative impacts on both proximate neighborhoods (traffic/parking), and negative impacts on existing businesses (cannibalization)
- The plan is not revenue-neutral; none of the cost-benefit analyses presented by City staff support this conclusion
- The Waterfront Park building is extremely unpopular
- The plan should do more to feature and lock in sites (and funding mechanisms) for historic/cultural amenities.

Surely, the City's goal should not be to maximize tax revenue potential if by doing so, we destroy the historical nature of the community. OTCA takes the position that the planning goal should be to determine the feasibility and desirability of revenue attraction, and use the feasibility to drive development accordingly. Tourists come to this city first for its history, beauty, and, authenticity and secondarily, its amenities such as restaurants and shops.

Reverse this relationship, and you're not in Alexandria; you are in "Anytown", USA.

Within the OTCA membership, there is significant frustration with the planning process and a belief that an important step has been missed. For a planning study of this importance, there is typically a step where two or three alternative plans (for example; a plan with an emphasis on maximizing commercial development, or an emphasis on more open space and less commercial development), are developed and presented together with their cost/benefit as options for the community to review and evaluate. This step allows constructive and well-informed community input and builds a sense of "community ownership" of the plan.

As this step was not part of the planning process, OTCA extends an invitation to members of the City Council to join our members at a planning workshop where we will develop an alternative planning

concept(s) that balance the objectives of both the 1992 Small Area Plan and this iteration. Notably, the 1992 Plan calls for less development, more open space and nature-based improvements while the latest version envisions massive development and commercial enhancements. There has been no attempt to combine the elements, in our opinion, the missing step in the planning process so far.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gosling', written in a cursive style.

OLD TOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION.
John Gosling, President

**Bill Harvey Comments at Open Microphone Session on
Alexandria's Waterfront Plan, March 12, 2011**

Good morning Mr. Mayor and members of the Alexandria City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to speak about my impressions of the recently-released Alexandria Waterfront Plan. My name is Bill Harvey, and I am a City resident. Before moving to Alexandria, I spent 28 plus years as a military member of the Army Corps of Engineers where I worked in high-level positions. I am a graduate Civil Engineer and also a licensed professional engineer. I know a lot about waterways and in-the-river projects. My last Civil Works position in the Corps was Vice President for Civil Works for the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts that included the Potomac River.

Viewing the planned waterfront improvements from the Potomac River, I see an economic development driven Plan that is not tied to the history of Old Town Alexandria, but to any town on the water, USA, that has marinas, hotels, and restaurants. My hope is that the City actually wants, and not just rhetoric, to capitalize on the connection between the Waterfront and historic Old Town.

Alexandria does not have a protected waterfront as do most other water recreation and economic developments. That is why we do not have industrial or recreational facilities into the run-of-the-River and why Alexandria's seaport status waned with the advent of larger cargo ships.

The draft Plan "sticks" things out into the run of the River to create more extensive, economic-driven uses. This strategy exposes these new facilities to flood-related flotsam and jetsam collection and damage; ice jams; high currents; locations near the shipping channel and potential for collision damage; high flotsam and jetsam collection in the facilities; and potentially significant environmental impacts. The proposed marina off the South Robinson Terminal is a good example. Of course, the City can do what is proposed in this Plan, but design, construction and operations and maintenance costs will be higher than the current Plan assumes, due to the issues I just mentioned.

Most waterfront projects are located where they take advantage of the natural "order" of the waterway. I see very little of that logic used in

selecting the Waterfront Plan structures in the River. That is one of the reasons you do not have realistic design, construction and operations and maintenance costs. The cost estimates for the Plan's water structures assume a lower capital cost, but will result in higher maintenance costs. If you build appropriate structures, facilities costs will drive up usage fees to the general public -- the group that the City's Plan purports to support! The foregoing characteristics and resulting environmental impacts will be used by the Corps and other agencies in considering requests for permits to build the Waterfront Plan facilities in the River -- permits that may not be granted for the current Plan.

A scaled down Plan with significantly less "speculative necessity" is needed to reduce current risks. I understand the need for a Plan to control future development, but it should not be an unrealistic Plan that would be developed "at any cost!" An initially smaller, less ambitious Plan could be the foundation for a larger, future Plan that is more informed on needed amendments to the 1983 Agreements; realistic and less costly landowner considerations; and Old Towners vision for the Waterfront. Necessary permits from Federal and other agencies may require significant changes to the current Plan anyway.

A statement by Bert Ely to the Alexandria City Council
March 12, 2010

Comments on the City's waterfront plan

Mr. Mayor and members of Council, I am Bert Ely, an Old Town resident since 1981. I am here to address the still-unresolved concerns many Alexandrians have about important aspects of the waterfront plan. However, I must emphasize that I am not speaking on behalf of any organization.

Last month, I spoke to you about serious shortcomings and questionable assumptions in the revenue and cost estimates for the waterfront plan. The draft waterfront plan released on February 25 stated on the attached page that prior to public hearings on the plan, the Planning and Zoning Department would post "additional information and re-analysis on phasing and costs/revenues" for the plan. That most important information has not been posted yet the first public hearing on the plan is scheduled to be held by the Planning Commission just 24 days from now. Even if that information was posted today, 24 days does not allow sufficient time to properly analyze that data and prepare to comment on it.

The February 25 plan also said that "additional design options for the restaurant proposed for Waterfront Park" would be posted. If those design options have been posted, where are they? As you know, the restaurant-in-the-park idea is strongly opposed by many Alexandrians. When will we see those design options for a restaurant concept so widely despised?

The February 25 plan said "a hotel use analysis" also would be provided. Where is the analysis that justifies putting 625 hotel rooms along the waterfront in what would hardly be boutique hotels like the Morrison House?

Perhaps of even greater importance, where is the language for two documents related to the Waterfront Small Area Plan – the Master Plan Amendment #2011-0001 and Text Amendment #2011-0005? The Planning Commission docket for its April 5 meeting cites those documents, but the links to them have not been activated, which suggests that they have not yet been drafted. As you know, the devil is in the details and those two documents will contain the devilish details. How can the public intelligently comment on a complex, multi-faceted waterfront plan without having seen those documents?

Clearly, the waterfront plan is not ready for consideration by the Planning Commission and Council this spring. Further, many elements in the plan – the restaurant in park, the piers and marina, the proposed hotels and restaurants – are neither legally nor economically feasible.

The time has come for Council to say STOP! Stop pushing forward with this so-called plan until it is trimmed back to a more modest and realistic scale that honors the unique, historical character of Old Town and honors the residents of Old Town and indeed all Alexandrians.

There is not enough time this spring for City staff to develop a scaled down and more realistic plan and to allow for sufficient public comment on that plan. I strongly urge Council to postpone until the fall any consideration of a waterfront plan by it or the Planning Commission. That delay will provide time for City staff and the public to go back to the drawing board to develop a much more feasible and acceptable plan.

Thank you for your time. I welcome your questions.

Waterfront Small Area Plan - *Public Comment and Review Process*

The public is invited to review the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan (Plan) and to provide comments via the online comment board included on the website or by contacting the Department of Planning and Zoning directly through information also on the website at:

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/Waterfront>

Those comments will be taken into consideration for the staff's final recommendations. The Planning Commission and the City Council will hold hearings on the Plan, with their dates and times to be confirmed on the website.

Additional Information that is forthcoming for Public Comment and Review:

Prior to the aforementioned public hearings, at the request of City Council and the community, the Department of Planning and Zoning will post:

- (1) additional design options for the restaurant proposed for Waterfront Park;
- (2) additional information and re-analysis on phasing and costs/revenues; and
- (3) a hotel use analysis.

Finally, with release of the draft Plan on the website you will find an updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document. The FAQs document was originally provided at the December 13, 2010 Waterfront Open House and Community Meeting but has been updated to further address common questions which have been shared by stakeholders. You will also find an updated Parking Summary Sheet. Moreover, notations in the draft Plan indicate that the earlier cost/revenue data has been removed, as it is being re-analyzed. While it is believed that the economic results of this Waterfront Plan are positive, a re-check of the cost and revenue details appear to be warranted.



February 24, 2011

The Alexandria Economic Development Partnership Board strongly believes the City needs to have a plan for one of its most important and distinctive assets- the Alexandria Waterfront. While Small Area Plans (SAP) serve as guides for land use, zoning, transportation improvements, open space and other capital improvements they also serve as important marketing tools, outlining the City's desire for new investment and development.

We believe it is important to approve a Small Area Plan this spring that provides a clear vision for one of our most important assets and provides stakeholders certainty with respect to appropriate redevelopment and adaptive reuse of properties within the plan area.

The Mayor's Economic Sustainability Work Group recommendations focused on the importance of the Waterfront. We support the Work Group's recommendations, quoted as follows, that specifically called for:

- Mixed-use vibrant development should be encouraged along the waterfront in the remaining opportunity parcels with commercial, retail, restaurant, arts and hotel development opportunities targeted;
- existing warehouse sites have high visibility and represent a major obstacle to completing the enhancement of the waterfront with world class redevelopment, so they need to be addressed in the process;
- water uses such as kayak and sailboat rental and additional marina slips should be encouraged;
- major existing docks should be maintained so that ships (such as the Coast Guard Eagle tall ship and small passenger ships) can still be accommodated;
- further expansion of water taxis and water shuttles should be encouraged;
- the food court at the City Marina should be rethought and revitalized; and
- if feasible, retail on South Union Street, the Strand and other areas should be expanded as part of the waterfront redevelopment plan.

We continue to support the Work Group's recommendations, as well as the evolving draft waterfront plan that has been crafted after almost two years of planning and community input meetings. The Waterfront is an economic asset belonging to the entire City and it is time to encourage smart development and redevelopment of this asset.