

Docket Item #11  
CITY CHARTER, SECTION 9.06; CASE #2006-0001

Planning Commission Meeting  
February 7, 2006

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of a proposal by the City of Alexandria to acquire the properties at 0 Prince Street and 200 Strand Street, pursuant to the provisions of Section 9.06 of the City Charter.

**LOCATION:** 0 Prince Street and 200 Strand Street  
Tax parcels 75.03-11 and 12

**ZONE:** W-1/Waterfront Mixed Use

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Planning Commission approve the acquisition of the properties as consistent with the City's Master Plan.

SITE GRAPHIC  
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE

CITY CHARTER SECTION 9.06  
CASE #2006-0001  
0 PRINCE STREET AND 200 STRAND STREET

DISCUSSION

The City has entered into an agreement to purchase two parcels of land on the City's waterfront. Section 9.06 of the City's Charter requires that the Planning Commission approve any acquisition or sale of public land and any change in streets, squares, parks, public buildings or spaces. The Planning Commission is charged with ensuring that any such acquisition, sale or change is consistent with the City's Master Plan.

Property Description

The two properties under consideration are part of what is commonly known as "the Strand," and have long been owned by the Richards family. 0 Prince Street is a 7,765 square foot lot, and 200 Strand Street contains 11,562 square feet. The parcels are occupied by several buildings, dining cruise ship operations, and part of a commercial parking lot.

Alexandria Master Plan

Adopted in 2003, the City's Open Space Plan, which is a chapter of the City's Master Plan, identifies the land along the Potomac River as a significant open space asset, and part of the City's "green crescent" connection of trails and open spaces. A goal of the Plan is the completion of the Potomac River waterfront corridor, and the Plan specifically recommends, as a high priority, acquiring all or part of the Strand properties. In furtherance of the Plan, Council adopted a list of Priority Sites for acquisition in 2004, and the Strand properties were identified as an immediate priority acquisition. The City will be financing the acquisition cost of the Richards parcels with funds derived from City Council's dedication of one-cent of the City's real estate tax rate for open space acquisition.

Future Use of the Property

The current owners of the properties will lease the property back from the City for one year, during which all current commercial activities on the properties will continue. This one-year period will allow the City to develop specific plans for the properties and water related uses. The public planning process to develop specific plans for the long term use of the waterfront area between Duke Street and the City's Marina are scheduled to commence this spring.

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Analysis

The proposed purchase of these two key waterfront properties represents a significant commitment by the City to the implementation of its Open Space Plan, and to Council's Strategic Plan, which envisions serious efforts to ensure a quality of life for all of its citizens. Although the entire property may not be used as open space in the future, it will at least help fill in the "missing teeth" in the public access walkway along the Potomac River in Alexandria. If it is determined that the property should be used as parkland, then it will expand the City's waterfront parkland to the north. If the City acquires additional property along the Strand, as is recommended in the Open Space Plan and implementation actions, then that park area could expand further south.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the acquisition of the subject property as consistent with the Master Plan, under section 9.06 of the Charter.

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director  
Richard Josephson, Deputy Director