

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA**

**Park and Recreation Commission**

**PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, March 18, 2010, 7:00 p.m.**

**Mt. Vernon Recreation Center  
2701 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria VA**

**MINUTES (DRAFT 4/8/10)**

**Commission Members:** Judy Guse-Noritake, Chairperson. Henry S. Brooks, Rich Brune, Mathew Coda, William Cromley, David Dexter, Ripley Forbes, Clark (Stephen) Mercer, Robert Moir, Jeffrey Murphy.

**RPCA Staff:** James Spengler, Director, Roger Blakeley, William Chesley, Jack Browand, Ron Kagawa, Laura Durham, Robin DeShields. **Guests:** Mayor William D. Euille, Councilman Frank Fannon, Members of Architects Anonymous and others. Brandi Collins of Planning & Zoning attended.

The Chair opened the meeting and greeted the Mayor, staff and guests.

**I. Presentation of Proclamation for Recognition of the Athlete and Coach of the Year who represented the City of Alexandria in the Mid-Atlantic Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Sports Alliance, GoodSports Award Program - Mayor William D. Euille, Chair Judy Guse-Noritake and Mac Slover, RPCA, Director of Sports.**

- The Mayor read the Proclamation honoring Alex Duke as the 2010 GoodSports Athlete of the Year, and Walter Coleman, Jr. as the 2010 GoodSports Coach of the Year. In addition they each received citations from Governor Martin O'Malley of Maryland the Maryland House of Delegates and the Maryland Senate. The event is normally held each year at the Maryland State House in Annapolis, but due to the snow storm in February, the event was canceled. The Mayor thanked the P&RC for its dedication and commitment, during challenging time and stated that youth programs should be expanded and sustained.

**II. Public Hearing on Proposed Special Use Permit Application for Community Use of the Duron Paint Store Building site - 4109 Mt. Vernon Avenue - Laura Durham**

- See Staff Report: The Chair provided background on the site. The City brought four parcels (4109-4125 Mount Vernon Avenue) as open space. Three buildings were torn down, but the City retained the Duron Paint store bldg. for possible community use. A group of architects that live in the community and Arlington have been working together on a pro-bono basis to develop a concept plan for the building re-use. An SUP is needed for a change of use from retail paint store to "public use".
- **Jillian Penndorf, Rebecca Mesny, Carter Jones, Lynn Johnson of Architects Anonymous conducted a brief presentation on the Duron building site concept plan.** A similar presentation was given to the P&RC at its February 18 meeting. The presentation is available on-line.

Comments/Questions:

- Q. What is the condition of the roof? R. Ms. Durham responded that a full analysis of lifespan of the building was completed and the roof was determined to have 15-20 yrs. of useful life left.
- Q. What kind of parking spaces are available?
- R. There are 22 existing spaces on the south side. There are 14 + parking spaces to the north of the four parcels for soccer.

- **Laura Durham-Open Space Coordinator-wrap up:**
- Ms. Durham thanked the group for their presentation.
- **Process:** A SUP application needs to go to the Planning Commission and City Council in June; deadline for submission is next week. The hearing tonight is to let the community know that staff is moving forward with submission of the SUP application, and to solicit feedback from the community. Between the time of submission of SUP application and the hearings in June, there will be a period of community involvement and feedback. Staff will be working with Planning and other involved departments to review the concept plan for design and re-use of the building.
- There is a limited budget, staff will be looking to the community to be involved in all phases and aspects of the project. Including looking at different means and methods of construction, investment, operations and programming of the site. This will need to be a joint effort between staff, Architects and the community.
- **Chair-** The Architects' group works with many large contractors in the Metro area. The group will continue to reach out to see if they can get pro bono services, donations of materials etc.; feedback from contractors has been positive. This will not be like a normal City project with a start/end date- the project will evolve over time.
- **Funding-**In response to a question from Mr. Brooks, Ms. Durham said there is limited open space funding left that will help with the initial phasing of project. Beyond this the project will be a phased-in process. Funding will be looked at over time. In-kind funding, support from the community as far as operations; we are exploring all options. The hope is that it will be community run with City support.
- Mr. Brooks suggested that a "Friends of Duron" group be formed beginning with those in attendance at today's meeting. Contact information was obtained and will be compiled for future use for those interested in being part of this group.

**Public Comment Period:**

The following persons spoke during the public comment period.

- (a) Nick Partee- Dale St., Alexandria, VA- representing himself and the Hume Springs Citizens Association. Fully supports the project. Not in support of community garden (unless educational opportunity only).
- Awesome use of Architect's time, great effort for the community. Hopes to match with community support. Starting a "Friends Group" will be good. We have a group of people desperate to have something happen in the neighborhood. He hopes the City will find the funds for phasing quickly.
- (b) Amy Slack, Randolph Ave. Alexandria, VA- Co-Chair of Land Use Committee, Del Ray Citizens Association, and member of the Arlandria Implementation Advisory Group. She supports the project and use of building for 4-Mile Run park and bike path interface with the Avenue. Asked if a community garden could be included in project to help supplement health food intake. There is a deep need, since Chinquapin garden has a waiting list. Asked if SUP for change of use to "public building" locks use of building into one concept plan. Ms. Durham responded that it does not as long as it is used for "public use".
- (c) Katherine Glennon, W. Caton Avenue, Alexandria, VA- Member of Public Art Committee, District II. She fully supports the project. It is a great catalyst for bring arts projects to another neighborhood in Alexandria.
- (d) Alison DiNardo-member of St. Rita's Church, Alexandria, VA
- Representing St. Rita's Church. Requested that the mural be maintained said parish members are fond of it.

- The Chair said the mural will be relocated inside the building and they will try to find the artist to touch it up. She asked if St. Rita's would be interested in being involved in the mural's dedication ceremony.
- **Next Steps:** Brandi Collins, Urban Planner, Planning & Zoning Department will help prepare the Special Use Permit (SUP) for change of use of the Duron site to a "public building" with Laura Durham of the Dept. of RPCA.

The Chair asked if there were any other comments or comments on other items. **There were no other comments; the public hearing was closed.**

### III. Approval of Summary Minutes from: January 21, 2010, February 18, 2010.

- Rich Brune motioned to approve the minutes for January 21 and February 18, 2010. The motioned was seconded by Clark Mercer and members of the Commission. The minutes were approved.

### IV. Division Updates (See Staff Reports):

[www.alexandriava.gov/Department/Recreation/Commissions](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Department/Recreation/Commissions) and Committees

#### A. Recreation Programs and Services Update -William Chesley

#### B. Operations & Park Planning Monthly Report -Roger Blakeley

- Luckett Field- the score board is in-the Monday night dedication was postponed due to rain.
- James K. Polk Field Close Down April- A geothermal heating system is being installed at the school; the field will be out of service for one year. This will impact youth sports played at Polk which will have to stop during construction. Additionally, John Adams and Patrick Henry schools/recreation centers will be under construction. There will be constraints for field space. Demand for youth sports has grown 3-10%, currently not meeting the demand. Re: Maintenance of fields- Mr. Blakeley responded to Mr. Forbes there are poor soils, lots of use, this is the general problem with most fields. Maintenance has not changed on fields. The only way to get more playtime on fields is with synthetic fields and pulling playtime off natural turf fields. Chair-Witter field and Ben Brenman Fields will come online within the next year. Losing use of 3-4 fields due to construction.

#### C. Office on the Arts Update - Alisa Carrel

#### D. Park Planning Updates-Ron Kagawa- See Staff Report: NOT Reviewed by Ron yet.

- Potomac Yard & Metro Small Area Plan-aka "The Big Box Plan".
- Discussion: Chair- there are several upcoming processes regarding public open space or public interest in private open space that the P&RC may need to comment on.
- Timing and process: Kagawa -there are two components: the Small Area Plan for PY and the CDD. The Small Area Plan is tentatively docketed for April, and the CDD possibly by early summer. From the P&RC prospective it is important to recognize that part of both the open space components-particularly the shopping center site as related to Landbay K-linear park site. It is the northern portion of that parcel that connects from the fire station to Crystal City to Four Mile Run -just west of the Metro. Staff has a vested interest in seeing this approved. Staff hopes to expand the site-make wider- 70-80 feet in length. A portion of Landbay K may be lost due to Metro-it may take some re-configuring- will impact design-not insurmountable.
- Chair- re: Small Area Plan- do we need to weigh in with the Planning Commission. Ron-Yes. April Planning Commission meeting is the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month. Chair the P&RC will not have another meeting before this meeting.

- Note: The next P&RC is on April 22, not April 15<sup>th</sup> as reflected in report.
- Action Item-The Chair and Ron Kagawa will meet with Planning and Zoning staff to look at the Plan. The will send an email out to the P&RC to see what needs to be done. Chair- said she is unsure of the date 4/17/10.
- **Update on 4 Mile Run Pedestrian-Cyclist Bridge Competition.**
- Public Presentation will be held Saturday, March 27, 2010, 7:00 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr., Alexandria, VA (A flier was distributed). There are three finalists for the competition. After the presentation, a panel jury will make the selection. No funding is currently approved for project; estimated cost is \$5 mil. Staff will develop a plan for potential funding source in conjunction with other team members from Arlington.
- **Update on Ben Brenman SUP for Lights-** The SUP for lighting goes before the Planning Commission in May and then to City Council. The Chair will attend the hearing to testify in support of the project, other P&RC members are encouraged to attend. Kagawa-drawings are being submitted tomorrow.
- Action Item: Mr. Mercer asked that a reminder be sent to the P&RC regarding the date and time of hearing.

E. **Marketing, Public Relations & Special Events**-Jack Browand

- See Staff Report- Woodrow Wilson ½ Marathon Race:
- The Special Events Committee recommended denying the special event application for Woodrow Wilson ½ Marathon Race as proposed to run in neighborhoods in Old Town Alexandria. The City will support their race from the southern border on South Washington Street to the pedestrian entrance on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.
- Discussion: The Special Events Committee made the recommendation to deny the application as proposed based on the Special Events policy. The recommendation was presented to Council on March 9, 2010, and a decision by Council was deferred for thirty days pending additional information from staff. Staff has been requested to determine what permits have been approved or submitted by the applicant in surrounding jurisdictions and to identify potential route options. Staff will present this new information on April 13.
- The City continues to receive additional applications to stage races in or to pass through by way of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge en route to National Harbor. The NPS is currently developing a specific race policy that is expected to receive public comment in April.
- Chair- the P&RC held a hearing on the Special Events policy last year; since that time it has now become a larger issue that needs to be addressed. Mr. Browand indicated that staff will not ask the P&RC to hold a public hearing at this time, but will be developing race specific guidelines in support of the existing Special Events Policy. Staff will seek comment from the Commission and forward to Council if necessary
- Mr. Browand further stated that it would require Council to provide an exception to the special events policy to hold the half marathon in Old Town. The Special Events Policy currently limits the number of events that can be held on consecutive weekends in Old Town. The proposed race date is September 19, 2010-one week following the Festival of the Arts 9/11 & 9/12.
- Action Item: In May the P&RC will have a broad discussion on the Special Events Policy and races in general.

Additional Discussion:

- Chinquapin Garden plots-Clark Mercer- Mr. Mercer asked for an update on the status of plot requested by teacher at T. C. Williams. Mr. Blakeley-no plots available; dealing with a lot of garden issues with schools right now. George Washington a whole group of people have come forward with a plan for a cooperative garden.
- Action: Mr. Blakeley will contact Mark Krause tomorrow and follow-up on Mr. Mercer's questions regarding receipt of garden plot by teacher at T.C. William.
- Clay Fields- Mr. Mercer asked are there any fields in the west end where this can be used. Mr. Blakeley- we've tried clay before. The Chair said a number of places have clay fields next to their prime play fields.

V. **Elections of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary:**

The P&RC conducted elections of officers in accordance with City Code. Officers will serve for a one year term.

- **Nomination of Chairperson:** The Chair asked for nominations from the floor. Henry Brooks nominated Ripley Forbes. Mr. Forbes declined the nomination. Rich Brune nominated Judy Guse-Noritake; she accepted the nomination. All were in favor. **Judy Guse-Noritake was re-elected as Chairperson unanimously.**
- **Nominations for Vice Chairperson:** Henry Brooks nominated Ripley Forbes for Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Richard Brune.
- David Dexter nominated Bob Moir for Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by William Cromley. **Bob Moir was elected as Vice Chairperson on a 6-4 vote.**
- **Nomination of Secretary:** The Chair opened up the nominations for Secretary. P&RC members held a brief discussion on the role and responsibilities of the Secretary. David Dexter and Henry Brooks are working as a subcommittee on drafting Bylaws, which will spell out the functions of the secretary. One of the functions will be to help the Commission maintain Robert Rules of Orders. **The Chair asked if the election of secretary should be postponed until the Bylaws are written; members decided to proceed with the election.** Ripley Forbes nominated Rich Brune for Secretary, Mr. Brune accepted the nomination. All were in Favor. **Mr. Brune was elected Secretary unanimously.**
- **Discussion: Bylaws and Procedures for the P&RC:** On January 23, 2010 the Park and Recreation Commission was formally codified by City Council, Item #23, Ordinance #4647. At the Park and Recreation Retreat held March 6, 2010 a subcommittee was formed (Henry Brooks and David Dexter) to work on developing procedures and drafting Bylaws for the Commission.
- At the March 18, 2010 meeting members discussed several options for possible inclusion in the Bylaws. The Bylaws are in the process of being developed and will be discussion further at the April meeting.
- Action Item: David Dexter will send the draft Bylaws to the Chair for review. This will be a topic for discussion at the next meeting once the draft Bylaws are finished.

VI. **Annual Park and Recreation CIVIC Awards (Volunteer Recognition) – Jack Browand.**

See Staff Report- 2010 marks the 25th anniversary of the award program, there are three categories. Awards will be presented at the City's annual birthday celebration 7/10/10. Application may be submitted to the Department of RPCA.

Discussion: Dexter-need to look at the announcement more closely. There has been some

question on the part of the public as to whether they qualify for this particular award. The P&RC identified the need to better define the award categories and narrow and more clearly define the scope of award. Mr. Browand indicated that the original intent of these awards was to be a broad, and that he would check with the Arts Commission and the Beautification Commission to determine the criteria for their awards program and forward to the awards committee. In addition, Mr. Browand will research and provide options to the Awards Committee to better define the award categories. Design of Logo: The P&RC discussed the need to design a logo that represents the award-particularly since it is the 25th year. The Chair suggested that the Arts Commission might be able to help design the logo. Mr. Browand indicated he would look into the development of a logo.

Announcement Distribution: Mr. Browand said that approximately 1400 people are on the Department eNews list. The announcement is also sent to Civic Associations, and other groups, P&RC members also promote the awards. Henry Brooks indicated that it is in the Washington post also. Dave Dexter- we typically get only 8-12 nominations. Announcements usually go out around April 1.

Action Item: Rich Brune, Henry Brooks, David Dexter and Ripley Forbes will form the award Nominating Committee. They will also review and determine the scope of who should receive the award to help narrow.

**VII. Director's Report - James Spengler (verbal update):**

**A. Update Patrick Henry School/Recreation Center**

- There is a plan in the CIP to do a community school on the existing P.H. site and add another 100,000 sq. ft. building to the existing school site. Staff has had preliminary meetings with the schools, no overall concept plans is developed yet. The next City Council/Schools Sub-Committee meeting is Monday, March 22, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.- Council work room. Councilman Rob Krupicka has placed on the agenda discussion of general issues with Recreation and school, planning and how we can do this better.
- **Budget Questions**- As part of the budget process RPCA staff are attending workshops by Strategic Goal area to answer questions. Some questions will require a response via a formal budget memo, some oral. Mr. Spengler distributed a list of question from Councilman Krupicka on RPCA Budget for discussion.
  - 1. Revenue from the Chinquapin Soft Play Room is \$22,000 for 5 months.
  - Funds are deposited to City general fund, not controlled by RPCA. Expenses for playroom are tracked separately.
  - 2. Early Morning class attendance at Charles Houston is about 50 people per mo. Use is split between fitness room and jazzercise class. Staff is still evaluating this program to see if it will continue.
  - 3. What is a reasonable dollar amount to assume in a future CIP for a Jefferson Houston/Durant/Old Town Pool public/private partnership? Unable to answer at this time.
  - 4. In order to break even at the City pools an admission fee of \$22.00 would need to be charged. Current cost for using Warwick pool is \$1.00. Outdoor pool attendance is about 14,500 during the summer months. Regarding an RFP to help save the pools, RPCA would welcome this. No study for spray parks done yet, but spray parks are used widely across the country.
  - 5. It costs \$20,000 per docking location a year to subsidize boat owners. Revenue does not pay for slips. 77 docking locations, dredging costs, tourist costs.

Comments: Mr. Cromley asked how this \$22,000 is justified-people who own boats don't need subsidies. Spengler-generally everything in the City is subsidized.

- Mr. Brooks commented that at the recent Marina night meeting- a lot of boat owners attended from other jurisdictions and commented that there are not enough transient boat slips. Mr. Spengler- the City has one of the only public marinas in the area; this makes it difficult to compare Alexandria's cost structure to other places. Transient slip use is high on weekends at other times it is declining.

**VIII. Retreat Action Items:**

- A. Review and prioritize consolidated list of action items from March 6, Retreat.
  - They will be discussed at the next meeting and items ranked by priority.
- B. Develop list to address at P&RC meetings from April through July 2010.
  - This will be discussed at next meeting –will be a standard item on the agenda.
- C. Discussion of Draft Operating Procedures/Bylaws for Commission –Dave Dexter & Henry Brooks.
  - Draft Bylaws are being developed for review by the Commission at the April meeting.

**IX. Reports From Commissioners (verbal updates):**

- **Ft. Ward Ad Hoc Advisory Commission**-Bob Moir, Ripley Forbes, Rich Brune
  - The Director RPCA will give a presentation Saturday, March 20 at 10:30 a.m.
- **Youth Policy Commission**- Stephen Mercer.
- **Waterfront Committee** - Henry Brooks
  - **The Tall Ship “Peacemaker”** will dock at Alexandria Marina 4/29/10 to 5/20/10. The ship is operated by a church group; its home port is in Georgia.
  - **American River Taxi Service**-Shaun Guevarra proposal to operate a privately owned water taxi service in the City-will bring competition. Smaller boats than Potomac Riverboat Co. 28 person-40 ft. boats. Uses diesel fuel less polluting.  
**Mr. Brooks noted that he has been on the Waterfront Committee for 6 yrs. and his term will expire soon.** He asked if anyone would be interested in replacing him on this committee. The term is 2 years. The group meets at 7:30 a.m., one time a month, and meetings are well attended. The Chair asked William Cromley if he would be interested in being the new liaison for this committee. Mr. Cromley will consider, check his family schedule and get back to the Chair.
- **Youth Sports Committee**- Jeffrey Murphy
- **4-Mile Run**- Ripley Forbes
- **Charles Houston Memorial Project**-William Cromley
- **Freedman’s Cemetery**-Bob Moir
- **Beauregard Corridor**- David Dexter

**X. Agenda items and location for April meeting.**

- Presentation of Waterfront Plan, Director, Planning and Zoning, April 22, 2010, location-TBD.

**XI. List of Upcoming Public Meetings**- a list of upcoming meeting was distributed.

**XII. Adjournment: 9:30 p.m.**