

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 31, 2014

TO: JAMES SPENGLER, DIRECTOR, RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL
ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT
KARL MORITZ, ACTING DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &
ZONING

CC: MARK JINKS, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
JACK BROWAND, DIVISION CHIEF, WATERFRONT & SPECIAL EVENTS
ROBERT KERNS, DEVELOPMENT DIVISION CHIEF
MATTHEW STENSRUD, CHAIR, ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE
ARTS
CHARLOTTE HALL, CHAIR, WATERFRONT COMMISSION

FROM: DIANE RUGGIERO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE ARTS

SUBJECT: CARR HOTEL PUBLIC ART CONDITION

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update of the public art at the Carr Hotel development at 228 S. Union Street and the recommendation from the joint meeting of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Waterfront Commission on Thursday, October 9, 2014.

Background

In compliance with the City's policy for public art in private development, standard conditions were developed by staff of the Office of the Arts and Planning and Zoning for the development of the Carr Hotel to be located at 228 S. Union Street. The condition for public art states:

B. PUBLIC ART:

In order to achieve the goals of the Waterfront Plan, significant public art shall be provided on-site that is integrated into the design of the site and building, relates to the design of the waterfront park, and is publicly accessible. The public art requirement shall include the following, to the satisfaction of the Directors of P&Z and RP&CA:

- a. The design of the public art shall follow the guidance of the Waterfront Plan (see Attachment #4).
- b. The applicant is encouraged to use an art agent to assist with the identification and selection of an artist.

- c. Provide a plan outlining the selection, installation, and maintenance of the on-site art with the first final site plan.
- d. The Waterfront Commission and the Arts Commission shall review the public art at a joint public meeting and shall provide a recommendation to the Directors of P&Z and RP&CA.
- e. Final details of the public art shall be provided prior to release of the final site plan.
- f. The on-site art shall be installed prior to the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy. (P&Z) (RP&CA)

Results and Recommendation

On Thursday, October 9, 2014 a joint meeting of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Waterfront Commission was held in an effort to fulfill the standard condition for the applicants of the Carr Hotel. They explained that in compliance with the City's expectation they contacted eight artists to submit proposals. They received proposals from four of those artists and considered two of them either inappropriate for their space or unfeasible. The two remaining proposals were presented to the Commissions for consideration and recommendation: "A Collage of Imagery" by Barry Broadway and "Potomac Harvest" by Chris Erney (attached).

At the conclusion of the presentation, Commissioners had a discussion and asked questions covering a wide range of topics including maintenance, alternate materials, interpretive signage, lighting, location and views. Minutes from the meeting are attached.

At the conclusion of the discussion and questions, each Commissioner was asked to give their recommendation which resulted in a clear consensus in support of "Potomac Harvest" by Chris Erney.

Conclusion

If the recommendation of the Commissions is accepted by the Directors of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities and the Department of Planning and Zoning, staff from the Office of the Arts and Planning & Zoning will notify the applicants and continue to work with them to refine their design and materials. The artwork is expected to be installed prior to the issuing of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Going forward, the process for developing conditions for public art in private development and community feedback on the artwork will follow the process outlined in the Public Art Implementation Plan.

Attachments

Meeting Minutes
Carr PowerPoint Presentation
Attendance Sheet

Public Art Presentation

220 South Union Street



A Neighborhood Story

- * Each Hotel Indigo uniquely represents the neighborhood where it is located.
- * This story is embedded into each and every design decision.

“The river rises and falls gently against the banks of a neighborhood whose energy seems to lean toward the water”

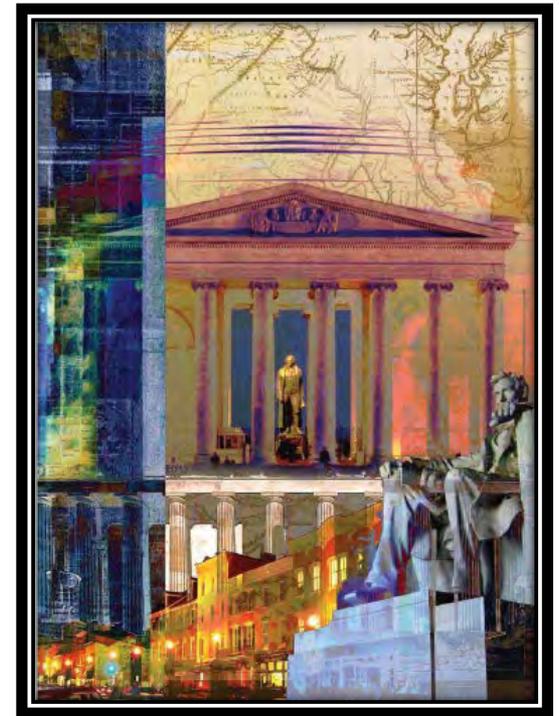
An Important Feature



A “Collage of Imagery”

proposed by Barry Broadway

Portray Alexandria in a contemporary medium as a historical seaport that has passed through the age of time.



“Collage of Imagery”



The focus would be on the following:

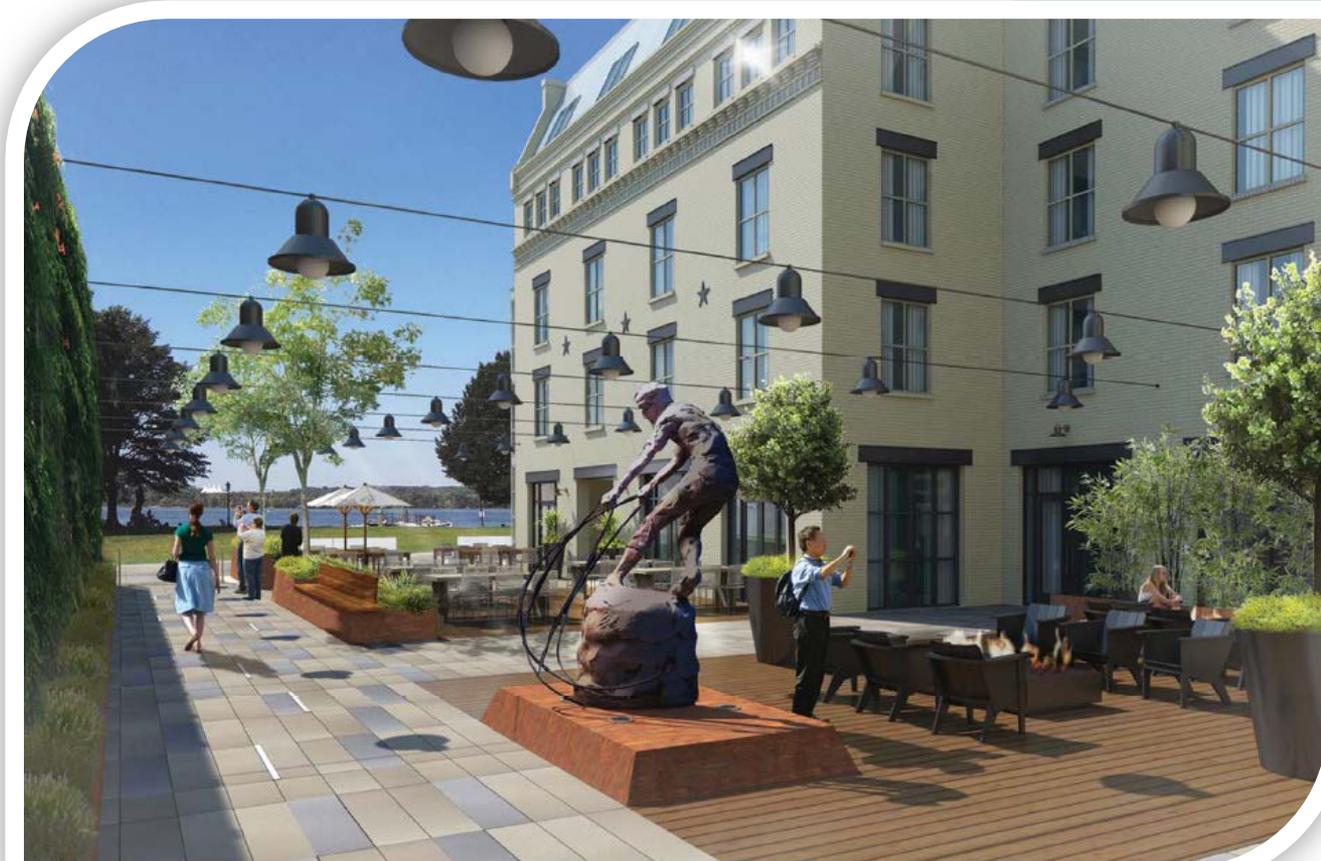
- 1) The City- Once busy streets have transformed into neighborhoods and small businesses.
- 2) The People- Where seaman and dock workers once walked the streets, now families and professionals live, work, shop and play.
- 3) The energy- The energy that makes the city continues.
- 4) The Restaurants and Taverns- Where people come to connect.
- 5) The history- The importance of its location on the past and into the future.

Each of these themes will be developed along a timeline of imagery.

“Potomac Harvest” Sculpture

by Christopher Erney

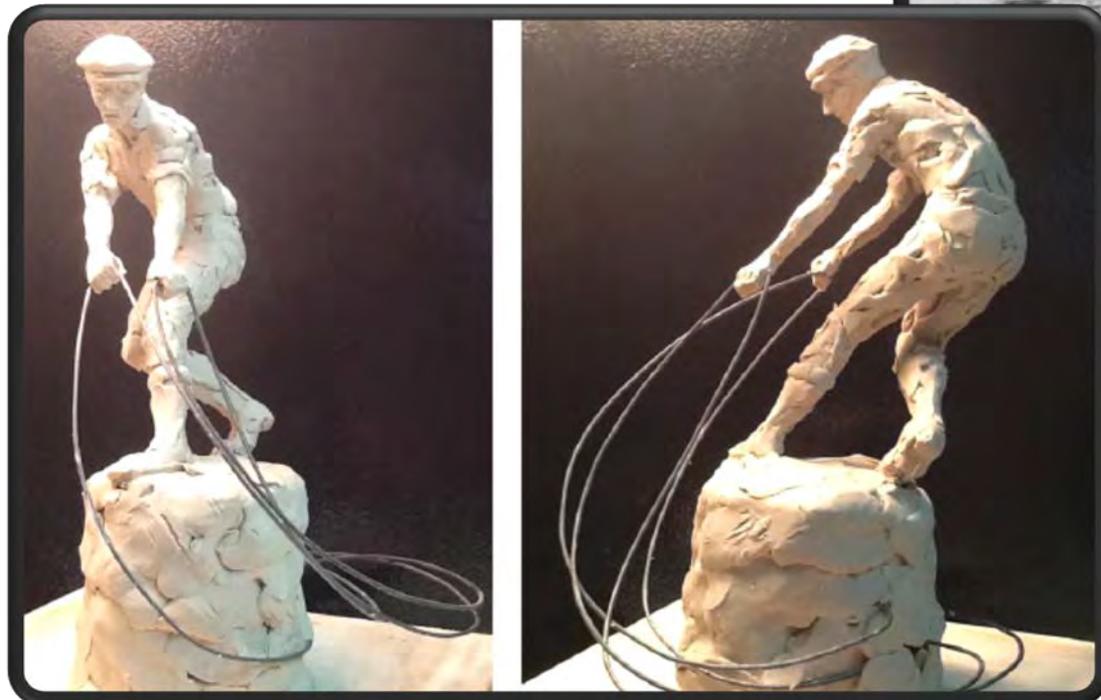
“To think about Alexandria is to think about the Potomac River.”



“Potomac Harvest”

The Potomac provided not only drinking water, but also easy transportation and rich food sources.

Today, few can imagine “fish” as a substantial Potomac resource.



A fisherman struggles to haul in the catch.

inspired by photos found in the Library of Congress archives showing primary source photos of Potomac fisherman in the 1920s

Summary Minutes - DRAFT

**Joint Meeting
ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS
&
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Public Art Presentation for
Hotel Indigo - 220 S. Union Street
Thursday, October 9, 2014
7 PM
Lee Center**

COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

Present:

Beth Coast
Pamela Corsini
Michael Detomo, Vice Chair
Shirley Downs
Kate Elkins
Amber Gordon
David Martin
Lucy Medley
Matthew Stensrud, Chair

Absent:

Sydney-Chanele Dawkins
Katherine Konefal
Michelle Kozlak
Allison Nance
Patricia Shaffer
Margaret Wohler

Waterfront Commission Members

Present

Dennis Auld, Citizen Park Planning District II
Suzanne Bethel, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)
Howard Bergman, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)
John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.
Shirley Downs, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair
Jacob Hoogland, Alexandria Archeological Commission
Mari Lou Livingood, Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Jody Manor, Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)
Stephen Mutty, Citizen Park Planning District I
Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.

Absent:

Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
Morgan Delaney, Historic Alexandria Foundation
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission
Arthur Fox, east of Washington St. and south of King St.

Doug Gosnell, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholder
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association
Ryan Wojtanowski, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

Vacancy:

Citizen Park Planning District III

City Staff:

Jack Browand, Waterfront Commission Staff Liaison and Division Chief, Public Relations, Special Events & Waterfront Operations, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)

Robert Kerns, Division Chief, Development, Planning and Zoning

Cheryl Lawrence, Regional Program Director (RPCA)

Iris Portny, Recording Secretary, RPCA

Diane Ruggiero, Commission for the Arts staff liaison, and Deputy Director, RPCA, Office of the Arts

Nancy Williams, DPI, and Principal Planner, P&Z

Guests:

Susan Cohen, Public Art Committee;

Bert Ely, Old Town Civic Association, Friends of Alexandria Waterfront)

Christopher Erney, sculptor of the bronze art being considered.

Austin Flajser, President, Carr City Centers

Dene Garbow, resident

Pat Miller, Waterfront History and Art Committee

Mark Orling, partner, Rust/Orling Architecture

Kathryn Papp, resident

Stephanie, Tincher, Rust/Orling Architecture

Eric Wallner, Torpedo Factory Art Center

Michael Wilson, Carr City Centers

Bob Wood, resident

Margaret Wood, resident

Welcome and Meeting Purpose

Jack Browand, RPCA liaison to the Waterfront Commission, called the meeting to order at 7 PM, and introduced Diane Ruggiero, RPCA liaison to the Commission for the Arts (Arts Commission), and Robert Kerns, Planning & Zoning (P&Z), who has been liaising with the Carr development team for the past year.

Browand said the special joint meeting of the two commissions was convened to carry out a requirement included by City Council when, on January 25, 2014, Council approved the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) for the Carr hotel planned for 220 South Union Street. The DSUP requires that the Commission for the Arts (Arts Commission) and Waterfront Commission review the public art being considered by the Carr team and provide comments to the staff of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) and Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs (RPCA) so that the directors of P&Z and RPCA can consider those comments as they develop a recommendation for the Carr development team on the proposed public art for the hotel site.

Browand explained the meeting was a public meeting, as are all meetings of the commissions, but not a public hearing.

Introductions

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Public Art Presentation

Austin Flajser, president of Carr City Centers, introduced Mark Orling and Stephanie Tincher of Rust/Orling Architecture and Mike Wilson, Carr's development manager for the project, Flajser said the name of the Carr Hotel at 220 S. Union Street had been officially designated as Hotel Indigo in light of Carr's having signed its franchise agreement with Hotel Indigo.

Wilson said it is a hallmark of Hotel Indigo that each hotel's design reflects the local fabric of its neighborhood. He said the historic neighborhood story for the Hotel Indigo that will be at 220 S. Union Street will be an important element of the Hotel Indigo courtyard, the public alley leading into it and be incorporated inside the hotel.

Process used to choose the art options

Wilson said the Carr team had invited multiple artists to present ideas for the courtyard's public art, four proposals had been received and of those two had stood out as "exciting, dynamic, and viable" works.

He introduced the works of art being considered by reading a narrative, based on the work of Carr development team consultant Thunderbird Archeology Associates, that reviewed the Waterfront's history as a shipping center and a working waterfront dotted with warehouses and wharfs along the Strand,

Two standout proposals

"A Collage of Imagery"

Wilson said "A Collage of Imagery" was proposed by northern Virginia art agent Barry Broadway who has recommended a non-Virginia collage artist for the project. He said Broadway's proposal is to use the contemporary medium of glass to present historic photographic images of the neighborhood's working waterfront as it has changed over time. He said the images would be laminated onto the glass, although specific images had not yet been proposed. He said images would be based on historic photographs in the Library of Congress' collection.

Wilson said the development team considered the glass collage concept unexpected and interesting but also one that raises questions about how costly it might be to preserve the glass's condition over time. In response to a question, Wilson said there would be a 10-year warranty provided for the glass collage. Flajser confirmed that maintenance of the courtyard's public art will be the hotel's responsibility, not the City's.

"Potomac Harvest"

Wilson said Alexandria sculptor Christopher Erney had proposed a bronze sculpture of a man at work on the City's working waterfront, a fisherman struggling with his net to haul in his catch. Wilson has quoted Erney's introduction from his proposal: 'To think about Alexandria is to think about the Potomac River. Without the Potomac there would be no Alexandria.'

Wilson said Erney's proposal had referenced Captain John Smith having commented upon the Potomac's rich fish resources, George Washington's fishery having harvested nearly one million pounds of fish annually, and Fishtown, an Alexandria neighborhood, having been located a few blocks north of 220 S. Union Street.

Commission Comments

NOTE: The Commission on which Commissioners sit is noted in parentheses after their names.

Overview

Commissioners said they appreciated being presented with two works of art in such different styles. A number of Commissioners were surprised that only two options were presented at the meeting, Wilson said staff had asked the development team to present only the top preferred public art proposals from among those that had been submitted for the project.

An effective response to recommendations from the Waterfront History and Art Plans

Stensrud (Arts) said both proposed works of art, especially the sculpture, effectively reflect the goal of the City's Public Art Master Plan to use public art to enrich the ways in which the City's history and its many layers of stories can be experienced.

Detomo (Arts) said the historic Waterfront narrative read at the meeting to introduce the proposed works of art effectively reflected recommendations in the Waterfront Small Area Plan, the Waterfront History Plans and the Alexandria Waterfront Art Plan that public art should be used to convey historical aspects of Waterfront sites. He suggested a written version of this narrative be incorporated into the public art design. Orling said the Carr team will work with an archeologist to develop interpretative signs regarding the history of the site. Flajser said it is the Hotel Indigo brand's practice for each Hotel Indigo to include an individualized history of the neighborhood that is provided to each in hotel guest.

Interpretative signage

Detomo (Arts) said interpretative signage should be placed at multiple points in the alleyway leading to the courtyard as a way to draw the public into the courtyard. Downs (Arts/Waterfront) said incorporating historical elements along paths was consistent with the Public Art Plan's recommendation to create ways for people to walk the City's history.

In response to Manor's (Waterfront) question, Orling said interpretative signage for the sculpture would initially be attached to a planned 12-foot high green screen between Hotel Indigo and the Turner building that would support both foliage and the interpretive signage.

Incorporate a water feature into the design?

In response to Stensrud's question, (Arts) Flajser said no water feature had been proposed for the public art. Downs (Arts/Waterfront) said adding water to the base of the bronze sculpture would enhance the image of the fisherman pulling up his fish. Flajser said the development team is not opposed to incorporating water but had not flushed out either work's details

Maintenance requirements

In response to Manor's (Waterfront) question about long-term maintenance issues for the glass collage, Flajser said long-term maintenance is one of factors being considered when considering the glass and bronze works of art. He said that for whichever work of art is chosen Carr is committed to preserving its condition over the long-term since the courtyard will be an integral aspect of the Hotel Indigo experience.

An interactive art experience?

In response to Detomo's (Arts) question about how each work of art would encourage public interaction, Wilson said the large three-dimension bronze sculpture would encourage people to walk around it and touch it and the glass collage would be a walking experience as a viewer walked from panel to panel.

Using etched glass rather than laminated?

Downs (Arts/Waterfront) asked if the team had considered using etched glass rather than laminated glass for the collage to minimize maintenance. Flajser said etching might be possible, but the artist had proposed laminated images and the Carr team did not want to be overly prescriptive for the artists' vision.

Sculpture effectively draws the eye towards the Potomac view shed

Manor (Waterfront) said the bronze sculpture would be more effective than the collage in drawing the viewer's eye to the river's view shed.

Watters (Waterfront) said she preferred the sculpture because it would also be more easily visible from throughout the courtyard, rather than requiring close-up viewing to appreciate its story, as the collage would.

Location of proposed work of art

In response to Bethel's (Waterfront) question, Flajser said both works of art would be in the same general location, although the glass collage would be elongated. He said as a person enters the courtyard from the public access alley the art will be on the right side.

Hoogland (Waterfront) said the proposed location would be at the historic waterline, where the river's waterline used to be.

An homage to the working waterfront

Elkins (Arts) liked the image of the proposed bronze sculpture and the fact it would memorialize a working fisherman rather than a person of wealth or well-known public figure.

Lighting

In response to Stensrud's (Arts) question, Wilson said the lighting, whether up or downward, will be designed to respond to the work of art chosen.

Incorporating narrative into the sculpture and providing multiple historic points of information

Stensrud (Arts) said the Arts Commission would like to be able explain to the public this is not just another traditional sculpture for the City but one that will incorporate multiple historic points and narratives within the work of art.

Commissioners' Recommendations

A clear consensus supporting the bronze sculpture "Potomac Harvest".

Commissioners agreed they were impressed by both works of art as proposed, but preferred the bronze sculpture for the courtyard due, in part, to its easier visibility and relationship to the Potomac's view shed and its durability.

Incorporating interpretative historical signage into the work of art

Stensrud (Arts) said the interpretative signage that will convey the City's seafaring history as represented by the sculpture should be considered an integral component of the sculpture rather than be seen as signage that shares the courtyard area with the sculpture but is separate from the sculpture.

Sculpture outside/ glass panels inside?

Martin (Arts), Bethel (Waterfront) and others suggested the sculpture be put outside and the glass collage installed inside the hotel. Orling said he thought the graphic nature of the glass design would be suitable as art inside the hotel and there may be opportunities to use it inside.

Consider adding a water feature to the work of art.

Public Comments

A wonderful precedent for Waterfront public art

Eric Wallner (Torpedo Factory Arts Center) said the process followed was a good start for how to develop public art for the Waterfront and his major interest is that there is an open and fair process. He said he was a little disappointed that only two options were presented. Orling said eight people were invited to submit proposals and only four had responded. Orling said it can be difficult for an artist to create a proposal without being paid for it.

Pat Miller (Public Art Committee) said that from the perspective of a member of the Art/History Waterfront Implementation Committee, created to develop ideas for incorporating recommendations from the Art and History Waterfront Plans as the Waterfront Small Area Plan is implemented, the process used had been "wonderful" and an important precedent set.

Factoring in a work of art's durability

Bert Ely (Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront) said he thought the sculpture should be chosen because it would be less vulnerable to vandalism and easier to restore if damaged. Ely suggested the glass collage be placed inside the hotel.

Using design and materials to reflect the river and traditional boatbuilding craftsmanship

Bob Wood raised four issues: (1) consider for the hotel's courtyard an idea from an Old Dominion Boat Club discussion of their new clubhouse: incorporating the woodworking techniques and craftsmanship of fine traditional boatbuilding; (2) lay out the courtyard's stone flooring in a pattern that conveys the movement of the river's waves rather than using an angular pattern; (3) use gas light in the manner used on King Street; and (4) in a manner similar to the notches at King/Union streets marking historic flood level waterlines, create a display along the courtyard wall that illustrates, for example, historic features of the site over time. Detomo encouraged Wood to join the Art/History Commission since these ideas were consistent with ideas that have been discussed over time.

Adding a hand pump as an interactive water feature

Kathryn Platt said she liked the idea of placing the sculpture in water and suggested incorporating an interactive water feature such as a hand pump as a reference to the hand pumps used in earlier times to pump out Potomac floodwaters.

Next Steps

RPCA and P&Z staff review and recommendations

Kerns said RPCA and P&Z staff will discuss Commissioners' comments with the development team before the RPCA and P&Z directors (the directors) make a final decision on the public art proposal. Kerns commended the development team for its responsiveness to staff requests over the past year and said the well-attended joint Commission meeting reflected the substantial City interest in public art. He said the discussion had fulfilled the DSUP requirement for the Arts and Waterfront Commissions to review the final public art options before the directors make their decision.

Commissioners' support for the traditional sculpture style as presented

Commissioners said they were confused by Kerns' comment that the finalized image of the bronze sculpture might be made somewhat more "abstract" than the image presented to the meeting, as Orling had suggested. Hall and other Commissioners said their consensus supporting the bronze sculpture was for the traditional style used to represent the working fisherman. Orling said his suggestion was that the sculpture's image of the fisherman could be made less literal to add more of a sense of movement to the image, but he did not intend to convey it might become an abstract image rather than a recognizable visual image of a fisherman at work.

Stensrud said the word "abstract" can have many meanings from an art perspective and that, rather than changing the work of art's style from traditional to "abstract", a change that makes a sculpture's image less "literal" could, for example, be as subtle as using a rough bronze surface rather than a smooth one.

Ruggiero said staff understands that the Commissioners support having a bronze sculpture of a fisherman at work that is crafted in a traditional, not abstract, style. She said the creation of public art is a process and the proposed designs were in the early stages of their development. She said staff will keep the Commissions advised as development of the work of art progresses.

Bringing future private development public art proposals into the process earlier

Ruggiero said that because public engagement plays an important part in the public art process the goal is to provide more opportunity for public input on public art in private development. She said that, as discussed in the Public Art Master Plan, public art should be incorporated at an earlier stage in the development process Kerns said the goal is to have developers include the location, theme and proposed material for a project's public art when the Planning Commission and Council consider a developer's request for a DSUP.

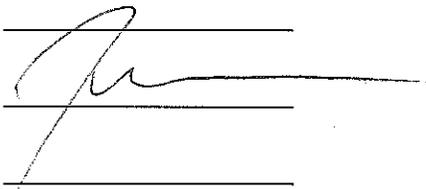
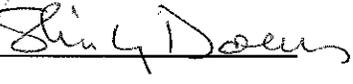
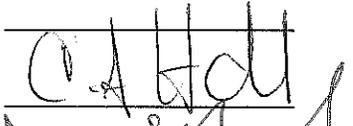
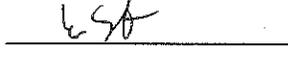
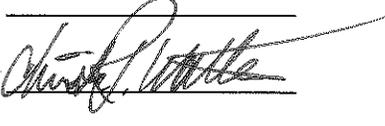
Hotel Indigo timeline

Ruggiero said Hotel Indigo's planned opening date is late summer 2016. She said that, to ensure the courtyard's public art is part of the hotel from its opening, the DSUP requires Hotel Indigo's public art to be completely installed before the City's issues a Certificate of Occupancy.

Adjournment

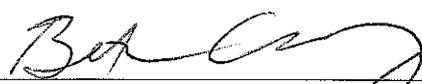
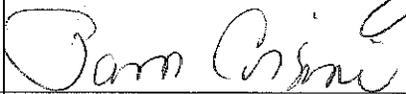
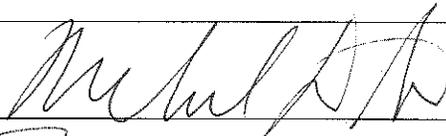
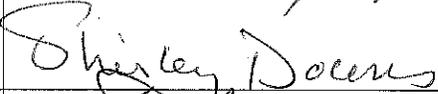
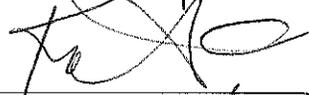
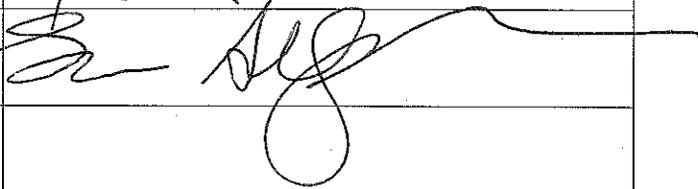
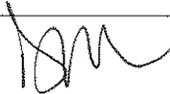
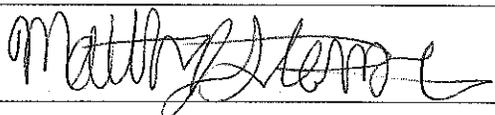
The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

WATERFRONT MEETING ATTENDANCE

NAME	REPRESENTING	SIGNATURE
Auld, Dennis	Park Planning District II	
Baum, Gina	Park and Recreation Commission	_____
Bergman, Howard	Founders Park Community Association	
Bethel, Suzanne	Old Town Professional Business Association	_____
Bordner, John	Citizen From Any Group or Area in the City Other	
Delaney, Morgan	Historic Alexandria Foundation	_____
Downs, Shirley	Alexandria Commission for the Arts	
Dunn, Stewart	Planning Commission	_____
Fox, Arthur	East of Washington St. & South of King St.	_____
Gosnell, Doug	Pleasure Boat License Holders	_____
Hall, Charlotte	Chamber of Commerce	
Hoogland, Jacob	Alexandria Archeology Commission	
Livingood, Mari Lou	Alexandria Seaport Foundation	
Manor, Jody	Alexandria Convention & Visitor Association	
Mutty, Stephen	Park Planning District I	
Smedberg, Paul	City Council	
Thayer, Stephen	Citizen East of Washington St. North of King St.	
Van Fleet, Townsend	Old Town Civic Association	_____
Watters, Christa	Citizen East of Washington St. & North of Pendleton	
Wojtanowski, Ryan	Environmental Policy Commission	_____
Browand, Jack	Staff Liaison, Recreation & Parks	_____
VACANT	Park Planning District III	_____



Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Joint Meeting with Waterfront Commission Thursday, October 9, 2014

BETH COAST	
PAMELA CORSINI	
SYDNEY-CHANELE DAWKINS	
MICHAEL DETOMO, Vice Chair	
SHIRLEY DOWNS	
KATE ELKINS	
AMBER GORDON, Secretary	
KATHERINE KONEFAL	
MICHELLE KOZLAK	
DAVID MARTIN ✓	
LUCY MEDLEY	
ALLISON NANCE	
PATRICIA SHAFFER	
MATTHEW STENSRUD, Chair	
MARGARET WOHLER	

NAME	REPRESENTING	E-MAIL*
Pat Miller	Art/History Comm.	pmiller1906@comcast.net
MARK ORLING	RUST/ORLING	MORLING@RUSTFORORLING.COM
MICHAEL WILSON	CARR CITY CENTERS	mwilson@carrcc.com
Shirley Downs	Water Front	Shirley Downs
Susan Cohen	PAC	Cohen2100@Verizon.net
CHRIS ERWIN	SELF	CE@YAHOO.COM
Cheryl Rawson	self	City Staff
Nancy Willis	DPI	
Dene Garbow	Citizen	comcast.net dene.garbow@
David McWhorter		
ERIC WALLEN	TFAC	
BERT ELY	OTCA/RM	BERT & ELY- CO.COM

* Enter e-mail it you want to be placed on the e-mail list

