



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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City Manager

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Dear Interested Members of the Community:

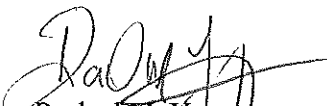
Just over a year ago, the City Council approved the Waterfront Small Area Plan, an important milestone toward achieving the community's vision for their Waterfront. That vision will be achieved by enhancing public open spaces, improving public access and connectivity, incorporating Alexandria's history, promoting arts and culture on the Waterfront and ensuring high quality development that supports and contributes to the many public benefits in the Plan. At the same time, City Council approved a text amendment to include the zoning changes necessary to carry out the Plan. Unfortunately, that Text Amendment has been delayed due to litigation that challenges the procedure for approving the zoning changes. This continuing litigation is preventing the Plan from reaching its full potential.

This week City Council provided guidance to me that, in an effort to move the Plan forward, they would again like to consider the Waterfront zoning text amendment. To that end, I will be making a request to the Planning Commission that they initiate and consider a text amendment to the W-1 Waterfront Mixed Use Zone to implement the Waterfront Plan at their next meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2013, that will then be considered by City Council at their public hearing on Saturday, March 16, 2013. In an effort to address the concerns raised by the opponents in the litigation, City Council will proceed as if there is a valid protest petition requiring a supermajority vote on this matter.

Additionally, I will request that the Planning Commission and City Council consider a text amendment to amend Section 11-808 of the Zoning Ordinance to clarify that the protest petition provision that triggers the supermajority vote applies only to map amendments not to text amendments. This will alleviate the confusion that the unclear text has raised and allow other pending text amendments that have been stalled due to this litigation to move forward.

This action provides the Community with an opportunity to get beyond the litigation. Additionally, it ensures that implementation advances comprehensively, rather than in a piecemeal way. The vision of the Plan is to preserve and protect the special character of the Waterfront, and the City Council wants that to be done comprehensively throughout the entire Waterfront. Moving forward with the zoning text amendment now will make the Plan real by codifying the Plan's standards for private development that funds the Plan and ensure the highest quality of design. This funding is needed to support the flood mitigation, parks, piers, promenades and activities that will ultimately realize the community's Waterfront vision.

Sincerely,


Rashad M. Young
City Manager