

**Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations, Inc.**  
**Meeting Minutes February 23, 2011**

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Roger Waud at 7:05 PM and those present introduced themselves.

**Minutes for February 3 Federation Meeting.** Upon motion by Poul Hertel and seconded by Nancy Jennings, the minutes of the February 3, 2011 meeting of the Federation were accepted as corrected.

**Treasurer's Report.** Roger Waud reported for the Treasurer that the current balance is \$7,741.53.

**Current and Pending Development Projects.** Gwen Wright reported that three SUP's had been scheduled for the March 1 Planning Commission meeting, but one of them had been deferred. To be considered are: 101 North Union Street (Suite 101) which is a frame shop to be converted to a 15-seat yogurt shop; and 444 Swan Ave. which is an auto repair shop moving from the west end to the Oakville Triangle area. Both of these items are on the consent calendar.

There will be a presentation by City staff on flood plain regulations.

There are two SUP's scheduled for the public hearing. Marino's pizza restaurant on Jefferson Davis Highway at Wesmond Drive is filing to build a 2-story addition to the present one-story carry-out facility. The addition would allow sit-down dining with 44 seats. The "eat-in" portion of the restaurant would close at 1 AM on nights when the carry-out is open until 2 AM. Parking would be on each side of the building and the strip in front of the building that faces JD highway would be landscaped.

Amy Slack noted that Del Ray is concerned that the proposed setback is a major encumbrance. She said her Association requests denial until the City has completed a development study for the west side of Route 1.

The second SUP for hearing is a revision of the SUP approved in 2008 for the James Bland project which is on the blocks adjacent to the Charles Houston Recreation Center. Their request is to build three four-story buildings rather than two four-story buildings on the block immediately north of the Rec Center. There would be an increase in ARHA units, with the building having ARHA tenants identical in appearance to the market price buildings. There would be one level of underground parking for the market price units while the subsidized tenants would have street parking only.

Nancy Jennings asked about the status of lighting of the athletic field at Hammond Middle School. Ms. Wright said this has been deferred indefinitely to obtain consensus.

Kristina Scholze asked about the Duke Street improvement project which she understood would eliminate the service roads between Jordan St. and Wheeler Ave. Mr. Lerner replied that there are no immediate plans and there will be an opportunity for community input before a plan evolves.

Ms. Lapento asked if there will be a large-scale community presentation on the waterfront plan.

**Transit-Planning Issues.** Abi Lerner presented a power point as an overview of transit initiatives in the City. The City is considering a 12 ½ cent real estate on commercial property in order to fund urgently needed transportation projects.

Mr. Lerner said an effort will be made to make transit options attractive to the vast majority of people who are in the group between those who must use mass transit and those who for whatever reason would never use transit. The middle group is those that could be convinced to use transit if it was made to be competitive with riding in an automobile. He said the City is dedicated to improving bus service, and to expand and create new routes and to provide more frequent service.

Among the incentives to use transit would be dedicated lanes for busses (or streetcars), and improving traffic signals by providing transit signal priority for busses.

The overview included a summary of the transit corridor studies provided for the Transit Corridor Work Group. Essentially, Corridor A is north-south in the east (Route 1/Washington St.), Corridor B is east-west (Duke/Eisenhower) and Corridor C is north-south (Beauregard/Van Dorn). Corridor improvement is a Working Group priority for Corridor C because of BRAC III, and work on this Corridor is to be completed in late spring.

Poul Hertel, who is on the Working Group, pointed out that we had lost an opportunity when we did not consider impacting on Fairfax County and getting them to buy into the plan. In order for the plan to work, faster and more reliable and frequent service is needed.

Lerner mentioned that Arlington County's Columbia Pike streetcar line is planned to be extended to the NOVA Alexandria campus. This could be further extended to the Mark Center.

Other potential transit projects include:

Crystal City/ Potomac Yards Transit Way (extending through Potomac Yards to the Braddock Rd. Metro.)

Potomac Yards Metro station (working on environmental impact statement – project cost \$240 million)

King Street Metro improvement (reconfigure kiss and ride, improve pedestrian facilities - \$4,300,000 already funded)

Eisenhower Metro improvement (Mr. Hertel suggests wind barriers for the station platform)

Enhanced transit from King Street Metro to BRAC at Mark Center

New exit ramp for HOV lanes at Seminary Road

Replacing Metro bus shelters (\$500,000 grant received)

Bike sharing program (estimated \$500,000 to implement)

Mr. Hertel commented that the effect of the 12 ½ cent commercial real estate tax on King Street retail and other small merchants would be catastrophic. The cost would be approximately \$3,000 for each store. He noted that some have closed and moved to National Harbor and many more may do so if the tax is enacted.

**VDOT Proposal to Avoid Environmental Impact Study for Seminary Road Plan.** Geoff Goodale reported on the proposal considered by the City Council. The VDOT proposal has a categorical exclusion (CE) as part of the package. This would allow the project to proceed without an environmental impact study.

Don Buch stated the Council action in approving the VDOT plan without considering transit alternatives was unacceptable. Ms. Cannady added that this is another instance of the Council voting on an important issue without public input. We should ask the

Council to have public hearings on matters of great importance to many citizens.

Mr. Goodale stated that the CE would have to be approved by the Federal Highway Administration. VDOT had said their voluntary studies would require eight months as opposed to 12 – 14 months for a full environmental assessment.

After discussion, upon motion by Mr. Goodale and seconded by Mr. Van Fleet that the Federation write to the City Council as soon as possible urging the Council to hold a public hearing as to whether the Council should support a categorical exclusion for this project. The motion passed.

Mr. Waud asked Mr. Goodale to draft a letter for this purpose.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Converse West, Secretary

Those present at the Meeting –

Guests:     Abi Lerner, Alexandria Department of Transportation  
                  & Environmental Services  
                  Gwen Wright, Chief, Development Division,  
                  Department of Planning & Zoning

Co-Chairs Joanne Lapento and Roger Waud and the following  
Association member representatives and citizens:

Joe Bennett	Michael Hobbs
Don Buch	Nancy Jennings
Katy Cannady	Kristina Scholze
Alice Cave	Amy Slack

Greg Cota  
Annabelle Fisher  
Heidi Ford  
Geoff Goodale  
Poul Hertel

Tom Soapes  
Van Van Fleet  
Christina Watters  
Converse West  
Elizabeth Wright