



[Alexandria Beautification Commission](#) | P.O. Box 178 | Alexandria, VA 22313
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Meeting minutes

Thursday, October 10, 2024 @ 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Charles Houston Recreation Center | 901 Wythe St

Present in person: Leah Bancheri, Elizabeth (Liz) Gelfer (Vice Chair), Kenneth Krupa, Maralyn O’Brien, Eleanor Quigley, Yanique Revers, Sara E. Rhoades, Emily Swaim, Daniya Tamendarova (Secretary), Eleanor Trice (Chair); Oscar Mendoza (City Staff)

Present remotely: N/A

Excused absence: Steven Cohen, Felicia Hackett, Monica Murphy, Laura Norfolk

The meeting began at 7:32 pm.

1. Motion approval of [September meeting minutes](#)

Ken moved to approve September minutes, seconded by **Sara**. Approved unanimously.

2. ABC members

Eleanor T. noted that, with Monica and Steve withdrawing from the Commission. New members: **Russ Bailey**, who accompanied the ABC members on our tour of Beautification Award nominated properties, and **Sandy Freedman**. Russ will join the Sustainability Committee, and Sandy will join the Education Committee.

3. Awards ceremony final prep – Yanique(

Yanique walked everyone through the Awards ceremony timeline and confirmed assignments. Zebra Press photographers did not respond to our invitation, so will be taking pictures (with input from others), and Sara and Leah will record interviews and live stream the event.

4. Budget recommendations
 - Tree equity program
 - Parking lot heat islands

- Eleanor discussed the recommendations; [they are described here](#).
- We voted to send the budget recommendations to City Council. Maralyn made the motion and Eleanor Q. seconded.

5. Meeting with Visit Alexandria

Eleanor and Liz met with Todd O’Leary from Visit Alexandria and recommended they celebrate and drive tourists to:

- The **bicentennial tree** near Beatley Library, off the Holmes Run Trail. Oscar is working on getting updated signs for the tree and directional signs. Eleanor also met with the Alexandria/VA250 group that is planning for the 2025 commemoration of the 250th American Revolution – and talked about the bicentennial tree and creating a **map of other older trees**. The group was very interested. Eleanor also suggested using a red/white/blue decoration on the trees leading up to the bicentennial tree (similar to a past bird ornament art pop-up) and Historic Alexandria is looking into this, along with the Office of the Arts.
- Alexandria is the midpoint for the **East Coast Greenway** (which is the Mt Vernon Trail in Alx), so we talked about celebrating this more and perhaps building a bike waystation, having fun bike runs/walks on the greenway, etc. in the future. Todd wanted to wait on these plans.
- **Bike gateway** signs are also in the works (Oscar will be providing an update) and perhaps we can add a note about Alx being the greenway midpoint. Also plans to look at landscaping around the bike gateways AFTER the original 13 gateways are completed.
- **Fort Ward** & its arborist memorial. Oscar is working with Eleanor/Liz on the plaque and plans for cleaning up the memorial.

6. Sustainability/advocacy update – Eleanor Quigley.

Fall plantings will be on the following Saturdays from 9-12

There was a very successful tree planting (33 trees) with the Tree Stewards training class & neighborhood advocates, plus Ken, Sara, Emily, Eleanor T, and Eleanor Q, on Sept 28 in Mt Jefferson Park. Upcoming tree plantings are planned for:

- Oct 19 – Four Mile Run Park
- Nov 9 – Locations along Cameron Run

7. Education/comms update – Sara Kohn Rhoades

Zebra articles have been submitted

8. Other updates

- ABC voted to hold meetings at the Durant Center starting in January 2025. Sara made the motion and Eleanor Q seconded.
- Eleanor and Liz volunteered to continue as chair and vice chair respectively for one more year. Many voiced appreciation. Liz noted that new members often take the secretary position so they can learn more about the Commission. Daniya said if no one else is willing, she can be secretary again, but hopefully new members will take the position.
- Eleanor noted Sarah Bagley will join us at our November 14 meeting. She also let folks know about the kayaking tour with Kurt Moser on Oct 15.