



[Alexandria Beautification Commission](#) (ABC) March Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2025 – 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Oswald Durant Center | Alexandria, VA

facebook.com/AlexandriaBeautification & instagram.com/beautifulalx

Present in person: Eleanor Trice (Chair), Liz Gelfer (Vice Chair), Russ Bailey, Kevin Fisher, Felicia Hackett, Sara Kohn, Kenneth Krupa, Oscar Mendoza, Laura Norfolk, Maralyn O'Brien, Kelsey Pramik, Eleanor Quigley, Daniya Tamendarova, *Alisa Wong*

Excused absence: Emily Swain

1. Vote to approve February retreat minutes

- a. *Motion to approve by Eleanor Q, Seconded by Maralyn; Passed unanimously*

2. Discussion of updated advocacy letter re: transitioning to electric leaf blowers

- a. The key change from versions previously shown to the ABC was in the addition of recommendation of an education campaign, alternatives to blowing leaves & a prompt transition.
- b. A spirited discussion followed with questions from Alisa and Kevin. Suggestions were made about future Zebra articles on what kinds of blowers to buy and why to leave the leaves.
- c. Eleanor Q presented about advocacy around Leave the Leaves.
- d. *Motion to approve signing onto the letter by Kenneth, Seconded by Russ; Passed unanimously*

3. Discussion of thank you breakfast for refuse collectors

- a. Eleanor T gave an update on discussion of hosting a thank you breakfast for refuse collectors.
- b. The goal is to annually recognize different kinds of workers who contribute to beautification of the city.

- c. Daniya asked about format. It was historically a pancake breakfast, however could be coffee and bagels for 70 people.
- d. A discussion of timing followed. Several members of the group shared concerns about getting donations on a short timeline.
- e. The conversation was tabled until after we get alternate dates that could work besides 3/28.

4. Reports from each subcommittee based on retreat goals.

- a. Kelsey reported on updates from the Awards Committee:
 - i. Key dates to save for 2025, including the nomination form, van tour and awards ceremony.
 - ii. Key changes to criteria, including: streamlining overall criteria, changing the timeframe in which an award could be nominated after last winning to 7 years, residential street award and no longer requiring a set number of awards.
 - iii. She explained the updated categories, including 1. Community (to include public art & architecture), 2. Residential, and 3. Residential Street.
 - iv. *Motion to approve by Eleanor Q; Seconded by multiple members; Passed unanimously*
- b. Daniya gave an update on Education. Since many members were unable to make the retreat, the Education Committee will report out later.
 - i. Starting next month, Emily will take over Zebra articles, while Daniya will manage social media accounts
 - ii. ABC members are asked to share ideas for content on art, sustainability, interesting community events, and more.
 - iii. Sara shared timing and structure for Zebra articles.
- c. The Advocacy Committee took turns presenting on their 10 Advocacy Committee SMART goals (see handout shared separately).

5. Other updates

- a. Eleanor T spoke about the ACPS Native Roots project; a planting kickoff is planned for on Earth Day, Tuesday, April 22 @ John Adams Elementary School/Early Childhood Center (ECC).
- b. Oscar shared that the city has now hired two Natural Resource Managers
- c. Eleanor T gave an update about Alexandria High School student Harlow Barbic who is the leader for the Watershed Warriors & will be completing an internship with us. Eleanor setting up shadowing opportunities for her.
- d. Liz set up 2 **Native Plants Seminars** with Beatley Library on [Saturday, April 26](#) and [Thursday, May 1](#); ABC members are encouraged to spread the word and attend.
- e. After discussion and a vote, the ABC determined to participate in the following spring events. Members are asked to sign up for tabling shifts:
 - [ALX Dog Walk](#) – Saturday, April 5 @ 7 am – 11 am (with set-up at 6:30 am)
 - [Earth Day](#) - Tuesday, April 22 - planting kickoff @ J Adams Elementary/Early Childhood Center (ECC)
 - [Del Ray GardenFest](#) – Sun, April 27 @ noon – 4 pm at Nicholas Colsanto baseball field - vote on attending
 - [Eco-City Festival](#) – Saturday, May 10 @ Ben Brenman 10 am – 2 pm

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.