

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA RESOURCES COMMISSION

Lloyd House

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

PRESENT: (10 for quorum)

Carol Black

Christopher Brownlowe

Donna DeBlasio

Nigel Mease

John Patrick

Lisa Schumaier

Ivy Whitlatch

Laura Lieberman

Christina Bembenek – At Large

Russell Simonaro

VIRTUAL:

EXCUSED:

Mia Mulrennan

David Kovalik

Steve Stuart

Roberta Stevens

Rebecca Super

Corrine Marasco

ABSENT:

Tyler Hale

Michael Pope

PUBLIC:

Robert Ray

LaSharen Howell

CITY STAFF:

Liz Williams, OHA Staff

Bill Conkey, P&Z Staff

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Christopher Brownlowe at 7:32 p.m. A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2025:

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna DeBlasio and seconded by John Patrick. The November 17, 2025, minutes were approved with edits.

Commissioner Updates:

Carol Black – Planning District 2

- No Report.

Chris Brownlowe – Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (NVFAA)

- Successful annual membership party.
- Jan 3 – poetry event, tickets on sale online.

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No Report.

Tyler Hale – Civic Association Representative

- Absent.

David Kovalik – Public Records Advisory Commission

- Excused Absence.

Laura Lieberman – Lee-Fendall House Museum

- Wrapped up busy fall.
- Site will be closed in January and will reopen in February.

Corinne Marasco – Houses of Worship

- Excused Absence.

Nigel Mease – Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission (AHRPC)

- Easement inspections continue at pace.
- Commission is discussing reviving plaque program.

Mia Mulrennan – Tourism and Business Community

- Excused Absence.

John Patrick – Planning District 2

- Rosemont Citizens Association is setting up a history committee for the neighborhood.

Michael Pope – Alexandria Historical Society

- Absent.

Lisa Schumaier – Torpedo Factory

- No Report.

Russell Simonaro – Tourism and Business Community

- No Report.

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association (Robert Ray gave report)

- In response to the ALX Forward Report, Karen Paul wrote response for open comment period
- A 250th event sponsored by VA Humanities will be held at St. Paul's on March 14 – Alexandria Festival of the Book. It is a one-day book festival with the theme *Portraying America 1776-2026* will celebrate the nation's rich history and literary achievements.
- Upcoming lectures:
 - January 19: Andrea Tracy, *America's Landmarks Abroad: Preserving Diplomatic Treasures*
 - February 16: Carol Cadou, *Celebrating America 250: Preserving a Future for our Nation's Past*
 - March 16: Jeffrey Ricketts, *The Antiques and Architecture of Brick Meeting House, Maryland, 1700-1870*

Steven Stuart – Planning District 3

- Excused Absence.

Rebecca Super – Carlyle House

- Excused Absence.

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)

- This afternoon attended the preconstruction meeting for Douglass Cemetery Stormwater Management project.
- Wilkes Street Complex Nomination project is moving along.

New Business:

- Election of New Officers for 2026
 - Nominating Committee, led Steve Stuart, proposed the slate of officers for the 2026 calendar year: Christopher Brownlowe as Chair, Donna DeBlasio as Vice Chair, and Roberta Stevens as Secretary.
 - A motion to approve the slate of officers was made by John Patrick and seconded by Carol Black. The slate was approved.
- America 250
 - Nigel brought up this could be a fundraising opportunity for the collective.
 - i. Ivy shared this is not HARC's purpose as it is not a dispersing organization.

- Discussion about whether HARC should work at coordinating fundraising efforts of affiliated organizations
- Suggestion of a letter to members saying this would be a good opportunity to fundraise
- Suggestion this could raise the profile of HARC to advocate for Historic Preservation in 2026
- Moved to Old Business for discussion at next meeting

- ALX Forward – AEDP report
 - Economic Development Plan focused on economically underdeveloped areas of the City
 - Published 2-3 weeks ago around Dec 5
 - Concern was raised that Preservation mentioned only two times.

- Prince & Patrick – Scuba Diver Mural
 - Ivy asking does HARC want get involved in this issue? Especially in Old & Historic District.
 - i. City has no purview. City Council clarified this this past summer that murals are not signage.
 - Moved to Old Business for discussion at next meeting

Old Business:

- Eisenhower Apartment Building –
 - No updates since the last HARC meeting. Will continue to monitor.
- Waterfront Pump Station –
 - A third alternative is being proposed that involves a “split station” with a smaller building in the park and the pump station located in the 1 Prince Street Building.
 - Cost estimates are being made on two different options – the one site at 1 Prince or the split station. These estimates will be available by February or March 2026.
- Jones Point Lighthouse –
 - An article in the Alexandria Times discussed the Lighthouse and its need for restoration.
 - Carol doing some research/ meetings on this issue.
- Heritage, Section 106 consulting party –
 - No updates on the enforcement of the destroyed archaeological features.

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) – Nigel Mease

- Held a meeting on Nov 19.
- The first part of the series of tours for the Remembrance Students with Alexandria City High School went really well and was well received.
- Scholarship Fund is growing but more is needed.
- Next year – Jan 9 retreat.

City Hall and Market Square Redesign – John Patrick

- Carol Black and John Patrick attended pertinent meetings.
- The City appealed the conditions of approval passed by the BAR.
- A motion by John Patrick, seconded by Lisa Schumaier, called for HARC to endorse the BAR's conditions of approval and authorize John to write City Council in defense of those conditions and/or speak in their defense at the Jan. 13 Council meeting. The motion passed.
- Information on the renovation can be found at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/CityHall>

Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Update: Bill Conkey

City Hall

- The City has appealed the conditions of approval passed by the BAR at the November 19, 2025 hearing. The appeal will be heard by City Council at the January 13, 2026 Council hearing.

910 King Street

- At the December 3, 2025 BAR hearing, the Board approved the application for modifications to the building at 910 King Street with staff recommendations and a condition that none of the exterior walls be painted. The applicant has appealed this decision and is asking Council to approve the design as submitted.

806 N. Columbus

- The three townhouses proposed for the empty lot at 806 North Columbus Street will be returning to the Board for a second concept review at the BAR hearing on 12/17/25. The applicant has made changes to the design in response to Board comments including reducing the height of the buildings and moving them further from the sidewalk so that they are in line with the adjacent buildings.

Board elections

- At the December 3, BAR hearing the Board held officer elections. Andrew Scott was elected as Chair and Nastaran Zandian was elected to Vice Chair.

The January hearings will be at the MARC Center.

Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) Update: Liz Williams

- Looking ahead to 2026, we will be in full swing for Alexandria's Commemoration of the nation's 250th anniversary. A launch event is planned for January 26th at 6:30 p.m. at The Lyceum.
 - Activities will include new programs throughout the year, new exhibitions and our largest event - Sails on the Potomac June 12-14, 2026.
- Gearing up for Black History Month, which theme this year is "A Century of Black History Commemorations."
- Other priorities include Freedom House Museum interior renovation and new exhibitions as well as Douglass Cemetery Stormwater Improvement Project.

- The city's FY27 budget process is underway and will be completed in May.

Public Comment

LaSharen Howell inquiring on recruitment of more diverse members for this commission.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting is planned for January 20, 2026, at the Lloyd House.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Williams, OHA

Roberta Stevens, HARC Secretary