

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

Meeting Minutes

Lloyd House
Tuesday, June 16, 2026

Attendance

Present: (11 for quorum)

Christina Bembenek
Carol Black
Christopher Brownlowe
Donna DeBlasio
Tyler Hale
Ed Jayne
Nigel Mease
John Patrick
Rick Price
Lisa Schumaier
Roberta Stevens
Steve Stuart
Rebecca Super
Jenny Waters
Margaret Whitesides
Ivy Whitlatch

Excused:

Gayle Converse
Corinne Marasco
Mia Mulrennan
Michael Pope
Russell Simonaro

Absent:

Public:

City Staff:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA Staff
Bill Conkey, P&Z Staff

Agenda

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Brownlowe at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes from May 19, 2026:

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna DeBlasio and seconded by John Patrick. The May 19, 2026 minutes were approved unanimously.

Commissioner Updates:

Christina Bembenek - Planning District 1

- No Report

Carol Black – Planning District 2

- In the absence of Michael Pope, Carol promoted the upcoming Alexandria Historical Society's lecture featuring Richard Bell on the American Revolution on June 24st.
- She continues to advocate for the restoration of Jones Point Lighthouse and hopes the restoration efforts will pick up in the fall.

Chris Brownlowe – Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (NVFAA)

- The program on the tall ships was successful.
- He highlighted their Juneteenth program with featuring poetry and music. Sign ups are available on the Athenaeum's website.

On July 11, they will be having a writing workshop at the Athenaeum.

Donna DeBlasio – Planning District 1

- No Report

Gayle Converse - Volunteer

- Excused Absence

Tyler Hale – Old Town Civic Association (OTCA)

- No Report

Ed Jayne – Community Member

- No Report

Corinne Marasco – Houses of Worship

- Excused Absence

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

- No Report

Mia Mulrennan – Tourism and Business Community

- Excused Absent

John Patrick – Planning District 2.

- No Report

Michael Pope – Alexandria Historical Society (AHS)

- Excused Absence

Rick Price – Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF)

- No Report

Lisa Schumaier – Torpedo Factory

- No Report

Russell Simonaro – Tourism and Business Community

- Absent

Roberta Stevens – Alexandria Association

- No Report

Steve Stuart – Planning District 3

- No Report

Rebecca Super – Carlyle House

- The Fairfax Resolves Exhibit is up in the front yard of the Carlyle House.
- They enjoyed the three hot days at Sails on the Potomac.
- The last of their walking tours for the summer is July 18th and will focus on architecture and preservation.
- The Carlyle House is hosting our "Tell Me Your Name" tour in honor of Juneteenth this Friday at 10 a.m. (The tour is sold out as of this morning)
- Trivia at Historic Sites begins this month and will run through the summer.

Jenny Waters – Lee-Fendall House Museum

- They received a grant from the Historic Alexandria Foundation for historic wallpaper restoration.
- The museum will be doing a series of lectures this summer in lieu of walking tours in the heat.
- Summer trivia nights will continue as well as journaling with Penny Post, and yoga in the garden with Radiance Yoga.
- The women's suffrage exhibit is closing.

Margaret Whitesides – Houses of Worship

- The Old Presbyterian Meeting House has a dismantling racism team and has been collaborating with Alexandria Community Remembrance Project.
- Tours are being offered by David Heiby at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House Cemetery focused on African American History. Tour tickets can be purchased at GravestoneStories.com.

Ivy Whitlatch – Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)

- On June 18, the PIF (Preliminary Information Form) for the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex will be reviewed by Virginia Department of Historic Resources. If approved to move forward, a grant from the Historic Alexandria Foundation will fund the research for the application.

New Business:

- The presentation by OHA Director Gretchen Bulova on the Office of Historic Alexandria covered its mission, strategic goals, OHA's museums, the historic sites they manage, the collections they maintain (with three million items), OHA exhibitions, commissions, friends groups and volunteers. Over the past year, a special focus has been the

restoration of the building that houses the Freedom House Museum, once the site of the domestic slave trading company, Franklin & Armfield.

Old Business:

- New Member Onboarding is being coordinated by Steve Stuart.

Standing Committee Reports:

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) – Nigel Mease

- They're coordinating the second year of the Banned Truth Tour for students at the Alexandria City Public Schools. There will be four separate tours based on different time periods.
- Scholarships were awarded to two Alexandria City High School graduating seniors in the name and memory of Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas.
- The remembrance for Benjamin Thomas is being planned for August 28th, the date Thomas's memorial was held.

Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Update: Bill Conkey

415 North Alfred Street

- Tomorrow night the Board will hold the second Concept Review for a row of five townhouses at 415 North Alfred Street. The townhouses will be three stories and will include a garage and second floor ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) at the rear of the site facing the adjacent alley. At the first concept review, the board asked the applicant to lower the overall height and add variety to the design so that they read as individual buildings rather than as a single multi-unit residential building. The applicant has revised the design by lowering the roof and adding a mansard roof design to two of the townhouses.

806 North Columbus Street

- At the May 20th BAR hearing, the Board approved a row of three townhouses at 806 North Columbus Street. These three-story townhouses are located on a currently vacant lot and include a roof deck. This project is being built by the same developer as the proposed ones at 415 North Alfred Street. These townhouses are on relatively small lots and have limited onsite parking at the rear of each lot.

BAR Hearing Location

- The Board has settled into its new home for the next few years and will be holding hearings at the Charles Houston Recreation Center on North Patrick Street. Committee meetings in other recreation centers will also be held if there is an unforeseen scheduling conflict. BAR expects to have hearings at Charles Houston until the renovation of City Hall is complete.

Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) Update: Gretchen Bulova

- The Juneteenth Schedule can be found at alexandriava.gov and includes a full day of activities.

- The new exhibit at The Lyceum, “The Stories of U.S.: Collections Capture Our History” for the 250th anniversary, opened June 11th.
- OHA is partnering with the Beautification Commission to promote red, white and blue native plantings throughout Alexandria between Memorial Day and Labor Day as part of the 250th Commemoration.
- Alexandria Forum, “Nothing but Independence,” will be held at The Lyceum on Friday, September 18th.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. The next meeting is planned for July 21, 2026, at the Lloyd House. No meeting will take place in August.

Respectfully Submitted:

Gretchen Bulova, OHA
Roberta Stevens, HARC Secretary