‘The most difficult portfolio’

Former ambassador discusses Turkey’s earthquakes, strategic importance
BY DENISE DUNBAR

When the massive, 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Turkey and Syria on Feb. 6, one Alexandria resident knew exactly what people on the ground were dealing with: James Franklin Jeffrey, former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, who did four tours there and was also a special representative for Syria engagement.

In 1999, when Jeffrey was serving as deputy chief of mission in Turkey, a significant earthquake struck near the major population centers of Istanbul and Ankara in the northern and north-central parts of the country.

“The American response is typically the same in all of these,” Jeffrey said. “First of all, it’s political support. Second, the United States has a huge capability through international institutions ... to mobilize the international community.”

After political support comes financial aid.

“Then we promise a great deal of money. It’s about $100 million in this case. We move military forces in essentially because they can move quickly,” Jeffrey said. “It’s not their combat power that’s of any importance. It’s the fact that a military unit of any size ... is like a small city. It has communications. It has helicopters. It has medical supplies. It has engineers. It has all kinds of neat things that can be used in any crisis, which is why we activate the National Guard here in the United States all the time.”

The former ambassador

Open space anomalies

A look at divergent views about a long-controversial issue in Alexandria
BY MARK EATON

Diametrically opposed opinions about the preservation and addition of open space in the city’s 15.7 square miles show that open space is important and subjective. Whether Alexandria, known for its density, is succeeding in maintaining and creating quality and accessible public open space is in the eye of the beholder.

The city’s overall open space target of 7.3 acres per 1,000 people is not a metric that influences how residents perceive their access to quality open space. The open space target also has no bearing on whether a new commercial development provides appropriate open space.

There are anomalies or departures from expectations that contribute to the divergent views about open space:

“Open space” needs context

The term “open space” covers extensive literal and

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<th>Parks in Process of Being Constructed – Completed</th>
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DATA/MARK EATON/CHART/JESSICA KIM

INSIDE

Wedding
Saying ‘yes’ to love and a life in Alexandria.

Alexandria Celebrates Women
The history behind Women’s History Month.

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3 BD | 2 BA | $867,500

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Kingstowne
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Rosemont [PENDING]
2 BD | 2 BA | $865,000

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Homicide victim identified

Kyren Eley, 19, a non-city resident, was gunned down on March 4 in the 200 block of South Reynolds Street, according to a news release. The office of the chief medical examiner has ruled the death a homicide. The Alexandria Police Department is actively investigating and anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact Detective Michael Whelan by phone at 703-746-6228 or email: Michael.Whelan@alexandriava.gov.

Juvenile arrested near ACHS

On March 9 at 3:23 p.m., officers from the Alexandria Police Department responded to an emergency call of an 18-year-old man suffering from non-life-threatening injuries outside of ACHS. A 15-year-old juvenile was arrested and charged with felonious assault, according to the APD. Because the suspect is a juvenile, no further information is being released at this time.

Stomping Ground to close next month

Owner, chef and self-proclaimed janitor Nicole Jones announced via an open letter that she is shuttering her Del Ray restaurant next month. Citing skyrocketing supply prices and other factors, Jones wrote that she intends to shut her doors and reopen in the future with a new space that she hopes will delight her customers.

Input on safe school routes sought

The City of Alexandria is requesting community feedback on walking and biking conditions around five schools as part of its Safe Routes to School Program to make it safer and easier for children to walk and bike to school. Parents, students, school staff, administrators and people who live or work near schools are encouraged to share their comments. See www.alexandriava.gov for more information. Feedback is due by April 2.

ACPS students celebrate healthy meals

March is National School Nutrition Month and Alexandria City Public Schools are celebrating with healthy meals. On March 9, Mayor Justin Wilson, City Councilor John T. Chapman, ACPS School Board Chair Meagan L. Alderton and Chadwick’s Restaurant owner Trae Lamond served students a hot breakfast in recognition of National School Breakfast Week.

Students were treated to a hot breakfast.

SPRING 2023

- Visit www.alextimes.com for more news and events.
On March 15, a postal delivery worker dialed 911 after witnessing flames and smoke from the roof of 216 S. Fairfax St. Units from Alexandria, Arlington, Prince George’s and Fairfax were on the scene to extinguish the blaze. “Strong wind conditions definitely hampered their ability to extinguish the fire, but once more hose lines were placed, they were able to do so,” AFD Deputy Fire Chief Paul Ruwe said. A homeowner was in the residence at the time of the fire, but escaped unharmed. One firefighter sustained minor injuries not requiring hospitalization.

Students raise more than $8k for animals

The Lyles Crouch Traditional Academy PTA worked with students and volunteers to organize a talent show and auction to raise funds for the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria and King Street Cats. Students raised more than $8,400 and will equally split the donation between both local charities.

Affordable housing counseling available

Alexandria’s Office of Housing creates a list of current vacancies in affordable rental properties, including the property name, monthly rent, income requirements and occupancy limits. For questions regarding city housing programs and resources, please call the OAH at 703-746-4990 or visit their webpage.
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Hugo Romero 703.582.6727
HRomero@cbmove.com

WASHINGTON, DC
1021 Sycamore Drive SE, Washington, DC 20032
For Sale
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Matt White 202.491.7777
MWhite@cbmove.com

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said this type of response is generally successful, and it’s helping now in Turkey.

“Moving in the military, it also is a symbol of America’s presence, including military presence, which allies tend to like. That’s the game plan that we essentially apply to anything like an earthquake or a huge flood in a close partner or ally. We’re doing this very effectively now in Türkiye*.” Jeffrey said.

The current earthquake, much larger than the one in 1999, took place well south of Turkey’s main population centers, but Jeffrey said the region is nonetheless important.

“While this was not a cosmopolitan part of Türkiye, it was a very economically important one, key to trade with countries in the Gulf and to the south. Therefore, this is a huge blow to Türkiye,” he added.

“While this was not a cosmopolitan part of Türkiye, it was a very economically important one, key to trade with countries in the Gulf and to the south. Therefore, this is a huge blow to Türkiye,” he added.

The size of the impacted region brings a special set of complicating factors.

“This [earthquake] is much, much greater [than in 1999] both in number of people killed – it’s probably over 50,000 now – and the area is almost half the size of Texas. ... When you have devastation of cities in that big an area, you have a recovery problem that is enormous,” Jeffrey said.

Providing aid to survivors while also dealing with those who have died is a huge challenge.

“First of all, trying to get people and then bodies out of the wreckage, then trying to find housing and food and water for the survivors because even those buildings that did not collapse, you probably cannot go back into them until they’re certified. Then, finally, the long-term rebuilding,” Jeffrey said.

Turkey’s geopolitical importance

Jeffrey spent a total of nine years in Turkey during his four stints there while in the U.S. Foreign Service. His fourth tour began in December 2008, when President George W. Bush appointed him as Ambassador, a post he held until July 2010.

“Türkiye is the most difficult portfolio the State Department has, period. Because it’s so big, it’s so important, and it’s so controversial,” Jeffrey said.

According to Jeffrey, Turkey’s significance and helpfulness to the U.S. is poorly understood by many in this country.

“Türkiye is very important because of its size. It is, along with Iran, number two in population in the Middle East – if you consider Türkiye in the Middle East. ... It has a very strong economy even now, somewhere between number 17 and number 14 in the world; a very strong military,” Jeffrey said.

But there’s an undercurrent of anti-Westernism in Turkey that makes it a prickly partner at times.

“The Turks expected to get into the European Union, but they didn’t. There’s various, specific U.S. policies near abroad in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere that they disagree with, so our relations are sometimes
strained,” Jeffrey elaborated.

What Americans sometimes fail to understand is that Turkey’s geography means that it has to proceed cautiously, particularly with Russia.

“Generally, it is a difficult but very important ally of ours against Iran and Russia, who are seen by the Turks as long-term, major threats to their country. While the Turks are the most effective block to the Russians anywhere in Eurasia other than us, they also have cozy relations with the Russians in trade and some other areas,” Jeffrey said.

The ambassador said our relationship with Turkey is a “glass three-quarters full” situation, where they’re with us most of the time on important issues.

“Washington, believe me, is bred to focus on the one-quarter and pound on that rather than all the good things you get from a partner, and so the Turks are resentful about that,” Jeffrey said.

One of the common misconceptions many Americans have about Turkey is that it’s not really a democracy, particularly as Turkish President Recep Erdoğan’s rule has become increasingly authoritarian.

“Türkiye under President Erdoğan is an illiberal democracy. Both words are important,” Jeffrey explained. “That is, at the end of the day, votes are counted. Erdoğan can, and in some cases has, lost. He lost most of the cities in the last set of elections. He, for various reasons, has to adhere to that. That is, he doesn’t have a coup option.”

But the illiberal part is equally important.

“It is an illiberal one in that there is very little division of power. There’s little federalism. There’s little checks and balances. Particularly, the court system is dominated by his people. The media is under pressure. That’s all true,” Jeffrey said.

U.S. presidents are often judged by how well they handle crises, and Turkey is no different. Jeffrey said many people within Turkey are upset at Erdoğan’s handling of earthquake relief.

“The government did not turn to the army, which is very big and very effective. It has a lot of troops there. The government had a cozy relationship with major construction firms and allowed the construction code, which is supposed to prevent such things – I mean Türkiye is no stranger to earthquakes – ignored,” Jeffrey said.

As a result, there’s a very real possibility that Erdoğan could fare poorly in Turkey’s upcoming election.

“You have an election coming up now in two months that will decide the fate of the Erdoğan government, which has been in power for over 20 years now.”

A life of service

Jeffrey hails from Saugus, Massachusetts. After receiving his BA in history from Northeastern University in 1969, he spent seven years as a U.S. Army infantry officer, with tours in Vietnam and Germany.


THE EARTHQUAKE IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

On Feb. 6, 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake occurred in southern Turkey near the northern border of Syria. This was followed about nine hours later by a second quake almost as strong, at 7.5 magnitude, about 60 miles away.

The initial quake was centered near the city of Gaziantep, which is home to thousands of Syrian refugees. Numerous aid organizations have ongoing operations there, according to www.disasterphilanthropy.org. These relief organizations provide aid to Syrians who have crossed the border to escape the Syrian civil war, which has been ongoing for the last 12 years and has resulted in a massive humanitarian crisis.

As of March 1, more than 11,000 aftershocks had occurred in the region, according to Turkey’s Disaster and Emergency Management Authority. Continued aftershocks are expected to continue for some time.

It’s estimated that more than 50,000 people have died so far from the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, though the eventual death toll may be much higher. Almost 9 million people live in areas most directly affected by the quake. Former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey James Jeffrey said the earthquake covered an area about half the size of Texas.

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Jeffrey went to Boston University, graduating in 1977 with an MBA. He joined the U.S. Foreign Service afterward, and has spent his career practicing diplomacy both in Washington and at stops around the world, becoming fluent in German, Turkish and French along the way.

“You’re constantly going from one country to another and then back to Washington,” Jeffrey said. “I specialized in the Balkans, Türkiye and the Middle East. ... Essentially, it’s a Darwinian competition. If you’re successful and lucky, you rise to ambassador. I was ambassador in Albania, Türkiye, Iraq, and then chief of mission, which is a slightly different variant of ambassador, in Syria.”

The first 20 years of Jeffrey’s career were spent helping the U.S. fight the Cold War. Those years brought a clear sense of direction and overarching mission for U.S. foreign policy – and those conducting it – that was lacking once the Soviet Union collapsed and the Berlin Wall fell, taking the Iron Curtain with it.

“Suddenly, we were in a world of, if you will, expanding the American Western global value system: collective security, democracy, liberalized trade, free immigration, and all of that. For the better part of 30 years, from 1990 until a few years ago, that was what we were doing in places like Albania and Türkiye and Iraq,” Jeffrey said.

Instead of pursuing ideological aims, the mission shifted to dealing with specific problems like terrorism, weak economies, human rights abuses, nuclear proliferation and human trafficking.

“It was specific problems, but without any overarching mission like we had during World War II or in the Cold War, beyond simply expanding our view of how the world should be globally and within countries,” Jeffrey said. “This led to two disasters: Iraq, a limited disaster, and Afghanistan, a total disaster.”

Jeffrey said with the end of that 30-year period of American dominance, “we’re faced with an existential challenge.”

Hopeful about Iraq

Jeffrey was sent to Iraq soon after the fighting ended and the dust was settling after the U.S. ouster of Saddam Hussein.

“I went into Iraq right as the State Department took over and set up an embassy. ... I went to work with [Jerry] Bremer to do the transition. Then John Negroponte came in as ambassador. I was his deputy,” Jeffrey said.

Jeffrey served as charge d’affaires there for a few months in 2005, then returned to the State Department to become the Iraq coordinator.

“In 2004-2005, we were just trying to survive. I mean, we had bit off more than we could chew, to be frank. We were just lucky to not have had the country totally collapsed or go the route of Afghanistan,” he said.

When Jeffrey went back to Iraq in 2010 as ambassador, U.S. troops were preparing to pull out of the country.

“We all thought that was a bad idea [to pull U.S. troops out], including many Iraqis,” Jeffrey said. But the troops eventually left because Iraqis “didn’t really see the need for an American presence that they felt was a perpetuation of the British presence and colonialism.”

Despite Iraq’s many and ongoing problems, Jeffrey believes there is hope for the country’s future.

“It’s got its own internal problems, but it’s got a functioning economy. It pumps almost half as much oil as Saudi Arabia. We just had Lloyd Austin, the Secretary of Defense, there. This is not Afghanistan. In that sense, I have a good feeling,” he said.

Jeffrey concluded with a strong endorsement of the people who serve abroad and conduct U.S. foreign policy.

“The American people should know ... that they are well-served by American diplomats, intelligence officers, USAID assistance people and others who are out there at the point of the spear, risking their lives, working on crises from Ukraine to Iraq, inside Syria right now and elsewhere,” Jeffrey said. “Not only trying to preserve the peace and help people and restore stability, but in the long run, keeping us all safe.”

“...”
metaphorical ground. Context is essential because open space ranges from areas close to their natural state like Taylors Run, Monticello Park, Dora Kelley Nature Park and Winkler Nature Preserve to carefully tended small patches of grass. Market Square may be the city’s first example of public open space.

Open space includes public property such as the city’s approximately 130 parks which constitute about 1,000 acres of open space, property controlled by the National Park Service like Daingerfield Island and Jones Point and private property. Alexandria came late to acquiring land for parks. Land for the city’s first park was not purchased until the 1950s when much of Alexandria’s land up to the then Quaker Lane border with Fairfax County had already been developed.

Ecologist Kurt Moser, the co-founder of the Four Mile Run Conservancy Foundation, said that his top open space priority is preserving the city’s few natural areas.

“That’s the thing we can’t replace,” Moser said. “You could knock down a building and put a ballfield there. But you would never be able to establish a real forest there, ever. Where we have existing forests, or wetlands, meadows – we should defend those.”

Natural areas are not self-maintaining. “Natural” cannot be synonymous with “impenetrable.” Invasive species, streams, wetlands and trails or paths in natural areas all require regular attention.

**Development can create open space**

Casual observers might assume that the best way for the city to increase its open space inventory would be through carefully considered real estate acquisitions. This is correct, but this strategy is severely constrained by Alexandria’s expensive land. Since 2015, the city has increasingly relied on the development process to create open space.

In 2019, officials from the departments of Planning and Zoning, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services collectively authored a planning document, “Shared Expectations for Open Space in New Development,” which has been adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council. “Shared Expectations” states:

“The new development has an important role in the provision of public and public-private open space. … Private open space is a necessary and positive component of open space in new development projects. … [Above-grade open space] can be a valuable contribution

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–Linda and Gilbert D., future residents moving from Annandale

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DATA/MARK EATON/CHART/JESSICA KIM

Parks in process of being constructed.
OPEN SPACE | FROM | 9

to on-site open space.”

Many arguments about open space focus on the ways in which and extent to which developers are asked to contribute to the city’s stock of open space as a condition of securing necessary city approvals. Some development projects, for example, the conversion of an office building to residences, cannot dedicate property to open space because the site is already completely built out.

“Shared Expectations” states that in such a case a developer, “will be required to provide contributions (in-kind contributions or funds toward shared public open spaces such as parks)” according to criteria established in the city’s Small Area Plans.

How to count developer open space

According to the city’s website, City Council created the Open Space Steering Committee, of which Moser is a co-chair, to assist staff in the development of an open space policy. The OSSC is expected to recommend changes by April to the city’s open space policies, to how the city acquires open space and how developer open space contributions should be counted.

City officials have not been making up the rules as they go along for reviewing open space contributions by developers. However, defining the criteria for such contributions is not easy and the process of doing so – part of the OSSC’s work – is not complete.

Section 2-180 of the city’s Zoning Ordinance defines “open and usable space,” but it does not address the complexities involved in developer open space contributions. The ordinance says “open and usable space” is: Eight feet or more in width; unoccupied by principal or accessory buildings; unobstructed by other than recreational facilities; and not used in whole or in part as roads, alleys, emergency vehicle easement areas, driveways, maneuvering aisles or off-street parking or loading berths.

“The purpose of open and usable space is to provide areas of trees, shrubs, lawns, pathways and other natural and man-made amenities which function for the use and enjoyment of residents, visitors and other persons,” the ordinance reads.

Alexandria Planning Director Karl Moritz describes the evolution of open space as a city infrastructure priority:

“[W]e’ve become interested in the qualities of the open space provided. In the development of single-family neighborhoods (and that era is largely behind us), private open space (i.e., yards) was very much the norm and people tended to look at public open space (i.e., parks) as something government would provide. As the majority of new residential development became multifamily, planners developed rules of thumb for ensuring that the open space required by the zoning ordinance met multiple needs: the needs of the residents of the new multifamily building, the need to separate large buildings and provide light and air, the contribution of new development to shared (that is, public) open space, etc.”

Development projects are location-specific and what may work as open space for one project is not feasible for another. How, and whether, above-grade, usually rooftop, areas should count as open space has been a point of contention.

“Periodically staff would hear comments at [a] hearing that 100% of the open space provided by a new apartment building should be ground floor and accessible to the public,” Moritz said. “So, we thought it would be useful to have a discussion about the goals we have for the open space required by the zoning ordinance, and that discussion resulted in ‘shared expectations.’”

Some projects, for example, the Harris-Teeter store in North Old Town, cannot generate additional physical open space. In that instance there were developer cash contributions to improve nearby parks.

KARL MORITZ
No dedicated open space funding

One of the audience questions at the Nov. 29, 2022 Agenda: Alexandria meeting was, “How much money is in the Open Space Fund?”

The Open Space Fund was created in 2003 and funded by the dedication of $.01 of the real estate tax rate. In 2007, the funding arrangement was changed to 1% of the revenue generated from real property taxes.

Former Mayor Allison Silberberg was the city's Vice Mayor in May 2013 when City Council voted to eliminate dedicated funding for open space. Silberberg was the lone dissenting vote in a 6-1 decision.

Silberberg's frustration with the elimination of dedicated funding for open space, and how it was done, has not diminished in the nearly 10 years since the vote. That frustration was evident in a May 30, 2013 column, “A tale of two funds,” she wrote for the Alexandria Times.

“If the public had known about this possible change, then residents would have had time to respond and write [to] us, just as they did about the Warwick pool, the meters in Old Town, the schools, etc.,” Silberberg wrote in the column. “Not one email came in about these two funds because no one knew about a possible change.”

The large expenditures of $2.8 million in 2006 and $4.8 million in 2007 were for the Old Dominion Boat Club property and the expansion of Four Mile Run Park. Since 2015, the city has reduced its land acquisition expenditures for public open space.

Jack Browand, RPCA deputy director, explained at the November Agenda: Alexandria meeting that the Open Space Fund is now a Capital Improvement Program line item.

“When the city had to respond to the economic downturn, that dedicated contribution was eliminated. We still have an Open Space Fund but it is 100% funded by the city. It’s a general fund account in the capital improvement program and it ranges from several hundred thousand up to a million dollars per year and sometimes it’s larger. It’s part of the budget process,” Browand said.

Thus, open space land purchases compete with every other capital budget priority, including school capital funding and city facility repairs, in the CIP. The FY2022-2031 10-year CIP includes $10 million for open space.

There are several reasons for the decline in city-funded open space acquisitions in the last seven to eight years. These include the city’s 2012 financial retrenchment, increasing financial demands relating to other priorities and an assessment that the city’s overall open space goal – 7.3 acres per 1,000 people – is likely to be met for at least the near future.

Open space has also been funded by other sources. For example, Woodrow Wilson Bridge settlement funds paid for Witter Field and the Contraband and Freedmen’s Cemetery acquisitions.

Looking ahead

Two large projects at either end of the city – West End Alexandria at the former Landmark Mall site and the development at the former Mirant power plant site on the Potomac – will be particularly important to Alexandria’s open space future.

Open space is an essential part of the city’s infrastructure for numerous reasons. According to Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning Jeff Farner.

“In a diverse city, open space is where everyone mixes. All races and ages mix there,” Farner said.

Silberberg points to open space as part of the strategy for addressing climate change, a problem which has grown worse in the almost 10 years since dedicated open space funding was ended.

“All of us need open space for all kinds of reasons,” Silberberg said.

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**Location:** 614 Oronoco St.  
**Information:** eventbrite.com/e/this-tide-of-wounded-lee-fendall-as-a-civil-war-hospital-tickets-483367915447

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The Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia hosts a gala and concert including a silent auction. Performances of Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Schéhérazade” and Mussorgsky’s “Night on Bald Mountain” and more. Tickets required.  
**Time:** 6:30 p.m.  
**Location:** 101 Callahan Drive  
**Information:** sonovamusic.org/march18.html

**MARCH 19**

**ELEANOR ROOSEVELT IN MUSIC**  
Conceived during the pandemic, chamber work “E.R., Inside/Out” is a musical presentation by composer and lyricist Leslie Bennett. Tickets will be on sale at the event and all proceeds will benefit The Fund for Alexandria’s Child. Free for students and teachers.  
**Time:** 3 to 5 p.m.  
**Location:** 201 S. Washington St.  
**Information:** apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=50748

**MARCH 20**

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE SEEKS FEEDBACK** The Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities is seeking public comment on the proposed amendment to the Public Open Space zone. Join virtually, register in advance.  
**Time:** 7 p.m.  
**Location:** Virtual  
**Information:** alexandriava.gov/rpca/project/public-open-space-zone-text-amendment

**MARCH 22**

**BREAKFAST WITH CITY MANAGER** Alexandria’s city manager Jim Parajon will discuss the 2024 proposed budget. Join members of City Council and business leaders to discuss Eisenhower Valley and greater Alexandria, too. All are welcome. Tickets and registration required.  
**Time:** 8:30 a.m.  
**Location:** 5380 Eisenhower Ave.  
**Information:** eventbrite.com/e/breakfast-with-the-city-manager-tickets-546664025817

**MARCH 24**

**BOURBON AND BLUEGRASS** Sip on bourbon while enjoying bluegrass and American roots music. Grammy Award winners Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer perform. Tickets required.  
**Time:** 5 to 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** 711 Princess St.  
**Information:** classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts

**MARCH 25**

**BISHOP IRETON PRESENTS ‘THE MUSIC MAN’** BI’s Theater Arts Department presents Meredith Willson’s “The Music Man.” Fun for the whole family. Tickets are $10 in advance and at the door. Dates and times vary.  
**Time:** 7 p.m.  
**Location:** 211 Cambridge Road  
**Information:** brownpapertickets.com/event/5701094

**MOUNT VERNON GENEALOGY CONFERENCE** Research contributes to a deeper understanding of our ancestors and a richer social history of our nation. Hear from genealogists on how to track down records of your military family members and those who supported them.  
**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
**Location:** 1500 Shenandoah Road  
**Information:** mvgenealogy.org
“I was dating his roommate,” Caitlin Kestermann confessed with a sheepish grin. “And when Joey walked into the room, I saw him and just thought ‘Ohhhh nooooo.’”

And so begins the story of how two people spent years living in the same town, socializing with shared friends, hitting all the same spots and spending time in relationships with other people all the while destined to be together. Nearly 20 years later, they’re happily married with three beautiful children. But first, about that roommate.

“Hey, you’re getting into the nitty gritty here,” Joey Kestermann teased as he settled onto the couch. The dog meandered

Longtime friends kept coming back to each other – and Alexandria

BY LESLIE GOLDEN
When I first talked to Caitlin, something sunk in ... and it never went away.”

– Joey Kestermann, groom

into the room and their son Tucker climbed onto his lap. Joey and Caitlin are relaxed, playful and fully immersed in their life as a family of five. But it took years of missed moments, inopportune timing and unspoken connections for the couple to get to where they are today.

Though Caitlin was raised in Alexandria and Joey hailed from Dumfries, he was the one who ended up in Alexandria attending Bishop Ireton while Caitlin traveled to Arlington for school at Bishop O’Connell.

“On the weekends, when I was spending time with friends from growing up, I’d hear about Joey. A lot of my friends knew him from BI, so we kind of ran in the same circles,” Caitlin remembered.

But it wasn’t until that afternoon in 2005 when she saw him for the first time that she knew she was in trouble.

By then, Joey and Caitlin had graduated from college and settled back in the Alexandria area. They shared mutual friends and had heard of each other over the years. Whether single or casually dating, Joey just couldn’t stop thinking about her.

“When I first talked to Caitlin, something sunk in ... and it never went away,” Joey said.

Years passed, relationships came and went until finally in 2010 they saw each other again. They were both invited to attend a friend’s birthday party and instantly connected.

“It was a big party in downtown D.C. and we were both there,” Caitlin said. “I immediately noticed Joey when I walked into the bar, but there were also old friends that I hadn’t seen in a while, so I wasn’t really paying attention to him. And then as our group went outside and people were just standing around talking about where to go next, he walked up to me and asked, ’Do you want to get out of here?’”

They skipped the afterparty and caught up with each other

BOOK THE BLACKWALL HITCH
for your big day!

Amenities includes ceremony and reception spaces, full bar services, proximity to a wide range of area accommodations, and on-site catering options.

POTOMAC PATIO
Overlooks the Potomac River
Up to 150 seated guests
Up to 200 cocktail guests

KINGS ROOM
Overview of the Potomac River
Up to 100 seated guests
Up to 150 cocktail guests

RESTAURANT BUYOUT
For Full Weddings
Up to 200 seated guests
Up to 400 cocktail guests

A honeymoon in Hawaii followed their fun filled wedding.
Joey proposed beneath the Market Square Christmas tree.

“Joey proposed beneath the Market Square Christmas tree. For the rest of the night at a bar nearby. They were both dating other people at the time.

“We’d keep up with each other. We would talk, message each other or text. But nothing ever happened,” Caitlin shared.

“I can sum it up relatively well: I think what happened is that there was always something there,” Joey said. “Even when we were dating other people or involved in our own lives, even when she moved all the way across the country to California, there was something there.”

“It was funny. Even in California, yes, we would still exchange text messages and talk and send emails,” Joey recalled.

He once texted Caitlin while he was on a guys’ trip to Las Vegas: “I’m in Las Vegas. Can you come? Drive over and visit me.”

Caitlin never made it to Las Vegas. Another missed opportunity to connect.

By 2010, Caitlin felt the call to come home.

“When Caitlin moved back, I came to my senses finally. That was it. We pretty much immediately started dating,” Joey said.

Caitlin’s former roommate and lifelong friend Alison Henry was living with her when the couple finally got together.

“When Caitlin and Joey finally became official, she was moonstruck. ‘Oh, Alison, I love everything about this guy.’ She couldn’t stop talking about him! It was over for her. I knew she was toast,” Henry said.

Three years later, Joey planned the ultimate Christmas surprise.

“It was the night before Christmas Eve, we were all going out in Old Town. I just told her we were going to meet a bunch of friends. But I had emailed all our friends and told them, ‘Hey guys, you really need to be at Columbia Firehouse tonight.’ So we parked nearby in front of the big Christmas tree in Market Square and I asked her to walk over to the tree to see the lights. It was perfect. I’d asked my sister to hide nearby to sneak a picture of the proposal.”

Joey’s sister Katie Larrabee fondly remembers the night.

“Joey knew getting down on one knee in front of the big tree would feel magical. Caitlin was totally surprised and it was very special for me to be able to witness that moment,” Larrabee said.

SEE KESTERMANN
“Oh, it was so much fun,” Caitlin said. “After he proposed, I said, ‘Let’s go get a drink and celebrate!’ and when we walked into the restaurant, all our friends and family were there to surprise me. It was so, so special. Oh yes, I loved his proposal.”

Childhood friend Gillian Rice-Maupin also remembered that the engagement was special – and that she was not at all surprised.

“It was a super fun night,” Rice-Maupin said. “It was always a tradition for our friends to get together around Christmas time and pop into different bars and restaurants around Old Town, so it was the perfect night to toast their engagement and celebrate them. Knowing Caitlin growing up and getting to know Joey during high school, I just knew they’d end up together. I don’t know another couple who passionately love each other the way those two do. They’re meant to be together.”

After many years of friendship, missed connections, courtship and an engagement, the couple wasted no time in saying “I do.” Less than a year after Joey popped the question, the couple married in September 2014 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Arlington with a reception following at the Army Navy Country Club.

“We had the wedding in Arlington, because logistically it made the most sense for our guests to be able to walk from the church to my parents’ club,” Caitlin said.

“But it was an Alexandrian wedding. An Alexandrian affair. It was a reunion of sorts. Our friend, Alexandrian native and professional DJ Adam Smith, performed at the reception. We had one picture taken that was just for people from Alexandria,” Joey proudly declared.

Joey’s best man David Kaye recalled, “You just knew they

Surrounded by friends and family on the dance floor.

Mr. and Mrs. Joey and Caitlin Kestermann.
were destined to get married.”

A honeymoon in Hawaii followed and by January they were expecting their first child.

“By the spring of 2015, we were house hunting and found our home in May. Our first child was born that October,” Joey said.

After years of circling each other socially and then forging a friendship, they were married with a home and a baby within a little over a year. Today, Joey works as the Service Director at MINI of Alexandria and Caitlin is an independent consultant. Their free time is devoted to family and friends and supporting their community.

Despite sometimes pondering a move to a different city, the couple found they couldn’t bring themselves to leave Alexandria.

“We always talked about how it would be fun to move somewhere else. This place ... you just can’t get away from it. Because Alexandria is such a perfect place to live,” Caitlin said.

Joey expounded on what drew them to — and keeps them in — Alexandria.

“I would say it’s small enough that we know everybody somehow, some way. We have established so many friendships and our families are here. But there are plenty of people we get to meet who are new friends and there’s always something new for us here, too. The ties that pulled us to Alexandria were too strong to ever be anywhere else.”

-lgolden@alextimes.com

“

You just knew they were destined to get married.”

- David Kaye,
best man to the groom

The Kestermanns love their local sports teams, too.

The couple with their children Eloise, Tucker and Willa Jane.
Wedding season is upon us and while we usually focus on what the women wear, it is time for us to think about men and this doesn’t have to be boring work. Since opening the men’s clothing store Yellow Jacket, I’ve come to realize how fun men’s fashion can be.

As the temperatures have warmed, the first spring events are back in full swing. Just as the office environment has become more casual for men, so have after hours events, parties and even weddings. Just look at Facebook or Instagram and you will see many grooms aren’t even in a tie!

A dress code for a wedding depends on the time of day and the location of the affair. These two bits of information will be your biggest guide in figuring out what to wear. If the wedding is black tie, the invite will say so. A tuxedo is also appropriate for an evening wedding, but a dark suit and tie works, too.

If the wedding is earlier in the day or at a destination like a beach, then it is time to show off your personal style. The question is usually whether to wear a coat or not. It is always easier to wear one and be safe. This spring there are more casual and less structured options available on the jacket rack than ever before. My personal favorite is the Butcher Blazer by Sid Mashburn. It is a classic navy, but the fit is easy and comfortable, a little roomier and can be worn casually or dressed up with matching trousers.

This wedding season you can pair it with one of the great bright, colored shirts that are on everyone’s shelves. Menswear is getting in on the color game and outdoor weddings are the perfect time to wear a fun pink, purple or any brightly colored shirt. Should you wear a tie? Unless the invitation specifically states cocktail attire, to tie or not to tie comes down to the time of day. If a wedding takes place at an outdoor location before 5 p.m., a tie is optional.

The great thing about style at weddings these days is that it is totally up to you except for a few boundaries: no shorts, no jeans and always a shirt with a collar. A navy blazer or similar sport coat is always a safe bet even if unrequired. A good rule of thumb if you’re still unsure of what to wear is to find out what the groom or groomsmen are wearing and follow suit – no pun intended.

The writer is the founder and owner of The Hive, The Shoe Hive, and Yellow Jacket.
CAMP RESOURCES

RPCA will offer full day and half day summer programs at several locations throughout Alexandria for children ages 3-18. The programs will run for eleven weeks beginning on June 5 and ending on August 18 and will take place Monday through Friday, times vary depending on the program. It is the goal of the City of Alexandria to offer affordable camp programs for all families. The programs will work with the City of Alexandria Health Department to determine best practices for keeping all campers and staff safe and healthy.

Registration for the 2023 Summer Camp season is open now. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recreation for updates about additional summer program options.

City of Alexandria
Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
1108 Jefferson St.,
Alexandria, 22314
www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation
(75 options at 20 locations in Alexandria)

Educational Theatre
Company Summer Camps
3308 S. Stafford St.,
Arlington, 22206
(7 other Arlington and Falls Church locations)
www.educationaltheatrecompany.org

Little Theatre of Alexandria
Theater Camps
600 Wolfe St.,
Alexandria, 22314
www.thelittletheatre.com

Mariner Sailing School
Belle Haven Marina
Alexandria, 22307
www.saildc.com

Washington Sailing Marina
Summer Sailing Camps
1 Marina Drive
Alexandria, 22314
Register at:
boatingindc.com/washington-sailing-marina

School of Rock Music Camps
3260 Duke St.,
Alexandria, 22206
(4 locations in the DMV)
www.schoolofrock.com/music-camps

Washington Summer Youth Experience at Episcopal High School
1200 N. Quaker Lane
Alexandria, 22302
headfirstcamps.com

YMCA Summer Day Camp
420 E. Monroe Ave.,
Alexandria, 22310
www.ymcadc.org

CAMPS & ENRICHMENT 2023

Children ages 3 through 10th grade are invited to join us for a memorable summer at our beautiful Old Town theater. Now in its 15th year, LTA is the premier Alexandria location for performing arts summer camps, featuring Acting, Musical Theater, Shakespeare, Improvisation, Play-making and a variety of specialty themed camps.

The instructors are phenomenal and my child had a wonderful time!” –Summer Camp 2022 parent

For online registration, visit
thelittletheatre.com/summer-camps

All students must show proof of COVID-19 vaccination to participate.

600 Wolfe St., Alexandria, VA 22314  703-683-5778 ext. 2  A limited number of partial scholarships are made possible through the generosity of the LTA Council.
The history of women and girls comes alive in March

By Gayle Converse

It has taken almost 250 years for the historic contributions of women in the United States to be recognized. According to the United Nations, it might be an additional 300 years for the world to achieve gender equality.

Although Alexandria women such as Anne Ball McCarthy, Ona Judge Staines and Martha Dandridge Custis Washington are comparable to women like Abigail Smith Adams, Sarah "Sally" Hemings and Dolly Payne Todd Madison for their singular contributions to the formation of the United States, it has only been within the past 36 years that women’s history has been recognized on a national scale.

Every March since 1987, the United States has celebrated Women’s History Month and the often-overlooked triumphs of women and girls, but International Women’s Day has earlier roots. With 20th century labor movements in mind the day was birthed on March 8, 1911, as a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women.

The United Nations General Assembly officially recognized International Women’s Day in 1977, “to recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women; and to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security.”

The national observance matured from a 1978 week in the Sonoma, California School District, where hundreds of students participated in the District’s “Real Woman” essay contest. The concept quickly spread across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter declared the week of March 8 as National Women’s History Week. A year later, the U.S. Congress voted to make it a national celebration. In 1987, the entire month became included after the National Women’s History Project petitioned Congress to enlarge the event.

In his March 8 remarks, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres revealed that progress is vanishing because the patriarchy is fighting back.

Guterres added if this trend continues, gender equality won’t be achieved for another 300 years.

Alexandria women have influenced much of our City’s growth and success. According to the Office of Historic Alexandria, the City has officially observed March as Women’s History Month since 1998.

This year, the city is honoring women with flags and special lighting in purple, gold and white which were the colors of the suffragist movement to “recognize those who bravely endured imprisonment and brutality in their efforts to gain the vote for all American women.”

On Aug. 26, 2021, OHA and Alexandria Celebrates Women honored suffragists tortured at the Occoquan Workhouse with an historic marker at the site of a landmark case held in 1913 at the old federal courthouse on St. Asaph and Prince streets. In the tiny courtroom, the judge declared the suffragists charged with blocking the sidewalk on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. should have never been imprisoned at the Workhouse.

The National Women’s History Alliance 2023 Women’s History Month theme mirrors the mission of Alexandria Celebrates Women: “Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories” as it recognizes past and present women.

The historic achievements of women in Alexandria and elsewhere are phenomenal. They continue to make history today. Happy Women’s History Month.

To learn more about Alexandria’s historic women, visit alexandriacelebrateswomen.com

To learn more about suffragists held at Occoquan, visit the Lucy Burns Museum at Workhouse Arts Center.
The Alexandria Commission on Aging is a 21-member citizen body appointed by City Council to advocate on behalf of older Alexandrians. Since 1990, the COA’s Excellence in Aging Awards have honored individuals and organizations that make superior contributions in advancing issues and projects that make a favorable impact on older Alexandrians.

Now through March 31, the commission is accepting nominations for the 2023 awards on their website www.alexandriava.gov/aging. The awards will be presented on May 9 at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall in the following four categories:

The Annie B. Rose Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an individual whose exemplary achievements span a lifetime of public service through devotion to significantly enhancing the community and work to advancing social justice and aging concerns for all citizens. The award honors the superior example set by Annie B. Rose. Previous awardees honored for their outstanding service include Suzanne Adams (2022), Kupenda Olusegun and Bob Eiffert (2019), Mary Hamil Parker, Ph.D. (2018), William “Bill” Clayton and Carol Siegel (2017) and Vanessa Greene and Gant Redmon (2016).

The Lois Van Valkenburgh Excellence in Aging Award recognizes an individual who has made outstanding contributions to elevating the quality of life for older adults in Alexandria within the past year. This award is in honor of Lois Van Valkenburgh, a long-time Alexandrian, community leader and past chair of the Alexandria COA. Van Valkenburgh was a tireless advocate of, and expert in, issues related to aging. Her strong spirit, steadfast dedication and extensive network helped to make Alexandria a more livable community for all ages during the course of their job. Awardees included Barbara “Babs” Waters and Frederick Reardon (2022), Lu Key Chow, Cedar Dvorin and Susan Lane (2019), Dolores Viehman (2018), Mary Lee Anderson (2017) and Wanda Dowell (2016).

The Excellence in Aging Award for an Organization recognizes an organization that has made outstanding contributions to elevating the quality of life of older Alexandrians. Awardees have included HomeAid Northern Virginia (2022), Giant Food Store, 3131 Duke Street, and Legal Services of Northern Virginia (2019), The Hermitage Northern Virginia (2018), Rebuilding Together Alexandria (2017) and At Home in Alexandria (2016).

The Public Service Award recognizes a City of Alexandria employee who has advanced, improved or otherwise contributed to making Alexandria a more livable community for all ages during the course of their job. Awardees included Terri Lynch (2022), Michael Brown, Dana Lawhorne and Kim Robertson (2019), Margaret Orlando (2018), Debbie Ludington and Arthur Thomas (2017) and Robert Fulk (2016).

For more information or questions, contact Pamela Austin at 703-746-5738 or pamela.austin@alexandriava.gov.

The writer is chair of the Alexandria City Commission on Aging.
CATCH-ALLS by David Karp, edited by Jeff Chen

ACROSS
1. Brooklyn NBA team
5. "Stay tuned" letters
8. Corn unit
11. Warehouse party
15. Work ___
17. Robotic space station tools
18. Many a Middle Easterner
20. Fan frenzy
21. *Enganges in a futile pursuit
23. *Basic style of horsing around?
25. X, sometimes
26. In need of charging
27. Knee part (Abbr.)
29. 1982 sci-fi film
30. "The 5 Second Rule" author Robbins
31. Biblical vessel
32. Western U.S. gas brand
33. ___/her/hers
34. Fine thing to study?
35. Aberdeen affirmative
36. Singer Lana Del ___
37. [Not my mistake]
38. Skin color?
39. Start to five of Brazil's 25 biggest cities
40. Hoppie brew, briefly
41. Workplaces for RNs
42. "Legally Blonde" actor Wilson
43. ___/her/hers
44. Rocks, in a drink
45. Head turner, of sorts
46. Runaway bride?
47. Syr. neighbor
48. Spreadsheet parts
49. Aberdeen affirmative
50. Maker of the fam
51. Football two-pointer
52. "Who, me?"
53. Subtracting
54. Otherworldly
55. Country bordering Pakistan
56. Part company of Rolls-Royce
57. Seal the deal
58. Sign of balance?
59. "Put Your Records On" singer Bailey Rae
60. Pull out of danger
61. Besmirch

DOWN
1. Sweet plant liquids
2. Otherworldly
3. "That's very kind!"
4. Member of the fam
5. Trampled
6. Parent company of Rolls-Royce
7. Many a "Kill Bill" character
8. San Francisco
9. Mass transit option
10. Hole-in-the-wall damage?
11. Totally tubular
12. Some Pixar offerings
13. Wine tour stop
14. Some baby birds
15. Totem pole's wood, sometimes
16. Old-school counters
17. Some Pixar offerings
18. Some baby birds
19. Notable period
20. Capital of Belarus
21. Blood bank fluids
22. Campus military org.
23. Processor in many autos
24. Party stunt involving beer
25. Sign of balance?
26. Opposed
27. Aerie offering
28. Confucian principle
29. Sofa
30. Org. with a Cryptanalysis Development Program
31. D.C. VIP
32. Gifted speakers
33. Pestio ingredient
34. "Thumbs down"
35. Gifted speakers
36. "Pow!
37. "Honest" prez
38. Dr. ___ (mentor of Snoop Dogg and Eminem)
39. Yellow school vehicle

DEATH NOTICES

RACHELLE BENNETT (89), of Alexandria, March 5, 2023
LYNN DUTTON (87), of Alexandria, Jan. 24, 2023
LARRY FULK (88), of Alexandria, March 7, 2023
COLLEEN GAHRES (93), of Alexandria, Feb. 6, 2023
PATRICIA GINSBURG (80), of Alexandria, March 5, 2023
LINDA MAIER (75), of Alexandria, Feb. 26, 2023
Spring is the perfect season for home improvement. First-time homebuyers and experienced homeowners alike need to be more thorough when it comes to maintenance. As the weather warms up, you’ll find plenty of indoor and outdoor projects that can improve the functionality of your home, boost curb appeal and avoid unpleasant surprises.

While you often perform spring cleaning tasks to freshen up and declutter your home, it’s also crucial to tackle important maintenance tasks. Routine repairs and installation projects provide comfort, safety and peace of mind.

Don’t know where to start? Here are three items you can check off your to-do list to make sure your home’s internal systems and external features are in tip-top shape:

**Schedule HVAC maintenance**

Your heating, ventilation and air conditioning system is crucial to keeping your home cozy in the winter and cool during the summer. Most systems have a lifetime of 10 to 20 years and efficiency can drastically decrease as your equipment gets older.

If your HVAC system is working harder and not performing, it may be time to replace it. Book a consultation with a certified professional who can inspect your existing system, make recommendations and give you an estimate for a new system. Not only will it help improve your home’s air quality, but it will also keep your family comfortable all season long.

**Maintain your water heater**

From showering and bathing to cooking and watering your lawn, water is used throughout the entire home. To ensure you are using quality water, you’ll need to inspect, replace and possibly repair your water heater.

Keep an eye out for any water buildup around your water heater, water-quality issues or small plastic pieces from your fixtures that can affect your water supply.

Look out for changes in water temperature or duration, a broken pilot light, noise in your unit or pipes, or the smell of gas around your water heater. If you notice any of these signs, your water heater may be failing and needs to be repaired or replaced.

**Spruce up the outside**

The exterior of your home is just as important to inspect and repair as the interior. Your windows are the most visible part of your home that need careful attention.

Windows should be inspected by a licensed professional every 20-25 years to see if they need to be replaced. During winter, you may feel drafts or see condensation on your windows. As the seasons change, you may notice cracking or peeling around window exteriors. These are signs that it may be time to replace your windows.

A new high-quality window with thick, insulated glass is more energy efficient than older single pane win-

**Like your car, your garage door needs regular tune-ups.**
windows. Best of all, new windows can also improve your home’s appearance.

Another external item to inspect is your garage door. You may not think this needs maintenance, but just like a car, it needs regular tune-ups. Small issues can quickly turn expensive down the line and problems can pose a safety hazard and cause serious injury. Depending on the age and condition of your garage door, it may be time to replace it.

Finally, consider installing a new fence around your property. Fences provide privacy and security keeping children and pets safe. This decorative element also provides protection around an outdoor space, like a pool or garden.

Follow these tips for your indoor and outdoor projects to spruce up your home this spring.

It may be time to replace your windows.

### HOME OF THE WEEK

**Urban living with an outdoor escape**

A turn-key property that offers urban living in Old Town Alexandria with an outdoor escape just a step outside your backdoor. This two-level townhome checks all the boxes complete with charming and warm features like heart pine flooring and elegant moldings and modern updates like vaulted ceilings and marble bathroom tile. Natural light beams through several skylights.

A brief hallway leads to the formal dining room. The modern kitchen boasts soft-close 42-inch white cabinetry and stainless appliances including a professional grade Thermador gas stove, granite countertops and subway tile backsplash. A relaxing and inviting fireplace anchors the living room.

Step outside to a spacious private brick patio with over 600 square feet of entertaining space. With views of the Masonic Temple and tranquil sunsets, this will surely be your new favorite spot to relax and unwind. Access your two off-street parking spots with ease.

A sunlit stairwell highlighted by a beautiful skylight leads you to the upper level. A vaulted ceiling in the primary bedroom creates a spacious feeling and includes his and her closets. Two additional bedrooms and two full baths follow. An updated bath features stylish marble tile, a custom blue vanity and classic black and white tile floors. The second bath showcases a large granite vanity and a bright skylight in the shower.

The lower level is an unfinished basement with a full-sized washer and dryer. The large basement is perfect for storing all your belongings neatly away.

### AT A GLANCE

**Address:**
324 N. Columbus St., Alexandria, 22314

**Neighborhood:**
Old Town

**Price:** $1,099,000

**Square feet:** 1,400

**Bedrooms:** 3

**Bathrooms:** 2.5

**Year built:** 1910

**Contact:**
Elizabeth Lucchesi
elizabeth@lizluke.com
www.lizluke.com
703-868-5676

HOMES ADVERTORIAL
Our View

Walking in sunshine

Sunshine is vital to our overall health – physical, emotional and, perhaps surprising to some, political.

“Democracy dies in darkness” is the mantra of the Washington Post, and they, along with all organizations that practice journalism, try to shine a light on power.

“Journalism is printing what someone else does not want printed. Everything else is public relations,” is the famous quote that’s widely, and perhaps erroneously, attributed to George Orwell. We don’t think investigative stories are alone in qualifying as journalism, but they’re essential to good governance.

This is Sunshine Week – and today is Sunshine Day – when media organizations remind the public, and elected officials, of why transparency in government is so important.

“Transparency” is one of those words that modern spin control has largely rendered meaningless. Everyone claims to be transparent and those who claim it loudest are often those who practice it least.

We believe open government has three key components:

1) Decisions made by elected officials and bureaucrats that impact the people they serve – that is, all of their decisions – should be conducted in the open with robust public input.

2) Freedom of Information Act requests should be complied with fully and promptly, with redactions limited to legally protected information.

3) Public employees should be readily available to talk with the media and residents about their jobs without fear of reprisal.

Virginia gets a middling grade on all three counts, particularly when compared with states like Pennsylvania that have an open government enforcement agency with teeth.

Virginia is well-served by the Virginia Coalition for Open Government, www.opengovva.org, and the Virginia Press Association, www.vpa.net, both of which are resources for information on open government laws and lawsuits. Both nonprofits also have limited staffs, and could do even more with tax-deductible contributions from concerned residents.

Unfortunately, laws regulating governmental transparency in Virginia have not kept up with technological changes. The state’s sunshine law that forbids two or more elected officials from meeting in private to settle policy – the stereotypical smoke-filled back room – has been found to not apply to email exchanges or collaborative work on Google documents.

And if Virginia’s media organizations or residents believe local governments, or the statehouse in Richmond, have not been forthcoming with responses to FOIA requests, there’s little recourse short of a lawsuit.

Virginia needs to emulate Pennsylvania, where their right-to-know law created an Office of Open Records with teeth. Pennsylvania’s OOR frequently sides with media organizations in forcing local and state government entities to release previously withheld information, ranging from improper redactions on FOIA requests to access to public officials.

Finally, an egregious affront to public officials’ right to speak to the public is playing out here in Alexandria, in a lawsuit brought by former Magistrate Elizabeth Fuller against the Supreme Court of Virginia – after Fuller was fired for talking to the Alexandria Times in October 2021.

Fuller’s case recently advanced after Judge Patricia Toller Gay denied the state’s motion to dismiss.

“The Court finds that Plaintiff has sufficiently alleged a First Amendment violation to survive a motion to dismiss,” Giles wrote in her opinion.

Fuller has not yet won the case, but she gets her day in court after courageously blowing the whistle on a bondsman for his role in Ibrahim Bouachii’s alleged murder of Karla Dominguez in July 2020. This important case is both about justice for Fuller herself, as well as the First Amendment rights of public employees to speak to the press. Let the sunshine in.

Opinion

“Where the press is free and every man is able to read, all is safe.”

- Thomas Jefferson

Photo of the Week

A recent sunrise in Alexandria.

Your Views

‘Communications errors’ strain credulity

To the editor:

As the aunt of a teacher who has dedicated her career to teaching in the most difficult schools, I am grateful for the many educators who give their life’s call to the profession and face complex challenges in today’s culture.

For that and other reasons, I read with interest – several times – the “About Alexandria” column by Mark Eaton titled “Using a sledgehammer to swat a fly” in the March 2 Alexandria Times. Given his service to Alexandria City Public Schools, his perspective deserves due consideration.

The column is about House Bill 2426 in the Virginia General Assembly, which is advocated by Gov. Glenn Youngkin and many parents.

It was curious to me that Eaton’s column would assert so strongly that “Serious high school teachers and administrators spend nearly every waking moment trying to help individual students maximize their abilities.” If that’s the case, then the grade on the performance of multiple Northern Virginia public school systems relative to educational outcomes is disappointing.

Focusing our lens closer to home, the School Quality Profiles published by the Virginia Department of Education show ACPS, despite healthy budgets, lagging in nearly every category – reading, writing, math and science. Importantly, the profiles account for or remove newly immigrated students with minimal English skills, for which Alexandria public schools have higher percentages across their student bodies. [https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/divisions/alexandria-city-public-schools#desktopTabs-2]

To the matter of the Fairfax County High Schools failing to notify “commended” students of their results on the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Exam, Eaton asserts this was a communication
Your Views

‘Simple explanation’ fails the smell test

To the editor:

In his column in the March 2 Alexandria Times, former Alexandria City Public Schools teacher and School Board member Mark Eaton argues that Governor Glenn Youngkin is “using a hammer to swat a fly” by supporting a bill to require public schools to notify students when they receive academic awards.

The particular awards in question are National Merit awards, and the issue has arisen because some parents have complained that some Fairfax County schools did fail to notify. Eaton says that we should not believe, as do advocates of the bill, that a woke, equity agenda is behind the failure.

In particular, he says, the complaint by some Asian parents that the failure was an effort “to make non Asian-American students feel better ‘strains credulity,’” although he fails to mention that the main offender was Thomas Jefferson High School, where a great many Asian-Americans are winners of the award.

Rather, Eaton says the failure is likely “an embarrassing oversight,” an “inadvertent omission,” and understandable given all that administrators have on their plate, and one should not rush to a “nefarious” motive when there is this simpler explanation.

I suggest that this “simple” explanation does not pass the smell test. In fact our schools, which appear to have healthy public relations departments, have generally not only notified students but have trumpeted academic successes like this to the world. The number of National Merit awards has been especially valued, and names of winners are published in various newspapers and online.

No, something has gone very wrong here, and the governor is right to try to use the law to put a stop to it before it goes any further.

-Sandra Levy

Alexandria

HUTTER

issue and not an action driven by a coordinated “woke conspiracy.”

As of Jan. 18, 2023, the Fairfax Times reported that 17 area schools admitted to withholding the National Merit award information. Was this a mind-bending coincidence or a coordinated effort?

How did something so significant to the future of Thomas Jefferson High School, where a great many Asian-Americans are winners of the award.

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-Sandra Levy

Alexandria

BY BILL ROSSELLO

No one pays a tax rate

It’s budget season in Alexandria, the time when city officials try to put the best face on the city’s growing financial challenges. The news is not good. The city manager’s operating budget calls for an increase of 5%, but the burden on residential taxpayers continues to grow. Just 15 years ago, in 2010, residents who owned or rented bore 70% of Alexandria’s real property tax burden. In fiscal year 2024, it will grow to 81%, versus just 19% for commercial taxpayers.

City Manager Jim Parajon’s proposed budget calls for no real property tax rate increase, but leaves open the possibility of a one cent hike from $1.11 to $1.12. Betting people will certainly go with the $1.12 or more to be the rate adopted by City Council this spring. But no one pays a tax rate, they pay a tax bill.

What will tax bills look like this year? Due to increased assessments — and including stormwater and refuse collection fees — the average homeowner bill will increase 4.3% from $8,075 to $8,423. Add a penny to the tax rate and that will be 5.2%. Not mentioned by the manager, but possible, is a two-cent increase to $1.13, a level the city charged just a few years ago. That would make the tax bill increase 6%.

Regardless, our politicians will continue to speak as if the tax rate is all that matters.

“We have not increased the tax rate in six years, and I am hopeful we can avoid any increase this year,” Mayor Justin Wilson said in November.

He is factually correct, but he does not seem to talk much about tax bills. And for good reason. Over the 10-year period between fiscal years 2013 and 2023, average tax bills increased by 54% while the tax rate increased by just 13%.

But the mayor is no tax rate hawk.

Six years ago, then City Councilor Justin Wilson led the charge to increase the tax rate by 5.7 cents. The vote was 6-1 with only then-Mayor Allison Silberberg voting ‘nay.’ That increase was not needed at the time. In fact, its only significant impact since 2018 has been a dramatic 131% increase in the city’s reserve or “rainy day” fund.

Worth noting is that the rainy day actually came in the form of the pandemic in 2020. But with plenty of federal assistance, the city dodged a fiscal bullet and socked away another $135 million of your money in reserve funds.

Now guess how the city is balancing this year’s budget with only a 4.3% tax bill increase in a high inflation year. You guessed it, the rainy day fund. Fully $28 million will be drained from the fund if the city manager’s proposal is adopted. While you may feel good that your taxes are not increasing this year at more than the rate of inflation – for a change – you should feel like you overpaid for the last six years.

So, no matter what happens when council adopts the budget the first week of May, you will hear city councilors tout their ongoing financial stewardship, particularly if the tax rate stays the same. Even if the rate is increased, the word will be that they only raised it a penny or two. No big deal, they will claim. But to homeowners, that will be on top of the 4.3% proposed increase, not instead of it.

Wait for the next time a city official only talks about the tax rate. It’s coming soon. And when it happens, tell them you weren’t born yesterday; you have been overpaying for years; and that the thing that matters to you is your tax bill, not the tax rate.

The writer is a civic advocate, management consultant and longtime Alexandria resident.
Alexandria and the Silent Sentinels

You might have noticed the yellow, white and purple flags flying in front of city hall this month. They honor the Women’s Suffragist Movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and those who fought for the right of women to vote.

In particular, the flags honor the 32 women released from the Occoquan Workhouse on Nov. 27, 1917, at the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia here in Alexandria. The former courthouse stood on the corner of South St. Asaph and Prince Streets. In 2021, the city installed a sign at the site of the former courthouse, commemorating the women’s courage and suffering in their fight against injustice.

The women were members of the National Women’s Party, which sought to give women the right to vote nationally. Nicknamed “The Silent Sentinels,” the protesters picketed regularly outside the White House, urging President Woodrow Wilson to convince members of his Democratic Party to support their cause.

Their use of picket signs and refusal to speak earned them their nickname. Wilson’s vague and tepid support for a woman’s right to vote led them to take more aggressive but peaceful measures. Led by Alice Paul, members of the National Women’s Party instead used Wilson’s words, often spoken in support of the American involvement in World War I, against him. For instance, Alice Paul was arrested on Oct. 20, 1917, for picketing with a sign quoting Wilson:

“The time has come to conquer or submit. For us there is but one choice. We have made it.”

Paul was sentenced to seven months in jail at the Washington District Jail. Other women arrested with her were sent to Occoquan Workhouse, which was considered a more lenient punishment. Paul led a hunger strike in the District Jail, and more Silent Sentinels were arrested on Nov. 10, 1917, for protesting the treatment she and others received in prison.

On Nov. 14, the women endured the infamous “Night of Terror” at the Occoquan Workhouse. The guards threatened, beat and hurled many of the women against walls and floors. Prison guards forced suffragist Lucy Burns to stand all night with her arms shackled to the ceiling of her cell. Some women refused to eat the worm-laden food they were given, including suffragists Lucy Burns and Dora Lewis. On day seven, the prison officials force-fed them. Lewis wrote that five people seized her and held her down. The doctor forced a tube down her throat. “I (was) gasping and suffocating with the agony of it,” she chronicled.

On Nov. 17, 1917, Judge Edmund Waddill, Jr. issued a writ of habeas corpus seeking to free the women in the District Court here in Alexandria, and 10 days later, he ordered them released.

News of the Night of Terror sparked protests across the country. In March 1918, four months after the Night of Terror, a judge ruled the suffragists had been illegally arrested, convicted and detained in the Occoquan Workhouse.

In honor of Women’s History Month, we invite you to read our series on women’s history in Alexandria throughout the month of March. For more on Women’s History in Alexandria, please visit https://www.alexandriava.gov/historic-alexandria/womens-history-in-alexandria.

Out of the Attic is provided by The Office of Historic Alexandria.

Correction: Last week’s column misspelled former City Archaeologist Pam Cressey’s name as Pam Cresse. It has been corrected in the online version of the article.

Weekly Poll

Last Week
The city recently halted launch of a new minority business program after a local company filed a lawsuit. What should happen next?

- 60% Don’t reinstate the program at all.
- 36% Tweak it and relaunch.
- 4% I’m not sure.

This Week
Do you think there should be set-aside funding from tax revenues for open space in Alexandria?

- A) Yes, we are rapidly losing our open spaces.
- B) No, other things are more important.
- C) I’m not sure.
- D) You mean parks?
The items described below will be heard by the Planning Commission and the City Council on the dates and times listed below. NOTICE: Some of the items listed below may be placed on a Consent Calendar. A consent item will be approved at the beginning of the meeting without discussion unless someone asks that it be taken off the Consent Calendar and considered separately. The Planning Commission reserves the right to recess and continue the Public Hearing to a future date. For further information, call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.746.4666 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/dockets.

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL
MARCH 30 & APRIL 15, 2023

The March 30, 2023 Alexandria Planning Commission Public Hearing and the April 15, 2023 Alexandria City Council Public Hearing are being held in the Council Chamber (301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314) and electronically. Members of the Planning Commission, City Council, and staff are participating in-person. The Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings can be accessed by the public in the City Council Chamber, through the live broadcast on the government channel 70, streaming on the City’s website, and can be accessed via Zoom Webinar by the following links:

Planning Commission (Public Hearing Webinar):
The Webinar will open at 6:30 p.m. to allow individuals to join, while the Planning Commission hearing will begin at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Registration Link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register

Zoom Audio Conference:
Dial in: 301-715-8592
Webinar ID: 995 1859 1136
Password: 03368

If you use the Zoom Webinar application, please be sure you have updated the application to the latest version for the best results. If you are unable to access the Zoom Webinar, please use the Dial-In number to access the meeting.

Public comment will be received at the meetings. The public may submit comments in advance to Department of Planning & Zoning staff at PlanningCommission@alexandriava.gov. The Planning Commission Hearing will be broadcast via Zoom Webinar to the City Clerk at CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov for the City Council Hearing; or make public comments on the day of either Hearing.

For reasonable disability accommodation for the Planning Commission Hearing, contact Lisa Chase at lisa.chase@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.4666, Virginia Relay 711. For reasonable disability accommodation for the City Council Hearing, please call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council’s Office at 703.746.4550 (TTY/TDD 838-5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

Advisory recommendations to the City Manager, under Section 6.14 of the City Charter, regarding the Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Improvement Program.

Staff: City of Alexandria, Office of Management & Budget (OMB)

Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00012
(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend Article XI, Section 11-700 related to Transportation Management Special Use Permits, to adopt a policy for Transportation Management Plans (TMPs) and to allow changes to existing TMPs administratively.
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Transportation & Environmental Services

Zoning Text Amendment #2023-00002
(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend healthcare-related use definitions in Article II. Specific comments.
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Zoning

Rezoning #2023-00001
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to the official zoning map to remove the King Street Outdoor Dining Overlay from the zoning ordinance.
Staff: City of Alexandria

The removal of the overlay represents a technical change and will not suspend outdoor dining along the King Street corridor. City staff has proposed that outdoor dining on the sidewalk now appear in City Code Section 5-2-29, which City Council will simultaneously review with this Rezoning on April 15, 2023.

Zoning Text Amendment #2023-00003
(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to delete Section 6-800 (King Street outdoor dining overlay zone) and all other ordinance references to the King Street outdoor dining overlay; delete Section 7-1500 (Outdoor display, sales or storage of goods or merchandise and outdoor dining in a parklet); delete all other ordinance references to parklets, outdoor dining on sidewalks in the public right-of-way and outdoor retail display and sales in the public right-of-way; amend Section 8-300 to waive parking requirements for outdoor dining in the Central Business District; and amend Articles III, IV, V, VI, to specify requirements for outdoor dining on private property.
Staff: City of Alexandria

Special Use Permit #2023-00002
2435 Ridge Road Drive
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit, with front and side yard modifications, for the redevelopment of a single-family dwelling; zoned: R8/ Single Family.
Applicant: James M. Rawlings

Special Use Permit #2023-00006
110 South Pitt Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit for additional outdoor dining seats at an existing restaurant (amending SUP #2022-00073); zoned: CD/ Commercial Downtown.
Applicant: Jahmond Quander

Master Plan Amendment #2023-00001
Development Special Use Permit #2022-10021
Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2023-00008
300, 312, 320 Montgomery St.; 805, 807, 809, 815 N. Royal St.; 806 & 816 N. Fairfax St. - Montgomery Center Public Hearing and consideration of requests for (A) an amendment to the Old Town North Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan to change the Recommended Height District Limits Map; (B) a Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan with modifications to construct a multifamily building with a total of 327 units with an arts and culture anchor and ground floor retail, including special use permits for multifamily residential use and to increase the floor area to 2.5 in the CRMU-X zone, utilization of Section 7-700 for Bonus Height and Density for the provision of affordable housing, bonus height and density for the provision of an arts and cultural anchor in Old Town North, a live entertainment use, outdoor recreation and entertainment use, a parking reduction for the arts and cultural anchor, a loading space floor area exclusion; and modifications to the crown coverage requirement and height-to-setback ratio; (C) a Special Use Permit for a Transportation Management Plan; zoned CRMU-X/ Commercial Residential Mixed Use.
Applicant: MC Property LLC / Carr City Centers, represented by Ken Wire, Attorney

Subdivision #2022-00008
1300, 1400 and 1500 North Royal Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Subdivision to re-subdivide two existing lots for consolidation into a third lot; zoned: UT/Utilities and Transportation Development District #30.
Applicants: HRP Potomac, LLC, and Potomac Electric Power Company; represented by Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney

PUBLIC NOTICE
The Alexandria City School Board will hold a public hearing on School Board Staggered Election Terms during the School Board Meeting on April 20, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the School Board Meeting Room located at 1340 Braddock Place in Alexandria.

Public comments regarding School Board staggered election terms may be submitted in the following ways:

• Sign up to speak or submit written comments for the April 20 public hearing at https://acpsweb.wufoo.com/forms/9p6zsuvm1g5byjv/

• Email comments to: boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us

• U.S. Mail: Clerk of the Board Alexandria City School Board 1340. Braddock Place, Suite 610 Alexandria, VA 22314

Only comments related to the topic of School Board Staggered Election Terms will be heard at the public hearing. Requests to speak or to submit written comments must be submitted by Noon on March 29, 2023.

For more information, please contact the Clerk of the Board at 703-619-8316.
LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF WISCONSIN  COURT  DANE COUNTY

ROBIN MIELEK
1360 MACARTHUR ROAD, APT 213
MADISON, WI 53711
Plaintiff,
v.
Case No.: 23-CV-332
PROGRESSIVE CLASSIC INSURANCE COMPANY
c/o CT CORPORATION SYSTEM
301 S. BEDFORD STREET
MADISON, WI 53703,
UROS TODOROVIC
2801 PARK CENTER DRIVE, APT A710
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22302,
FROM A TO B LOGISTICS, LLC
900 RIDGE SQUARE, APT 209
ELK GROVE VILLAGE, IL 60007,
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF WISCONSIN
N17 W24340 RIVERWOOD DRIVE
WAUKESHA, WI 53188, and
XYZ INSURANCE COMPANY,
Defendants.

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
1 WEST WILSON STREET
P.O. BOX 7850
MADISON, WI 53707
Involuntary Plaintiff.

SUMMONS

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN
To each person named above as a defendant:
You are hereby notified that the plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. Within (20) (45) days of receiving this summons, you must respond with a written demand for a copy of the complaint. The demand must be sent or delivered to the court, whose address is Dane County Courthouse, 215 S. Hamilton Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703 and to Attorney Ronald W. Tusler, plaintiff’s attorney, whose address is Tusler Law, S.C., 207 W. College Avenue, Suite 100, Appleton, Wisconsin 54911. You may have an attorney help or represent you.

If you do not demand a copy of the complaint within (20) (45) days, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future, and may also be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property.

Signed in Appleton, Wisconsin this 7 day of ____________ 2023.

TUSLER LAW, SC
Attorney for the Plaintiff

By: Ronald W. Tusler
Atty. Ronald W. Tusler
State Bar No. 1066815

MAILING ADDRESS:
Tusler Law, S.C.
207 W. College Ave, Suite 100
Appleton, WI 54911
Ph. 920-749-0400

POTOMAC WINDOW CLEANING

CHEVY CHASE FLOOR WAXING SERVICE
Wood floor polishing, buffing, waxing, old floor specialists

AT&T proposes to modify an existing facility (new tip heights 137’5” & 140’9”) on the building at 3201 Landover St, Alexandria, VA (20230138). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr, West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

CROWN CASTLE is proposing to install a 38-foot telecommunications metal pole located within the public right of way at the intersection of N Pitt St and Wythe St, Alexandria, VA 22314, (38 48 42.44 N 77 02 35.41 W). The facility is not expected to be FAA lighted. Crown Castle invites comments from any interested party on the impact of the proposed action on any districts, sites, buildings, structures or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or specific reason the proposed action may have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Specific information regarding the project is available by contacting Monica Gambino at 724-416-2516 during normal business hours. Comments must be received at 1500 Corporate Drive, Canonsburg, PA 15317, ATTN: Monica Gambino or via telephone at 724-416-2516 within 30 days of the date of this notice. (Ref. EBI Project #6123001192)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT FY 2024 ONE-YEAR ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The City of Alexandria’s Draft One-Year Action Plan (“Draft Action Plan”) for the period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 for Housing and Community Development will be available for a 30-day comment period beginning on or about Monday, March 20, 2022 and ending Friday, April 21, 2022. Persons wishing to comment on the Draft Action Plan may do so either in writing and/or by providing testimony the public hearing to be held before the Alexandria Housing Advisory Committee at their virtual meeting on Thursday, April 6, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held via the Zoom web platform and members of the public can register via the Office of Housing website: alexandriava.gov/Housing.

The City’s Draft Action Plan has been developed in accordance with guidelines set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Draft Action Plan describes actions to be taken during City FY 2024 to meet housing and community development needs identified in the City’s 2022 – 2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and serves as the City’s application to HUD for an estimated $1,094,483 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and $712,411 in Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOMES) funds.

The City’s FY 2024 CDBG and HOME funding levels are based on the Federal Fiscal Year 2023 Approved Budget. Activities to be supported with CDBG Program funds have been developed to meet the national objective of benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. CDBG Program activities will continue the City’s ongoing efforts to address the needs of its low- to moderate-income persons. CDBG Program funds have been developed to be consistent with the HOME Program objective of expanding the supply of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing. HOME Program activities will also continue the City’s efforts to provide affordable housing opportunities for low-to moderate-income residents. In addition to CDBG- and HOME-funded activities, the One-Year Action Plan describes other affordable housing and community development activities to be undertaken by the City during this period, including the development and preservation of affordable housing.

Copies of the City’s Draft Action Plan (accompanied by a Resident Summary) may be reviewed or picked up beginning Monday, March 20 at the Office of Housing, located at 421 King Street, Suite 215, Alexandria, VA from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. These documents will also be available on the City’s Website: alexandriava.gov/Housing and for review at the following City libraries:

BEATLEY CENTRAL LIBRARY:
5005 Duke Street, Alexandria
BARRETT BRANCH LIBRARY:
717 Queen Street, Alexandria
BURKE BRANCH LIBRARY:
4701 Seminary Road, Alexandria
DUNCAN BRANCH LIBRARY:
2501 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria

Translated copies of the Draft Action Plan and copies of the Draft Action Plan accessible to persons with disabilities are available upon request. Written comments may be sent or delivered to the Office of Housing or emailed to kimberly.cadena@alexandriava.gov. Comments will be accepted until 5 p.m., Friday, April 21. Once approved by the City Council, the One-Year Action Plan will then be submitted to HUD, per their instructions, for the City to receive the FFY 2024 CDBG and HOME Program funds.

For further information or request for reasonable accommodations, please call the Office of Housing at 703.746.4990, or TTY 703.838.5056 for the hearing impaired.
ADOPTED: March 7, 2023

WHEREAS, pursuant to Code of Virginia § 15.2-2214, the Planning Commission has the authority to set the date of its regular Public Hearings and dates to which it may continue those Public Hearings if the Chair (or Vice Chair) finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA THAT:

1. The Planning Commission will meet on the following dates:
   - Tuesday, September 5, 2023
   - Tuesday, October 3, 2023
   - Tuesday, November 7, 2023
   - Tuesday, December 5, 2023
   - Tuesday, January 2, 2024
   - Tuesday, February 6, 2024
   - Tuesday, March 5, 2024
   - Tuesday, April 2, 2024
   - Tuesday, May 7, 2024
   - Tuesday, June 4, 2024
   - Thursday, June 27, 2024

2. If any Public Hearing needs to be continued, it will be continued on the first Thursday that is not a legal holiday. If the first Thursday is a legal holiday, then the Public Hearing will be continued to the first Tuesday, that is not a legal holiday.

ADOPTED: March 7, 2023

NATHAN M. MACEK, CHAIR, PLANNING COMMISSION

LEGAL NOTICE

RESOLUTION TO SET PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE AND ESTABLISH CONTINUATION DATES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

oval

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, held at City Hall, 301 King Street, Council Chamber and on Zoom webinar on Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 9:30 a.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement Renewal Between the City of Alexandria and City Experiences, by Hornblower for Use of the City’s Marina.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement with ARP Waterfront, LLC for the use of a portion of the City Marina Plaza for outdoor dining associated with Special Use Permit #2017-0002.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL (LIMITED COPIES AVAILABLE). If the mayor finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting, this meeting will be continued to the following Saturday.

GLORIA SITTON, CMC, CITY CLERK

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, held at City Hall, 301 King Street, Council Chamber and on Zoom webinar on Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 9:30 a.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

PUBLIC HEARING, Second Reading and Final Passage of an Ordinance to amend and reorganize Section 6-804(F) (ADMINISTRATIVE PERMIT PROCESS) of Article VI (SPECIAL AND OVERLAY ZONES) of the City of Alexandria Zoning Ordinance, in accordance with the text amendment heretofore approved by city council as Text Amendment No. 2022-00015 (Implementation Ordinance for Text Amendment No. 2022-00015 associated with King Street Outdoor Dining sidewalk use permit validity dates approved by City Council on February 25, 2023). [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

PUBLIC HEARING, Second Reading and Final Passage of an Ordinance to amend and reorganize the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, by adopting and incorporating therein the amendment heretofore approved by city council to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan chapter of such master plan as Master Plan Amendment No. 2022-00006 and no other amendments, and to repeal all provisions of the said master plan as may be inconsistent with such amendment (Implementation Ordinance for Master Plan Amendment No. 2022-00006 associated with Samuel Madden Homes approved by City Council on February 25, 2023). [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

PUBLIC HEARING, Second Reading and Final Passage of an Ordinance to amend and reorganize Sheet No. 054.02 of the "Official Zoning Map, Alexandria, Virginia," adopted by Section 1-300 (OFFICIAL ZONING MAP AND DISTRICT BOUNDARIES), of the City of Alexandria Zoning Ordinance, by rezoning the property at 3908 Elbert Avenue from RA/Multifamily zone to RPM/Residential multifamily zone, in accordance with the said zoning map amendment heretofore approved by city council as Rezoning No. 2022-00008 (Implementation Ordinance for Rezoning No. 2022-00008 associated with Elbert Avenue Residences approved by City Council on February 25, 2023). [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

PUBLIC HEARING, on the City Manager’s Proposed Annual Operating Budget for FY 2024 (including Schools) and the Proposed Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) for FY 2024 -2033 (including the Schools CIP).

Adoption is Scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. A public hearing on the ordinance establishing the Real Property Tax Rate will be held Tuesday, April 25, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement Renewal Between the City of Alexandria and City Experiences, by Hornblower for Use of the City’s Marina.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement with ARP Waterfront, LLC for the use of a portion of the City Marina Plaza for outdoor dining associated with Special Use Permit #2017-0002.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL (LIMITED COPIES AVAILABLE). If the mayor finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting, this meeting will be continued to the following Saturday.

GLORIA SITTON, CMC, CITY CLERK
Call Babs and put her expertise to work for you in this upcoming Spring market!