Council removes panhandling restrictions

Recent First Amendment case law cited as justification for change

BY CAITLYN MEISNER

Restrictions on panhandling in Alexandria were unanimously lifted Saturday during the City Council public hearing.

This vote comes after a heated discussion at the council’s October 11 legislative meeting where Councilors debated a 1994 ordinance on panhandling regulations. The 1994 city ordinance banned panhandling within 15 feet of ATMs and aggressive panhandling, which includes soliciting money using methods that cause fear of injury.

This topic was brought to the forefront of City Council due to recent developments in First Amendment case law, according to Mayor Justin Wilson. In 2015, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit ruled that a similar Charlottesville law violated free speech rights of homeless panhandlers.

“We have confirmed that [those jurisdictions] don’t have – and haven’t had – panhandling ordinances,” Anderson said.

Another question raised was the frequency of citing panhandling regulations. In the October 11 legislative meeting, Jason North, Alexandria Police Department

A pirate pup at Paws in the Park, which took place Sunday in Old Town’s Oronoco Bay Park. Proceeds from the event went to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

Renaming explained

The process for renaming Confederate streets in Alexandria

BY CAITLYN MEISNER

The city has announced proposed name changes to six streets in Alexandria now named for Confederate leaders. Three are scheduled to be presented to City Council and voted on in December following a public hearing.

Changing a street name involves many facets for both homeowners and the city. For instance, homeowners will need to update their address on everything from their driver’s license to Amazon to their checks, which will involve both money and time. There will be a cost to the city as well to replace street signs, redraw maps and retrain everyone from emergency responders to bus drivers.

But what does this process look like, and how long does it take? Below is information on why certain streets were picked, the process for changing the cost and comments from Alexandrians.

Which streets are being considered soon?

Streets currently up for consideration are North Breckenridge Place, North Frost Street, North and South Early Street, North and South Jordan Street, Jordan Court and Forrest Street. Here’s a list of the honoree for each street listed above:

- **North Breckenridge:** named for Brig. Gen. John C. Breckenridge,
- **North Frost:** named for Brig. Gen. Daniel Marsh Frost,
- **North and South Early:** named for Brig. Gen. Jubal A. Early,
- **North and South Jordan, Jordan Court:** named for Brig. Gen. Thomas Jordan,
- **Forrest:** named for Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, Gen., or Navy Commander French Forrest.

All except Forrest Street were named in 1953 after an ordinance was passed, which
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CORRECTION: The Oct. 12, 2023, story “Local brothers debut first feature film” stated that Roger Sharp, pinball legend, portrayed the older version of himself in “Pinball: the Man Who Saved the Game.” Dennis Boutsikaris was the actor who portrayed the elder Sharp and Sharp himself was only an executive producer in the film. Mike Faist portrayed the younger Sharp. The Times regrets the error.

Teenager killed in Oxon Hill identified

Alexandria resident Kenyon Valentine, 18, was identified as the teenager shot and killed inside a car on the 6800 block of Haven Avenue in Oxford Hill on October 6, according to the Prince George’s Police Department. Valentine was pronounced dead at the scene.

-Suspect arrested from Holmes Run robbery

A 16-year-old boy was arrested October 7 by the Alexandria Police Department in connection with a robbery and shooting of a 21-year-old in September at the 5500 block of Holmes Run Parkway, according to a press release from the APD. The suspect was charged with aggravated malicious wounding and two counts of robbery. The APD is still investigating the case and those with information should contact Detective Brandon Smith at 703-746-6159 or brandon.smith@alexandriava.gov.

-Assault on Bluestone Road

A man was stabbed and a woman sustained minor injuries in an assault at the 200 block of Bluestone Road Monday according to a press release from APD, which is still investigating the assault. Anyone with information can contact 703-746-4444.

-Alexandria’s ‘Best in Business’ awarded

The city’s Chamber of Commerce held its annual Best in Business event October 12. This year, Don Simpson Jr., president of Simpson Development Company, was honored as Business Leader of the Year. The Chamber also honored Salon deZEN as Small Business of the Year and McLaughlin Ryder Investments as Medium Business of the Year. ALX Community won Overall Business of the Year with Ada’s on the River taking home Rising Star Business of the Year. Neighborhood Health won Nonprofit of the Year and Woodbine Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center was awarded Large Business of the Year.

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Honoring the city’s ‘Living Legends’

The Living Legends of Alexandria honored 12 Alexandrians Wednesday at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial according to a press release from the Living Legends of Alexandria. The event honored city legends such as former Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, Redella “Del” Pepper, Alexandria’s longest-serving City Councilor, former Police Chief David Baker and Carolyn B. Lewis, an educator in Alexandria since the early 1960s.

Other honorees include Nelson Greene, Jr., Patty and Kate Moran, Gary Oelze, James Paige, Julianne White, Margaret Winter and Melissa Thiringer. All were recent summer camp counselors and were awarded based on their dedication to educating and training the next generation of Alexandria’s archaeologists. Brennan, the namesake of the award, was devoted to preserving and sharing the city’s heritage and a founding member of the AAC.

Petition disapproving new construction

A petition disapproving a construction proposal at 301 N. Fairfax St. – which has received more than 500 signatures – says the proposed condo building violates Old and Historic District rules. The petition says the nearly 100,000 square foot, four-story condo complex will “overwhelm” the 18th and 19th century style in the neighborhood.

The petition is asking the city government to protect the OAHD history and architectural heritage because it holds “national significance.”

Citywide street work underway

The Department of Transportation has started citywide street resurfacing, storm inlet repair and ramp enhancements, according to a city press release. Construction is expected to last until October 27 but is subject to change. Areas to be impacted include Duke Street from Diagonal Road to South Henry Street; Luray Avenue from West Braddock Road to Leslie Avenue; Clyde Avenue; Cameron Mills Road; the 4700 block of King Street; 1700 block of Commonwealth Avenue; 200 block of Burgess Avenue; 1600 Block of Kenwood Avenue; 600 block of S View Terrace and between the 2200 and 2400 blocks of King Street. For questions and/or concerns, use Alex311.

Pride of Baltimore II visits Alexandria

The Pride of Baltimore II ship – a replica of the original ship from the War of 1812 – is visiting Alexandria this weekend, according to a press release from the city. The ship will dock at the Alexandria Mariana for free tours from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Tickets are not required. Tours will include a chance to talk with the Pride of Baltimore II’s deck crew and learn more about the War of 1812.
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lieutenant, said he has never written a citation of this nature.

Anderson backed up his statement and said this code has been used 50 times during the last 10 years, but zero times since 2020.

“The majority of the reasons why it was used... can be enforced in different sections of the code,” Anderson said. “There were two in the last 10 years that were cited for being within 15 feet of an ATM machine, but in those instances there were probably other actions that created the reason for someone to call the police.”

Councilor John Taylor Chapman said he initially was unsure of removing the code, but realized this issue goes beyond just panhandling.

“If it’s just that case in Charlottesville, I would be against what we’re doing here,” Chapman said. “If you look at the totality of the different cases – particularly around free speech versus panhandling – I think you come to a different conclusion about the work that we’re doing here.”

Before the council officially voted on the matter, Chapman requested there be further discussion “offline” about ATMs because he believes those are protected spaces.

“That’s when you’re most vulnerable, if you’re getting cash out,” Chapman said.

Wilson also spoke before the vote and said it’s unusual Council is voting to reverse a fairly new ordinance in comparison to some that are hundreds of years old.

After resolving the panhandling issue, Council then moved on to other matters, including two special use permits and a closed session.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Panhandling often occurs at or near ATM machines, which makes customers vulnerable at these locations.

**UPDATES**

**FROM | 1**

file photo

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forced all north-south streets in the western portion of the city to be named for Confederate leaders.

What are the proposed new names?

North Breckenridge, North Frost and North and South Early have four potential figures under consideration. All are Black and have Alexandria or regional ties.

**Benjamin Banneker**, 1731-1806, was a free African American surveyor who helped draw the original survey of Washington, D.C. **Sarah Gray**, 1847-1893, was principal of Hallowell School for Girls, a school for African Americans. **Harriet Jacobs**, 1815-1897, was an abolitionist and established the first free school for African American children in Alexandria. **Ona Judge**, 1773-1848, was an enslaved woman by the Washington family and is known for her 1796 escape to New Hampshire.

North and South Jordan Street and Jordan Court is proposed to be renamed **Hughes Street** after the Hughes family. They lived in Foxchase while enslaved in the early and mid-1800s. Two members, David and Wilson, served in the Colored Infantry based in Alexandria.

Forrest Street is proposed to be renamed **Forest Street**.

There is a full list available of deceased figures being considered, including those who died as recently as this year.

Councilor Alyia Gaskins said the Council Naming Committee – composed of her and Councilors John Taylor Chapman and Sarah Bagley – wanted to pay special attention to underrepresented communities in this first batch of renamed streets.

“We wanted, at least in this first bucket, folks who had a specific history or tie to Alexandria,” Gaskins said. “We [also] wanted people who reflected diversity of perspectives as a reference in our All Alexandria resolution.”

How many streets are there in total?

Dana Wedeles, strategic initiatives officer for the city, said there are a total of 41 confirmed streets named for Confederates, 21 of which originated in 1953.

“At this time ... we’ll continue to do our research so that we’re only looking at those [streets] that we have confirmation on,” Wedeles said. “The list could grow as we continue to research, but those 41: we feel comfortable saying these were, in fact, named for Confederate soldiers and have the documentation on it.”

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STREET NAMES

Gaskins said the committee wanted this first batch of streets to have been directly affected by the 1953 ordinance. She said in future renaming initiatives, the committee may take a different approach depending on the full council's perspective.

“We thought, ‘Let’s pick streets that were intentionally changed so that we can be as intentional in changing them back,’” Gaskins said.

She also said while Alexandria has many issues to be focused on, the role of Council is to manage and work through multiple issues simultaneously.

“I think that people sometimes assume that just because we’re working on this, it must mean we’re not working on something else,” Gaskins said. “And that’s not true. We’re working on a multitude of things and thinking about those intersections and connections.”

What is the process and timeline?

According to the city’s website on this initiative, the naming committee will direct efforts and ultimately choose three streets per year, which will go before Council for a vote. The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission developed a list of individuals and locations worthy of honor.

Currently, the city is in its public engagement phase, according to Wedeles. She said this is the point in the process where the committee seeks out feedback from city residents.

“Either [residents] can agree with the names that have been suggested or they can suggest their own name,” Wedeles said. “If they suggest their own name, we are asking that they provide some sort of documentation that they have discussed that suggestion with their neighbors. This is really aimed to ensure there is a unified response … and a seriousness to the response.”

On November 30, the committee will send their recommendations to the full Council at a public hearing. Then at the December 16 public hearing, Council will make an official decision in the form of an ordinance.

Gaskins encouraged all residents who have questions, comments or concerns to contact the committee and read more about the process.

“This is something that is just unfolding and this is a space where all of that is welcomed and is necessary to contribute to this process as we learn and figure out how it unfolds,” Gaskins said. “There are so many people who have been ignored in our history, but have done significant things to improve our community. Their history and their stories are part of what make Alexandria great.”

Wedeles said the city plans on making the official change in January to avoid disruption during the holiday season.

“If there’s any concern about mailing addresses when packages are being delivered at a high season for package delivery, we’ll certainly avoid that,” Wedeles said. “The [city] will be prepared in producing the street signs once the decisions are made.”

How many streets will the city change per year?

Wedeles said the city hopes to change three streets per year – one larger street and two smaller. She also said the amount was determined as to not overwhelm the production of street signs. Wedeles cited the budget restrictions as another reason.

“There’s allocated resources for the street signs and it’s to help really focus the efforts … rather than a much broader initiative,” Wedeles said.

What is the cost to the city?

Wedeles said each year, the city allocates $60,000 for renaming streets; she said the cost is not standard, but depends on the size and location of the street.

“It’s not only the street

SEE STREET NAMES | 9
Signs that we need to consider, but it’s intersections, if there are parks or if there’s other city signage,” Wedeles said.

City Transportation and Environmental Services calculated $164,000 in manufacturing costs for the 41 streets, excluding labor. According to the city, streets with a “significant amount” of signage, including Beauregard, Van Dorn and Pickett, will cost between $16,000 and $44,000 each.

What is the cost as a resident?

The cost will fluctuate from home to home, but residents are responsible for notifying some agencies of the change. On the city’s FAQ site, it states residents will have to update their addresses, but not immediately.

In many cases – such as a driver’s license or passport – an address change is not necessary until it expires and renewal is needed. Social security, insurance, banks, credit card companies and subscriptions, will need to be changed, but most can be done online.

The city handles many facets for residents when streets are renamed. According to the city’s website, it will handle any changes with the U.S. Postal Service, utilities, personal property tax, voter registration, schools and emergency services. These agencies will be notified by the city and do not require any resident action.

What do other Alexandrians think?

This initiative is controversial and has sparked fruitful discussions online. In a Facebook post made by the Times in an attempt to interview residents, more than 35 comments were posted in support of and against the initiative.

“I can understand if these street names had some kind of recognized significance, but they really don’t anymore,” Bruce B. wrote. “They are just names of long dead people on a street sign. This effort is pure virtue signaling to make some members of Council feel good about themselves.”

Jen L. wrote a paragraphs-long comment, tying in the history of racism in Virginia and Alexandria and her frustrations with the city’s initiatives in zoning. She said as a resident of the city for many years, she does not believe this is a city that prioritizes righting the wrongs of racism.

“Changing street names is a joke and an insult that I see as symbolic nonsense,” Jen L. wrote. “Leave the names. Change the real life residual effects of segregation that are still painfully visible in Alexandria today. I don’t care what these streets are called. Alexandria needs to change what living on them is like if you’re not white.”

Kenneth Wolfe, an Old Town resident since 1996, wrote in an email to the Times that he believes crime is the main issue in the city.

“Until the murders, carjackings, shootings, abductions and robberies get under control, the mayor and city council should be focused on nothing but crime,” Wolfe wrote. “Is renaming Early Street going to reduce crime? We really don’t have time for these cheap stunts by our local elected officials to get on television, like renaming streets, when crime is absolutely out of control in Alexandria.”

– cmeisner@alextimes.com

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The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra is celebrating its 80th birthday in style with four original, commissioned pieces that will be performed throughout the ASO’s season.

“80 is the new 30, except livelier,” James Ross, ASO’s music director, said in an interview with the Times. “The ASO is celebrating its Oak Anniversary in big ways and small ways. We’re excited to share the new original pieces with the city of Alexandria while also playing beloved classics,” Ross continued.

ASO was started in 1943 during World War II by music teacher Lucie Neale Landen, who recruited 40 amateur musicians to play music together, according to the ASO website. The orchestra was originally called the “Alexandria Civic Orchestra.”

It would be 10 more years before the ACO became the ASO.

The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra was officially incorporated in 1954 with an annual budget of $1,200,” according to the ASO website.

Wendell Margarve, Ph.D., who was director of the Washington Musical Institute, became ASO’s music director in 1948 and led the orchestra into the mid-1960s. The orchestra’s next director, George Steiner, Ph.D., took the first steps toward professionalizing the organization.

“Under Steiner’s influence, the ASO introduced its first subscription series, performed at Albohm Auditorium on the campus of T.C. Williams High School,” ASO’s website reads.

Kim Allen Kluge followed Steiner as ASO’s director in 1988 and was there for almost three decades before departing in 2016.

“Under Kluge’s direction during the 1990s, the ASO became a professional orchestra. In partnership with the City of Alexandria, the ASO significantly expanded its programs and concerts in the schools and began performing in the Alexandria Birthday Celebration concert on the waterfront each July,” according to the ASO website.

After departing from the
ASO

FROM | 10

ASO, Kluge became renowned for writing music scores for movies including 2016’s “Silence,” directed by Academy Award winning director Martin Scorsese, 2018’s “Driven” and 2019’s “Peel.”

“Kluge did so much for the ASO,” Melinda Kernc, ASO’s director of development and marketing, said in an interview. “He transitioned it to a fully professional orchestra composed of the area’s top musicians. The ASO wouldn’t be this big now if it wasn’t for Kluge.”

Ross, ASO’s current music director, has been with the orchestra since 2018. He has taught orchestral activities at the University of Maryland and has worked with other orchestras such as the Cuban American Youth Orchestra and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra’s Young.

“In the spring of 2018, the ASO completed a two-year international search selecting James Ross as its fifth Music Director,” according to the ASO website. “Ross has introduced new concert experiences, audience engagement and nontraditional venues and formats to the community, attracting new audiences and growing the ASO family.”

The first original piece in the ASO anniversary celebration was “Toast,” which was performed at the ASO’s opening concert, “ASO at 80-oh!,” on September 30 and October 1. “ASO at 80-oh!” featured musician Elissa Lee Koljonen on the violin.

“The original verses span from nostalgic reflections on moments shared around music with family and friends to Dr. Seuss-inspired musings about the humorous personalities within orchestras,” Lester Green, Toast’s composer, said in a press release.

Green also played the piano for “Toast” at “ASO at 80-oh!” on both dates. “ASO at 80-oh!” included other pieces such as Quinn Mason’s “Toast of the Town,” Johannes Brahms’ “Violin Concerto” and Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s “Symphony No. 4.”

ASO’s next 80th-anniversary concert will be “Going Home,” to be held on November 4 and 5. Musician Stephen Seifert will also play the mountain dulcimer in “Going Home.”

“Going Home,” will feature the original piece “Tscenacomoco” written by Native American composer Dawn Avery. “Tscenacomoco” is about Alexandria’s Native American history and honors the Powhatan tribe.

“This work employs contemporary performance techniques and soaring melodies that reflect Indigenous soundscapes, decolonizing strategies in composition, and the lands and peoples of Tscenacomoco,” Avery said in a press release.

“Going Home” will also include performances of Margaret Bonds’ “Montgomery Variations,” Conni Ellisor’s “Blackberry Winter” and Antonín Dvořák’s “Symphony No.9.” It is also the 80th-anniversary concert that hits home the most, according to ASO’s Board of Trustees president Nancy Davenport.

“Going Home reminds me of the Appalachian Mountains, the mountain dulcimer, and the powhatan tribe,” Davenport said in a press release.

SEE ASO | 12

The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center.
which is near where I grew up and it really touches my heart,” Davenport said in an interview.

“Do Not Go Gentle” is ASO’s next 80th-anniversary concert, scheduled for February 10 and 11. The concert features the Cantate Concert Choir with Victoria Gau as the music director, Mandy Brown singing soprano, Cara Schaefer singing alto and Joshua Coleman singing bass.

“Do Not Go Gentle” will include the original piece “Au-rora” by composer Milad Yousufi, which draws from Yousufi’s experience as an Afghan refugee and is also inspired by a poem dedicated to his mother.

“I have always dreamed of writing music for the next generation of artists in Afghanistan, to do what Bartók – a Hungarian composer from 1899 to 1945 – did for his country as a composer and ethnomusicologist,” Yousufi said in a press release.

ASO is ready to share these original pieces with Alexandria. “All of the programs have amazing pieces,” ASO’s executive director George Hanson said. “All these people that support ASO are the reason we’re still here. This is a love letter to the Alexandria community.”

An additional ASO concert, that’s not part of the 80th anniversary celebration, is a holiday performance on December 16 and 17. “Holiday with a Twist” will feature musician Joshua Banbury on Baritone along with Chris Ulman, the world whistling champion.

“I really think this concert’s season will be looked on in the future as a momentous season for the ASO,” Davenport said in an interview.

Saturday concerts are at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. Sunday concerts are at George Washington Masonic Memorial at 3 p.m.

Tickets cost $20 for adults, $15 for students, and $5 for youth 18 and under. Subscription packages to see all five concerts cost $86. Military, senior and group discounts are also available.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Red Charitable Trust all support this upcoming ASO season.

ASO’s staff includes Hanson as executive director, Ryan Jordan as director of operations, Davenport as Board of Trustees president, Kernc as director of development and marketing, Susan Kelly as personnel manager and Craig B. Teer as stage manager.

--ivanpate@alextimes.com

Lester Green (left) and Milad Yousufi (right) both composed original pieces for the ASO’s anniversary series.
Lloyd Moss details his travels across the globe, his love for helping others
BY LEXIE JORDAN

If there’s one thing Lloyd Moss has learned he loves in his 72 years, it’s helping people – no matter where they are in the world.

Moss was born and raised in the Gulf Coast region of the U.S. and stayed through high school. He is the son of a World War II doctor and nephew to a foreign service officer. Moss grew up hearing great stories of foreign places and wars, but most importantly, about people helping other people.

He took an early liking to the German language and culture in school; unlike other teenagers, Moss’ reasoning for choosing his foreign language was not because it was easy, but because he wanted to read the literature, history and theology of Germany. During his undergraduate time at Davidson College in North Carolina, Moss took a year abroad where he went to Germany as an exchange student. He perfected his German and immersed himself in the culture.

Moss then went to Johns Hopkins University for graduate school, taking courses in history, literature and German. He had only just started his dissertation when the foreign service knocked on his door.

Growing up, Moss had no idea what he wanted to do, but upon hearing the stories and work of his uncle, he was always open to working in the foreign service.

“Had I known then what I later learned, I would have had enough tenacity to say, ’I will join but I need another year to finish my dissertation,’ but at the time I didn’t have that...
much nerve,” Moss said.

Thanks to pure luck, his first assignment with the foreign service was in Berlin where he stayed from 1983 to 1986. He witnessed many atrocities of a struggling post-war Germany, including the loss of a friend.

“On the day I departed Berlin, as the aircraft took off, [I was told] I have bad news,” Moss wrote in an autobiographical article. “A U.S. Army officer with whom you’ve done a bit of Reserve work is being shot dead by a Soviet soldier.”

Moss then went to Auckland, New Zealand from 1986 to 1987, which is where he met the love of his life, Sera, who he described as someone with a big heart.

“I was very fortunate. She was a wonderful wife. She had many talents,” Moss said. “I’ve never met anyone who has better interpersonal skills than she did.”

Following the quick move to New Zealand, Moss and his wife went to Palau where they were stationed from 1990 to 1994. Moss described it as “a tropical island paradise and marvelous aquatic wonderland with fascinating people.”

In 1990, the Moss’ had their first daughter, Eva. Thinking back to that time, Moss reminisced on the nomadic lifestyle with children.

“It was fun at the start when they’re young. It’s all one great adventure. Then when they get into their teen years and start making relationships, that’s when it gets hard,” Moss said.

Next stop for the Moss family was Grenada. They were there from 1998 to 2001 where Moss dealt with many high priority cases, specifically when Fidel Castro came to visit.

According to Moss, the most impactful part of the Grenada stay was when the family added one more family member: Moss and his wife decided to adopt a Grenadian girl, Sarrana.

The family arrived back in Washington, D.C., where they were stunned by the 9/11 attacks.

In 2003, the Moss’ were uprooted once again to Belize, where they stayed for three years. Moss dealt with his fair share of problems, including a blackout in Belize that forced almost no communication with the outside world for a week.

“For about a week, no cell phones, internet, telephone, radio, television or ATMs. The country’s only link with the outside world was the satellite system on the roof of the Embassy; we asked U.S. citizen tourists to limit their calls to a few minutes,” Moss said. “The ironic adage holds true: invention is the mother of necessity – not the other way round.”

In 2006, the family moved to Jamaica. They dealt with hurricanes, wildly entertaining drug lords in disguises and the Jamaican police attempting to reassert government control. Moss was also present to celebrate Usain Bolt’s Beijing Olympic victories.

Moss was then stationed in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2013. There, he saw the horrors of war and lost friends.

“At night we often had to endure rocket attacks against the airfield, but these were seldom effective,” Moss said.

“Near the end of my tour, a terrible tragedy occurred while delivering Pashtu textbooks to a local school: A group of aid workers was ambushed by the Taliban and suffered sev-
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Lloyd Moss plans to return to Samoa for the next phase of his retirement.

Moss wanted to go back and serve for a third year, but his application was rejected. “It’s a good thing I was not approved,” Moss said. “They were seldom approving anyone for a third year and I finally knew why when I got home and realized how tired I was.”

Moss and his wife lived in Miami for several years following his stint in the Middle East. During that time, Moss volunteered at a hospital. “I really just like being able to help people,” Moss said.

Moss and his wife then planned to retire in Samoa; however, after only about a year of peace, problems ensued once again. Sera, his wife, was diagnosed with cancer and was brought back to her home in New Zealand for treatment. “She fought cancer long and hard, but it was too late,” Moss said. “About the last thing I ever would have expected was that she would precede me.”

Following Sera’s death, Moss could not return to Samoa because they were still on lockdown due to COVID-19, so in November 2022 he came to the DMV area to visit family, including his sister who was living at The View Alexandria. During his trip, he had a routine check up where he was shockingly diagnosed with prostate cancer.

“All of this was completely unexpected. I thought I was visiting my sister,” he said.

He moved into The View Alexandria following his diagnosis, where he received his treatment while staying near his sister. Thanks to modern medicine, Moss is now cancer free.

“Now, I’m supposedly – gratefully – cancer free. Modern medicine is simply amazing. I only wish my wife’s problem could have been diagnosed and dealt with the same way,” Moss said.

Throughout his long career in the foreign service and all his travels, Moss said the best part was meeting the wonderful people in the host countries.

Reflecting back on this time and thinking of his biggest inspirations, Moss sat with a bright smile on his face. He listed several friends all with names from different ethnicities. “I really have known some remarkable people along the way,” Moss said with a glint in his eyes, “and some truly psychologically tough characters.”

Moss also said advice he lives by is that “despite the many problems around the world, remain optimistic. There is always a way ahead.”

These days Moss spends his time reading and watching world news and volunteering at ALIVE! in Del Ray, where he has been working for the past four months as the new location gets on its feet. “After merely 30 years of service, I’m perfectly happy doing unpaid volunteer work,” Moss laughed.

Moss plans on leaving The View Alexandria this month in the hopes of returning to Samoa for the next phase of his retirement. He said he hopes to volunteer and teach English and German at the local school.

Before his departure, Moss went to Winston-Salem, N.C., where he watched his daughter, Eva, get married. “If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s to take things one day at a time, so that’s what I’m going to do.”

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Most of us know that having friends and keeping active is good for everyone, but staying social is especially beneficial for older adults. But, this is often easier said than done. As people age, it’s natural for their personal relationships, interests or living situation to change, and they become less social.

Researchers recently took a broader view of successful aging by analyzing data from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging, which followed Canadians aged 60 and older over a three-year period. Results showed that those who maintained excellent health regularly participated in volunteer work and recreational activities and were less likely to develop thinking, physical or emotional problems.

Some seniors may find themselves without a partner for the first time in a while or with fewer friends because they’ve moved away. Others may lose interest in the things they once loved. Seasonality can also have a big impact. With colder weather approaching, there is less interest in leaving one’s home. The autumn time change with darkness arriving earlier can also shorten days for those who don’t drive at night or reduce motivation to seek outside activities.

Those of us who work in senior living see every day how older people blossom and their health can be improved when they become part of a strong social network and routinely participate in social activities. Throughout my over 24 years working with older adults, I’ve seen first-hand the ways in which passions for hobbies, specific subjects and other interests can be reignited.

Giving back
The health benefits of giving to others are tremendous. Something as simple as taking part in a clothing drive, helping to make meals for those less fortunate or lending services to a local charity can be incredibly rewarding.

Sharing expertise
Older people have valuable life experiences and professional knowledge that can be shared with others. Retired teachers, for example, may enjoy reading to local children or former business owners could act as mentors or coaches. For example, at Benchmark, we will be working with schools in our neighborhood to offer inter-generational programs.

A strong social network and routine participation in social activities can help improve your health.
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Taking classes
For older people, the “golden years” are often the best time to further explore subjects they are passionate about. Have you always wanted to learn more about history, your family’s genealogy or finally learn how to paint? Now is the time to dig in and you just might make a few friends along the way.

Connecting over mutual interests
It’s always fun and rewarding to connect with others who can relate to or share in your life experiences. Enjoying a meal or a cup of coffee while reminiscing about being from the same place, shared travels or knowledge about certain subjects can be a great way to spend time.

Joining clubs
Things like book clubs, men’s and women’s groups or religious groups provide a common ground on which individuals can come together to engage in mutual interests. Through the action of getting together on a regular basis, individuals often learn about and develop strong, lasting relationships with others.

As a certified director of assisted living who has had both personal and professional experience helping thousands of older adults, it’s important to know that there are many seniors who are having the same challenges. Whether it’s the local senior center or community college, find local resources that match your goals or feel free to reach out to us about how we can help you get connected.

The writer is the senior executive director at Benchmark at Alexandria, an assisted living and Mind & Memory Care community.

Join a club or take a class to find individuals with similar interests as you age.

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Medicare open enrollment

How to get help in Alexandria, find a new plan
BY ASHLEY JOHNSON

Medicare open enrollment is now available through December 7 and is effective January 1, 2024. Between now and December, recipients can change drug prescription plans, change a current plan to another or sign up for prescription drug coverage. Open enrollment is the period when Medicare beneficiaries can make changes to insurance benefits.

Due to this, everyone with a Medicare Part D prescription drug and/or Medicare Advantage plans should review their coverage. It’s best to look for changes in the monthly cost you pay for your plan, also known as the premium. It’s also good practice to check the cost of each medication you take, as costs may increase or decrease. Plans can also change the drugs covered—the formulary—and the amount of the annual deductible—the amount you must pay before your prescription drug plan begins to pay—so make sure to review these, too.

You may do a self-checkup yourself or get assistance.

Conducting a self-checkup

If you’d like to do it yourself, you will need a computer, your medication list with the names and dosages of your medications and your Medicare card.

1. Go to medicare.gov.
2. Create your “My Medicare” account or log into your Medicare Account.
3. Click on find health and drug plans.
4. Enter the information requested—zip code, preferred pharmacy and medications—to get a list of plans tailored to you.

ASHLEY JOHNSON

5. Compare plans by selecting the plans you would like to review and compare.
6. Compare the cost of plan premiums, deductibles and drug costs.
7. If you are satisfied with your current plan, no further action is needed.
8. If you compare plans and find a plan that better meets your needs, you can call the plan or check their website to confirm the information, then switch plans by calling 1-800-Medicare — or 1-800-633-4227—to request the switch to your selected plan, or you may enroll in the plan using your My Medicare account.

Assistance in Alexandria

If you would like help you may request assistance online or by mail from Alexandria’s Virginia Insurance and Counseling Program. We provide free, unbiased and personalized counseling. This program is funded by the Administration of Community Living and Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services. We help beneficiaries understand their Medicare plans, options and compare plans so our residents get the best coverage at the lowest cost.

Request assistance online

1. Compile your medication list with the names and dosages of your medications, your Medicare card and access the online form located at www.Alexandriava.gov/Aging.
2. Once the form opens, add your name and email on the log-in screen then click on the “proceed to document” button.
3. Follow the prompts to fill out the online VICAP Medicare information form.
4. When completed, a VICAP counselor will conduct the assessment and suggest the two or three plans that best fit your needs. You will receive your assessment by email or phone call. If you have additional questions, the counselor can review the assessment with you and can help guide you in making the changes.

Request assistance by mail

1. Download, print and complete the VICAP information form from www.alexandriava.gov/aging.
2. Compile your medication list with the names and dosages of your medications and your Medicare card number and effective dates.
3. Mail the completed form to the Alexandria City VICAP office at Division of Aging and Adult Services VICAP, 4850 Mark Center Drive, 9th Floor, Alexandria, 22311.
4. A counselor will conduct the assessment and suggest the two or three plans that best fit your needs. You will receive your assessment by email or phone call. If you have additional questions, the counselor can review the assessment with you and can help guide you in making the changes.

The writer is the deputy division chief and long term care coordinator for Alexandria.
Don’t let time slip away

Why luck is not the sole factor in deciding your final chapter
BY LINDSAY HUTTER

How lucky do you feel?
Those were the words of a Goodwin Living Board Trustee as he shared his approach to conversations with older adults brushing aside encouragements to plan for their future. I had just joined Goodwin Living, a faith-based not-for-profit senior living and health care services organization serving older adults across the DMV area, and was on a listening tour. Little did I know how salient his words were.

Most of us know older adults, whether they are family, friends or neighbors. We’ve likely heard some say, “We’ll visit senior living communities when we’re ready.” Others say, “We’ll move into assisted living when we need it.” They must feel very lucky. Their statements imply that they will decide the “when.” They will know “when” that is and that “when” will come when they say so.

Recent national data suggests luck is not prevalent when it comes to aging and needing some assistance. A recent survey conducted by Nexus Insights and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago found that one in four adults 50 years of age or older said they or a loved one had experienced a long-term care crisis in the previous 12 months. Here’s what that data means: the next time you’re enjoying dinner with a group of friends, look around the table. One of them is likely to experience a long-term care crisis.

How can you avoid this outcome in your own life or the lives of those you love?
1. Take good care of yourself.
2. Make a plan and discuss it with your loved ones.
3. Do your homework.

Take good care of yourself

A rich resource for your own total health is the International Council on Active Aging’s Seven Dimensions of Wellness. These seven dimensions include intellectual, physical, environmental, social, emotional, spiritual and vocational.

Some may say, “Well of course. That’s obvious, isn’t it?” Take an inventory of your typical day. How sufficiently is each of those seven dimensions addressed every day in

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your life? Obvious and implementation are two very different concepts.

Make a plan

Goodwin House Alexandria resident Fred Pang was recently interviewed by WUSA-9 about the retirement planning that he and his wife undertook. Pang’s first bit of advice was to not plan in a vacuum.

“Gather your family, your financial advisor, your insurance advisor and everyone who will be part of the team that supports you when you have needs. Gain the benefit of everyone’s wisdom and their care for you and come up with a plan as a team,” Pang said.

Something we often hear from older adults when they are asked about “their plan” is “My children will take care of it.”

Then comes our question. Have you shared this expectation with your children? Have you discussed the possible scenarios and your wishes for each scenario? Do your children have the time and resources to meet your needs and wishes?

The room has a way of getting quiet at that point.

Do your homework

Speak with older adults who have taken steps to age in place in their homes as well as those that have moved into retirement communities. Ask for their insights and lessons learned. Visit multiple retirement communities and learn about them.

For example, some retirement communities have all levels of living. These are called Continuing Care Retirement Communities and have independent living, assisted living, memory support and health care – which are often called nursing or long-term care. The advantage of CCRCs is that you never have to leave the community should you or your spouse or partner need a higher level of care. CCRCs also are more likely to have dedicated physical therapy and rehab services on-site.

Other retirement communities may focus on one or two levels of living, such as assisted living and memory support.

It’s also important to learn about the contracts and financial models so you can assess what you want or are able to spend in the way of retirement and care expenses.

Going back to national research that found that “one in four” have experienced or know someone that has experienced a long-term care crisis, you are doing yourself and your loved ones a very big favor by knowing the senior living and rehab centers around you and knowing their staff. If you or a loved one is in a crisis, do you want to call a stranger at a senior living community or rehab center you have never visited or do you want to call someone you know at a community or rehab center that you have toured?

Back to that Board Trustee’s question: How lucky do you feel?

The writer is the chief strategy and marketing officer for Goodwin Living.
Bird feeder battleground

Winning the war against squirrels

BY FAMILY FEATURES

For bird lovers, the sight of a bushy tail hanging off the side of a feeder means one thing: war. Love them or loathe them, most birders agree they do not want squirrels in bird feeders where they can devour seed meant for birds.

Squirrels have to eat, too, and no one wants to harm the persistent critters; however, that does not mean you have to put up with squirrels scarfing down seed set out for birds, damaging feeders and bumping up your blood pressure. It’s possible to discourage squirrels – and even outsmart them – with the right seed mix and some nature-friendly squirrel-control tactics.

Because squirrels love birdseed as much as birds do, both groups routinely battle for rights to the birdfeeder. It’s not an equal fight – most squirrels are bigger than the average bird, so chances are they’re going to devour the seed.

Squirrels are one of the biggest problems for people who feed birds. They can eat large amounts of seed, destroy bird feeders and chase birds away. When squirrels claim your feeder as their territory, it’s hard to get rid of them.

While they can be relentless in their perpetual pursuit of bird seed and do not like to share – you do not want to hurt them, just set them on the straight and narrow. One of the most effective tactics to keep squirrels out of bird feeders is taste aversion – serving seed that birds find delicious, but squirrels consider downright distasteful. Simply put, if the seed you serve tastes terrible to squirrels, they will seek sustenance elsewhere.

Put pesky squirrels on notice your bird feeders are meant to be bird-exclusive by stocking them with products infused with fiery hot habanero chili peppers. Birds find the spicy taste delectable but squirrels detest it. Studies show mammals, including squirrels, have receptors on the tongue and mouth that react to chili peppers by sending heat signals to the brain. Although there’s no actual harm, the sensation makes it seem like the mouth is on fire. Birds lack receptors that make chewing chili peppers such an eye watering experience for mammals.

If you have a soft spot for those fluffy-tailed felons as amusing additions to your backyard, try diversion feeding, an effective tactic to lure squirrels away from the bird feeder by providing them with their own food source. Set up a squirrel feeding station away from bird feeders and make it easy for squirrels to access their own platform feeder filled with favored temptations. This can satisfy squirrels and allow for a “birds only” oasis at the bird feeder.

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HOME OF THE WEEK

Left: Majestic location in the heart of Old Town. Middle: Stunning open kitchen with river views. Right: Living room with classic details and park views.

Waterfront living in historic Old Town

Overlooking the Potomac River and Windmill Hill Park in the coveted South East Quadrant of Old Town, this 4-bedroom, 4.5-bath, nearly 3,500-square feet home has been completely renovated to highlight traditional architectural character with all modern amenities. A private entry-level office, featuring original parquet floors, stunning custom built-ins and a wood-burning fireplace is just off the impressive foyer. Just a few steps down, a sunken family room with taller than 10-foot ceilings, custom built-ins, wet bar and grand French doors opens to a private walled garden. A spectacular new open kitchen with a large center island, stainless steel appliances, custom white cabinets and beautiful white quartz counters features views of the Potomac. Each bathroom has been completely renovated and features custom tile work and modern fixtures. The stunning living room is composed of classic details including crown molding, chair rails and a wood-burning fireplace with a grand mantle and three sets of French doors overlooking both the park and river. The primary suite also has river and park views with a wood-burning fireplace, a beautiful new ensuite bath and a large walk-in closet. The finished upper level includes a newly renovated full bath, laundry/utility room, storage room and a large flex space.
**Weekly Words**

**ACROSS**
1. "Passages" author Sheehy
2. Droll
3. CA home to Warhol's "Triple Elvis"
4. Infuse, as with emotion
5. Radius neighbor
6. Yes, in Lyon
7. "Ironic" singer Morissette
8. NBA or NFL position
9. Panache or oomph
10. Corrida cheer
11. Pepperoni or salami
12. Ocean base?
13. Enterprise's console
14. No. cruncher
15. Cascadian volcanic peak
16. T.H. White novel about King Arthur
17. Corp. head honcho
18. Worried sick
19. Jacket fastener
20. One on the invite list
21. God, in Islam
22. Really ridiculous
23. Strategically planted plants
24. "Yeah!"
25. Charged particle
26. Egg pouch
27. Egg on
28. Like some dirty shots
29. Winter bug
30. Took some measured steps?
31. Sale limit, in brief
32. Capital of Thailand?
33. Like calls from the ocean
34. Gave it my best shot
35. Break bread
36. Pig's pen
37. Crowned head
38. Piglet's pen
39. Feature of a giraffe
40. Like autumn air
41. "Doesn't go" in Spanish
42. Word that can precede "sheet" or "shelf"
43. "I'm so excited!"
44. "She's got by"
45. "Hey!"
46. My Chemical Romance, for one
47. Plod through a shallow pool
48. Article in some hip-hop titles
49. "Ironic" singer Morissette
50. "I'm so excited!"
51. "Qué viva!"
52. Fencing gear
53. Remoulade ingredient
54. Up to the task
55. Renowned
56. Virtual game people
57. Like some dirty shots
58. Chewy model that can be interpreted as "doesn't go" in Spanish
59. Like autumn air
60. Outfit for a baby
61. She's got by"
62. "I'm so excited!"
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**Solutions from last week**

1. Fernando Joel Cruz Conde
2. James Kilgore Edmundson Jr.
3. James Paul Tyrrell
4. Norma Ann Vest
5. Edward Anthony Zahrobsky

**Death Notices**

- **Fernando Joel Cruz Conde** (55), of Alexandria, Oct. 9, 2023
- **James Kilgore Edmundson Jr.** (84), of Alexandria, Oct. 8, 2023
- **James Paul Tyrrell** (68), of Alexandria, Oct. 9, 2023
- **Norma Ann Vest** (76), of Alexandria, Oct. 14, 2023
- **Edward Anthony Zahrobsky** (65), of Alexandria, Sept. 21, 2023
Editorial

What’s in a name?

A name is one of the highest honors we can bestow. Babies are often named after parents or other relatives – or sometimes for current popular figures. For instance, there were a lot of little girls named “Hermione” in the 2000s in honor of the “Harry Potter” character.

We also name buildings and streets to commemorate people. And then later, when new information comes to light or majority sentiment changes, we sometimes rue prior decisions.

The issue of removing names of people associated with the Confederacy or segregation has been a contentious topic in Alexandria, as with the rest of the country, for a decade or more.

There was an explosive City Council meeting in September 2016 when impassioned residents almost got out of hand while Council discussed removing the “Appomattox” statue from the intersection of S. Washington and Prince streets. Then Mayor Allison Silberberg quieted the riot and Council voted to remove the statue, which stayed in place until 2020 because General Assembly approval was also required for its removal.

This paper ran a series of award-winning stories in 2018 and 2019 about the brave children and their parents who desegregated Alexandria’s public schools in 1959 – and the terrible price some of them paid – for the 60th anniversary of that event. We also led the way in calling for Alexandria City Public Schools to rename T.C. Williams High School after those stories exposed the extent of his resistance to desegregation.

It seemed unconscionable that a mostly minority school would continue to be named for someone like Williams. To read the series of stories, go to alextimes.com and search for “mcelhatton,” the author’s name.

Which brings us to the current discussion around removing names from streets in Alexandria. We see three key components to this discussion: streets named as resistance to desegregation, the costs associated with renaming and what to do about the name “Lee.”

1. In short, it’s a no-brainer to put all of Alexandria’s streets named as part of resistance to desegregation at the top of the list to reconsider. Specifically, streets named after a 1955 city ordinance passed that required new streets to be named for Confederate generals should be the first ones looked at. What’s remarkable is that this noxious requirement remained on the books for more than 60 years.

2. Despite our sentiment above, there is also a cost to renaming streets. This cost is monetary to both the city and residents on impacted streets. But the cost for residents will extend beyond the financial. There’s a time and hassle cost in changing one’s place of residence on every form, organization, bank account and with delivery companies. There’s also an emotional cost to having your street name changed without voluntarily moving. That’s why buy-in from residents on streets proposed for renaming is important.

3. And then there’s the delicate issue of Robert E. Lee who spent much of his boyhood in Alexandria. How do we handle the congruence of a native son who also led the Confederate Army so effectively that he prolonged the Civil War, with the fact that his name adorns one of Old Town’s loveliest streets? While some would like to contend that the street was named for the Lee family rather Robert E., the 1874 timing of the street being named seems to refute that assertion.

On face value, renaming Lee Street should be an easy call – except that it isn’t.

Names are important. They’re a part of our identity as people and as residents. Who we honor, however, is a clear reflection of what we hold dear.

Opinion

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

Photo of the Week

Remove oversized flag on the waterfront

Letters

To the editor:

Last year, I had the misfortune of seeing an enormous red and black flag – and by enormous, I mean nearly four stories tall – adorn a building facing the waterfront a mere two blocks from King Street. Thankfully it was removed in mid-January this year before I could call attention to the issue.

However, you can imagine my dismay, when, while walking along the riverfront, as literally thousands of visitors and residents of Alexandria do every day, to see the red and black atrocity rear its hideous head again.

It was my understanding that the city has codes and regulations in order to prevent and control gaudy displays of this sort. I am truly shocked and chagrined that a flag of this size could be publicly displayed at all, let alone in such a high-traffic area and in such a visible location.

This display not only significantly detracts from Alexandria’s image, but it makes a mockery of the Alexandria government as it is clear that businesses are out of control and can do whatever they please. Do we not have standards that govern inappropriate displays such as this?

Keep in mind that even American flags, that merely approximate this size, adorn office buildings only a few significant days a year, such as on Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day and 9/11. Afterward they are promptly removed.

The waterfront is an incredible public space, one that took not only years, but decades to come to fruition, and city government should be saluted for this amazing accomplishment. Please do not throw all that hard work away by letting one obnoxious flag make a laughing stock out of us all.

I urge the city to immediately get this situation under control; heaven forbid that it propagate among other business owners. Imagine if other buildings along the waterfront, or dare I say, our beloved King Street, were to be adorned with similarly sized and competing flags. To quote Colonel Kurtz, “The horror. The horror.”

You may think this melodramatic and alarmist, but it is a slippery slope and the smallest crack in the dike can cause a flood. And “small” could never be used to describe this appalling display.

- Anthony Priest, Alexandria

The opinions expressed in letters and columns are those of the writers only and do not reflect the views, nor receive the endorsement, of the Alexandria Times.
Letters

Town hall meeting leaves residents frustrated and angry

To the editor:

I am writing to express my deep disappointment and frustration with the recent meeting held between City Council and local residents on September 24. It is with great concern that I recount what can only be described as a deeply insulting and disheartening experience.

Local government meetings are meant to be a forum where elected officials engage with their constituents, listen to their concerns and work collaboratively to find solutions to community issues. Unfortunately, the meeting held on September 24 failed miserably in achieving these fundamental goals.

One of the most disheartening aspects of the meeting was the apparent lack of genuine interest from some Council members. It was evident that decisions had already been made on various matters, rendering the entire meeting a mere formality. This disregard for the input of local residents not only insults the intelligence of local residents not only in Alexandria but also undermines the very essence of democracy.

Moreover, the lack of respect shown by certain Council members toward those who spoke during the public comment period was unacceptable. Residents, who took time out of their busy lives to attend the meeting, were met with dismissive attitudes and condescending remarks. Such behavior is totally insulting — especially when City Council tells residents that they want more power and decision-making authority over changes in our zoning and infrastructure requirements.

The failure to address pressing issues raised by local residents during the meeting is equally troubling. Several crucial concerns were presented, ranging from public safety and infrastructure to environmental sustainability, yet there was little substantive discussion or follow up from Council. This lack of responsiveness sends a clear message that we can no longer trust the City Council we elected to be responsive to our needs, and that they do not deserve to make the zoning changes they are promoting.

Demanding that we residents give them more power has nothing to do with more affordable housing. It is a power grab by both City Council and the developers.

It is my hope that this letter serves as a call to action for both our City Council and our community. We must demand accountability, transparency and respect from our elected officials. Local government should be a place where ideas are heard, issues are addressed and citizens are treated with the dignity they deserve. Let us not forget that the foundation of our democracy is built upon the active participation of citizens.

Ann Shack,
Alexandria

Commentary

City Hall Watch

Losing your say in the matter

BY BILL ROSSELLO

In 2019, city residents endured a nine-hour public hearing only to watch former Councilor Del Pepper cast the deciding vote to narrow a 0.9 mile stretch of Seminary Road. That decision was made in the face of overwhelming community opposition.

At the meeting’s end, Mayor Justin Wilson commented, “We cannot do this again,” meaning allow the community to have so much say in a controversial matter. He made similar comments last week related to two ill-advised stream restoration projects that would have wrought destruction at Taylor Run and Strawberry Run.

Now, on what the mayor calls “the most ambitious housing reform in our history,” the city is proposing to eliminate your say on land use, affording developers the right to build in your neighborhood whatever makes them the most money.

The astonishing bundling of nine zoning proposals through 41 text amendments to be reviewed by the public in just six weeks represents the latest and the most significant assault on resident voices.

The intent of the city’s Zoning for Housing initiative is to dramatically increase the city’s housing stock, in part by eliminating zoning protections that safeguard your neighborhoods from being overdeveloped.

The city’s assertions for the zoning changes hold no water. Most alarming was the assertion about racist provisions in the zoning code. For three years, officials promised to uncover those that continue to impede equity and promote systemic racism. But the only thing they found in the code was the presumably discriminatory use of the word “family,” which will be removed.

Was that the code’s major impediment to equity?

The City policy change’s other basis was affordability. But past is prologue: The city added about 11,000 rental units between 2012 to 2022 without improvement in affordability. What did result were disproportionate increases in school enrollment, violent crime and emergency police and medical calls for service. And more water main breaks, flooding, traffic congestion and a dramatic growth in the city’s debt.

Meanwhile, the city has planned 40,820 more units in transit-oriented areas and 2,838 “affordable” units elsewhere. That equates to 80,000 to 100,000 new residents, at least a 50% increase above Alexandria’s current size.

That would require perhaps a dozen new schools. Where will we put them? It will add tens of thousands of motor vehicles. Where will we park them and what will happen to traffic congestion? And how will we afford the inevitable infrastructure costs, already taxing our residents and testing the city’s borrowing capacity?

There are other implications.

Despite having one of the lowest percentages of single-family units in the nation at nearly 12%, the city’s policies will reduce that number, allowing houses to be replaced with “fourplex” rental apartments. That will eliminate single-family zoning — in turn making owning a home even less attainable than today — and reduce our already dismal homeownership rate.

“...is to dramatically increase the city’s housing stock, in part by eliminating zoning protections that safeguard your neighborhoods.”

– Bill Rossello,
Alexandria resident

Despite having one of the highest percentages of rental units in the nation, the city will add tens of thousands more. That will involve redevelopment of older garden apartment buildings, drive more gentrification and displace longtime residents.

We saw that at the Heritage complex in Old Town. It will also come with extreme densification in high-rise communities as with the ParcView apartments, where a new tower is planned on the same site. And we will also see new towers erected right next to townhomes, as with the Blake apartments near Mark Center.

Through zoning changes, the city will make it easier for developers, large and small, increasing their ability to build “by right,” and eliminating your right to question what’s happening in your neighborhood. The zoning protections that keep your neighborhood from being overdeveloped will be gone.

City Council will vote on these changes on November 28. Unless residents speak up — and Council hears them — prepare for the continued reduction of our quality of life, which we will pay for, while losing our say in the matter.

Our lives here may never be the same.

The writer is a civic advocate, management consultant and longtime Alexandria resident.
Out of the Attic

James Pollard Espy: the Storm King

On June 1 and 2, 1840, Professor James Pollard Espy of Philadelphia delivered two lectures on the “Law of Storms” at Lyceum Hall, now the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum. While perhaps not as obsessed as Weather Channel aficionados and storm chasers of the 21st century, weather fascinated people in the 19th century, too. Espy, who developed a convection theory of storms, was a well-known and influential figure though some of his theories may sound odd today.

The ad for Espy’s lecture noted:

“In these lectures a new theory, founded on experimentation and observation, will be developed, by which it will be clearly understood how clouds are formed; and a method shown how their height, when forming, maybe ascertained by the Thermometer. ... Also, a very simple means will be demonstrated how any careful observer may know, in what direction a great storm is raging, several hundred miles from him, and many other interesting phenomena never before understood, will be explained, such as hail storms and tornadoes.”

The writer of the ad, beyond his affinity for commas, suggested that audiences were not simply interested in weather but in practical ways they could themselves understand weather and climate.

Espy was born May 9, 1785, in Pennsylvania and spent his early adulthood as a teacher and lawyer. At the age of 43, he took an interest in studying what causes storms and began to pursue a career in meteorology. Over the next five years, he developed his convection theory of storms. Convection, as it relates to weather, is the universal movement of warm air in storms that gives them self-sustaining power.

In 1834, Espy became meteorologist for both the Franklin Institute and the American Philosophical Society – both in Philadelphia. As chair of a joint committee, he established a network of weather observers to study storms. He convinced the Pennsylvania legislature to appropriate $4,000 to equip an observer in each county with a barometer, thermometers and a rain gauge.

In 1856, Espy abandoned teaching to focus solely on lecturing before scientific bodies and popular audiences and he illustrated these lectures with charts, illustrations and globes. It was then that he became known as the “Storm King.”

In 1840, he lectured before the British Science Association and the French Academy of Sciences. French physicist and astronomer Francois Arago said, “France has its Cuvier, England its Newton, America its Espy.” Good company indeed. In 1841, Espy published his convection theory in “The Philosophy of Storms.” In it, he also argued that forest fires, because of their heat, can cause rainstorms. He recommended burning Appalachian forests to end major droughts.

Espy went so far as to lobby Congress and the Pennsylvania legislature for funds to study the possibility of starting forest fires to create rain. Enough people had observed, however, that forest fires don’t necessarily lead to rainfall. He received no money to pursue this theory.

Before Espy’s first Alexandria lecture in 1840, Lyceum Company president Benjamin Hallowell wrote in the Alexandria Gazette, “This distinguished individual has consented to favor our citizens with one or two lectures ...” Hallowell also mentioned Espy’s theory of burning fires to create rain, downplaying it as “incidental” and the “least interesting and important” part of his theory. Espy lectured at Lyceum Hall four more times in 1842 and once more in 1847.

Espy was a pioneering Meteorologist. In his life, he served as meteorologist to the War (1842) and Navy (1848) departments and was first meteorologist to the United States Government (1843) under the Surgeon General. He developed the use of the telegraph in assembling weather observation data so he could study the progress of storms.

Espy laid the basis for scientific weather forecasting. And on several occasions, he fascinated Alexandria audiences who wanted to learn more about the storms and weather forecasting.

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Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.
ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 2023

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.alexandriavi.gov/dockets.

Translation Services in Amharic, Arabic and Spanish will be provided for the November 1 Special Planning Commission Public Hearing:

Translation Services in Amharic, Arabic and Spanish will be provided for the November 1 Special Planning Commission Public Hearing:

November 1 Planning Commission (Public Hearing Zoom Webinar Information):
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/WN_qwQpJlZT3Fy/7wMUH1yFxA
Webinar ID: 950 5785 9463
Webinar Passcode: 295384
Dia-in number: 301-715-8592

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 Dia-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 PlanComm@alexandriavi.gov for the Planning Commission Hearing; to the City Clerk at CouncilComment@alexandriavi.gov for the City Council Hearing; or make public comments on the day of the Public Hearing.

For reasonable disability accommodation for the Planning Commission Hearing, contact Lisa Chase at alicia.chase@alexandriavi.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 proper arrangements may be made.

Master Plan Amendment 
#2023 – 00005
Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of amendments to all chapters of the Alexandria Master Plan to: (1) amend the following sentence wherever it occurs, from "Areas of the City currently zoned residential should remain zoned for residential use at no higher than their current density" to "Areas of the City currently zoned residential should remain zoned for residential use;" (2) incorporate the following notes in all Master Plan chapters: "References to low density will continue to refer to development configuration that limits overall building height and lot coverage compatible with the existing neighborhood" and "Ensure race and social equity is 'incorporated and centered in all planning' per City Council's Resolution 2974 including, but not limited to, all references to preserving and protecting neighborhoods and character"; and (3) amend the Housing Master Plan, Zoning Tools Section, Page 107, to add a statement supporting use of the Residential multifamily/RMF zone in areas planned and/or zoned for medium or higher density development and other potentially suitable locations.

Applicant: City of Alexandria, VA

2020-2021 Housing Policy Updates

Public Hearing on proposed amendments to update the 2020-2021 Housing Policy to require, as City Policy, that 1/3 of the density required above what is recommended in the underlying Small Area Plan be provided as committed affordable housing under Zoning Ordinance Section 7-700 and as a condition in Coordinated Development District Special Use Permits and (2) to require as City Policy for commercial to residential conversions in existing buildings that Section 7-700 is applied to allow additional floor area ratio for the proposed residential use.

Applicant: City of Alexandria, VA

Zoning Text Amendment 
#2023-00007 Zoning for Housing

(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend all Articles to implement the following measures from the Zoning for Housing Initiative: (1) Expanding Housing Opportunities in Single-family Zones: amend the R-20, R-12, R-8, R-5, and R-2-5 zones to increase the number of housing units permitted; amend lot and yard requirements in the R-2-5 zone for two-unit dwellings; amend Article VIII to reduce minimum parking requirements; and amend Article XII to exempt lots developed with small scale multi-unit dwellings from site plan requirements; amend the limitation on occupancy limits per unit to allow the same number of occupants allowed by the building code; and delete “roominghouse” definition and regulations. (2) Industrial Zone: add standards for ground floor uses and limitations on locations of vehicular entrances and parking and loading spaces. (3) Residential Multifamily Zone: allow neighborhood-serving commercial uses as permitted and special uses. (4) Historic Development Patterns: in all zones that allow multi-unit dwellings, amend yard and open space requirements for multi-unit uses, delete maximum dwelling units per acre and minimum lot size requirements for multi-unit uses; and delete zone transition setback requirement and require compliance only with other supplemental yard and setback regulations. (5) Townhouses: amend yard, bulk, and open space requirements for single-unit, two-unit, and townhouse dwellings in all zones that allow townhouses; amend lot requirements in the CL, CC, CSL, CG, CD-X, OC, OCM-50, OCM-100, OCH, CRMU-L, CRMU-M, CRMU-H, CRMU-X, and W-1 zones for two-unit dwellings; delete noncomplying provisions in the RA, RB, and RM zones; and create new provisions that allow RM development rights to single-unit, two-unit, and townhouse dwellings on certain lots outside of the RM zone.

Applicant: City of Alexandria, VA
Elevance Health, Inc. seeks Information Security Analyst in Alexandria, VA to provide system and network architecture support for information and network security technologies. Apply at www.jobpostingtoday.com Ref#: 19377.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Benny Diforoza’s Pizza
Opening in Alexandria!
NOW HIRING!!!
Competitive pay, fun working atmosphere, amazing pizza!
Please apply at:
www.bennysva.com/careers

LEGAL NOTICE

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2023

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 re-arrange 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 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2023 7:00 PM, CITY HALL CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER 301 KING STREET ROOM 2400 ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2023 9:30 AM, CITY HALL CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER ROOM 2400 301 KING STREET ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

The November 6, 2023, Alexandria Planning Commission Public Hearing is being held in the Council Chamber (301 King Street, Room 2400 Alexandria, Virginia, 22314) and electronically. Members of the Planning Commission and staff are participating in person. The Planning Commission Public Hearing 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 link:

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/WN_kb7t4Wz5SS-MGjdeMTPC0mng

Zoom Audio Conference:
Dial in: 301-715-8592
Webinar ID: 934 3237 6408
Password: 125381
City Council (Public Hearing Webinar)
Registration Link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qQJb7ZtFy7w7MUH1yFxA

Zoom Audio Conference:
Dial-in number: 301-715-8592
Webinar ID: 950 5785 9463
Webinar Passcode: 295384

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For reasonable disability accommodation for the Planning Commission Hearing, contact Lisa Chase at alicia.chase@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.4666, Virginia Relay 711. We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

Zoning Text Amendment #2023-00005
Issue: (A) Initiation of a Text Amendment and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend Section 6-300 to: revise the effective date of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) updated Flood Insurance Rate; revise existing and add new definitions related to floodplain management and development in floodplain districts; revise existing and add new sections to update language related to floodplain management and regulations for development in floodplain districts in compliance with federal regulations related to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); and to correct typographical errors.

Staff: City of Alexandria - Department of Transportation & Environmental Services

Special Use Permit #2023-00072
5318 and 5320 Eisenhower Avenue (parcel address: 5300 Eisenhower Avenue)
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for expansion of an existing non-complying general automobile repair use (amending Special Use Permit #2004-00049); zoned OCH/Office Commercial High
Applicant: East Coast Collision, Inc., represented by Matthew Roberts, attorney

Special Use Permit #2023-00079
600 Madison Street and 724, 728, 730, and 734 North Saint Asaph Street (parcel address: 734 North Saint Asaph Street)
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for outdoor dining; zoned C1/DCommer-
cial Traditional (Old Town North)
Applicant: ARP Royal, LLC, represented by M. Catherine Puaskar, attorney

Special Use Permit #2023-00076
404 A Alexander Avenue
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to construct a Single-family dwelling on a vacant substandard lot and for a lot without frontage on a public street; zoned: R-2-5 and Single-family. **Wells Fargo Home Projects credit card is issued by Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., an Equal Housing Lender. Special terms for 24 month apply to qualifying purchases of Wells Fargo Home Projects credit card.

Mariner’s Mark 2000 Special Issue: $1,000 or more with approved credit. Minimum monthly payments will not pay off balance before end of promotional period. APR for new purchases is 28.99%.

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**Wells Fargo Home Projects credit card is issued by Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., an Equal Housing Lender. Special terms for 24 month apply to qualifying purchases of Wells Fargo Home Projects credit card.

Mariner’s Mark 2000 Special Issue: $1,000 or more with approved credit. Minimum monthly payments will not pay off balance before end of promotional period. APR for new purchases is 28.99%.

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Mariner’s Mark 2000 Special Issue: $1,000 or more with approved credit. Minimum monthly payments will not pay off balance before end of promotional period. APR for new purchases is 28.99%.
Applicant: Eric Teran and Daniela Gross
Development Site Plan #2023-00012
550 South Pickett Street – Avanti 550 Retail Building
Public hearing and consideration of a request for a Development Site Plan, with a modification, to construct a new retail building; zoned I/Industrial.
Applicant: Avanti HG 550, LLC, represented by M. Catherine Puskar, attorney

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Board of Architectural Review
**LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**

A Public Hearing will be held by the Board of Architectural Review on Thursday, November 2, 2023 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, room 2400, second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 on the following applications:

**BAR#2023-00399 OHAD**
Request for signage at 515 King Street
Applicant: Petmedic Urgent Care

**BAR#2023-00410 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B and Jane J Wallace

**BAR#2023-00415 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 418 S Lee Street
Applicant: John and Fiona Moran

**BAR#2023-00424 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B and Jane J Wallace

**BAR#2023-00433 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 810 Prince Street
Applicant: Andrew M Holden

Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD); Parker – Gray District (PG)

Public comments will be received at the Public Hearing. The public may submit comments in advance to Lanning Blaser at lanning.blaser@alexandriava.gov or make public comments on the day of the Public Hearing.

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Alicia Chase at alicia.chase@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3810, Virginia Relay 711.

For further information, call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.746.4666 or visit alexandriava.gov/dockets.

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**LEGAL NOTICE**

Applicant: Alturas 225 NF, LLC
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 119 Princess Street
Applicant: Kulinski Group Architects

**BAR#2023-00421 OHAD**
Request for alterations and addition at 119 Princess Street
Applicant: Kulinski Group Architects

**BAR#2023-00423 OHAD**
Request for alterations and addition at 418 S Lee Street
Applicant: John and Fiona Moran

**BAR#2023-00424 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 418 S Lee Street
Applicant: John and Fiona Moran

**BAR#2023-00416 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B and Jane J Wallace

**BAR#2023-00415 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B and Jane J Wallace

**BAR#2023-00414 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B and Jane J Wallace

**BAR#2023-00417 OHAD**
Request for signage at 625 First and 510 Second Street
Applicant: EAHG Alexandria LP

**BAR#2023-00420 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 119 Princess Street
Applicant: Kulinski Group Architects

**BAR#2023-00421 OHAD**
Request for alterations and addition at 119 Princess Street
Applicant: Kulinski Group Architects

**BAR#2023-00423 OHAD**
Request for alterations and addition at 418 S Lee Street
Applicant: John and Fiona Moran

**BAR#2023-00424 OHAD**
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 418 S Lee Street
Applicant: John and Fiona Moran

**BAR#2023-00415 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 810 Prince Street
Applicant: Andrew M Holden

Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD); Parker – Gray District (PG)

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Peter Crouch & Katie Crouch
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