
FW: [EXTERNAL]City Hall south facade alt. for BAR

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Fri 11/14/2025 9:35 AM

To Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

 1 attachment (466 KB)

City Hall alt 111325.pdf;

Please see the attached public comment for the City Hall case.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
alexandriava.gov



The City of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary

From: alcox@comcast.net <alcox@comcast.net>

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 9:19 AM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Brendan Harris <brendan.harris@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]City Hall south facade alt. for BAR

Bill:

Please submit the attached comments to the BAR for the City Hall case next week.

Thank you very much,

Al Cox, FAIA emeritus
311 N Alfred St
Alexandria, VA 22314
202-531-7955

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Madam Chair and Members of the BAR:

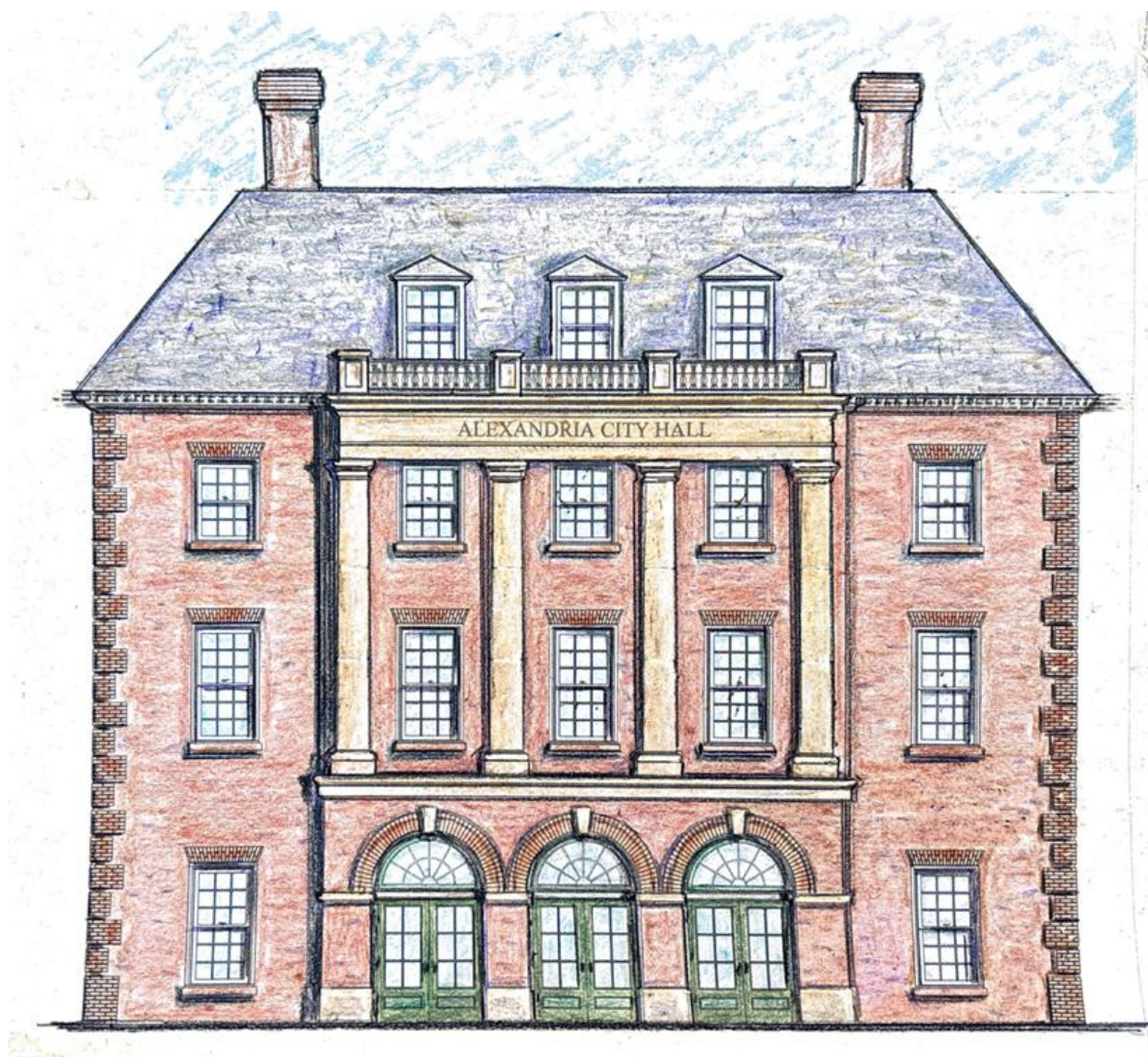
We respectfully offer the attached alternative to the design of the central section of the south façade of Alexandria City Hall. It is a refinement of a sketch that Bud Adams drew prior to the previous BAR hearing and that was widely supported by members of the community and reflects comments made by some BAR members at the previous hearing.



South Façade sketch October 2025

The Colonial Revival style architectural features shown are based on classical Roman precedents and was used historically on several public buildings in Alexandria but are simplified here to reduce cost and for compatibility with scale and architectural character of the existing City Hall building. For instance, the stone or cast stone pilasters at the second and third floors would be engaged with the brick façade rather than freestanding, as used at the old Alexandria Hospital or the Bostetter Courthouse. These pilasters sit on a three-arch base that we feel is both visually stronger and a more welcoming entrance than the rectilinear stacked pilasters previously proposed. A simple balustrade sits on the entablature rather than the triangular pediment used on many other Georgian structures. We continue to recommend that the chimney forms be replaced, though they are slightly smaller on the current proposal.

While it may seem to some that we are debating the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin, the south façade of City Hall is arguably the most important public building in Alexandria and will appear on the Visit Alexandria website and in tens of thousands of tourist photos on social media for generations. We believe that the suggested architectural features of the central section are a de minimis expense on a project of this size and is an appropriate scale to highlight the entrance location and the civic purpose of this one-block wide building when viewed from King Street.



Alternative to Central Section of the South Façade of Alexandria City Hall 11/13/25



Alexandria Hospital Duke St. 1918



Alexandria Police Dept. ca 1959



Martin Bostetter US Courthouse 200 S Washington St., constructed 1930

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me immediately if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Al Cox, FAIA

311 N Alfred St.

FW: [EXTERNAL]City Hall renovation

From Preservation <Preservation@alexandriava.gov>

Date Fri 11/14/2025 10:52 AM

To William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Cc Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

Please share with the Board.

From: Karen D. Paul <karen.d.paul1948@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 5:51 AM

To: Preservation <Preservation@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]City Hall renovation

You don't often get email from karen.d.paul1948@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I support recommendations of the BAR in maintaining the Colonial Revival aspect of City Hall and strongly oppose contemporary updating that moves in the opposite direction of Old Town's historical architectural identity.

Karen Paul

President

The Alexandria Association

Alexandriaassociation.org

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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FW: [EXTERNAL]City Hall Renovation

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Mon 11/17/2025 12:58 PM

To Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

Please see below.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
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The City of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary

From: Melissa B Kuennen <melissa.b.kuennen@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:54 PM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>; brendon.harris@alexandriava.gov

Cc: Yvonne Callahan <yvonneweightcallahan@gmail.com>; Al Cox <alcox@comcast.net>; Gail Rothrock <gcrothrock@gmail.com>; Christine Roberts <croberts799@mac.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]City Hall Renovation

Please forward my comments to the members of the BAR prior to the November 19 Hearing.

As an architect who practiced for 42 years, and who designed dozens of buildings for municipalities, it is well known among civic building architects that "the image a city projects in its public buildings represents the pride it has in its community."

All photos of City Hall's entrance facade shown as the image of the city show an American flag and the fountain obscuring the building. Do we want this to continue?

For the city of Alexandria's office of General Services to demand that the BAR accept one alternative as its public face - with its extremely modest and minimal alterations to the existing south facade - due to their own time pressures would be a terrible mistake.

It is through no fault of the BAR that this consultant has yet to create a south facade that exhibits the city's pride in its citizens, despite hours of time spent discussing the issue at meetings and work sessions.

As someone experienced in working with municipalities, Alexandria's requirement to select one of the existing designs for a new image pale by comparison. It would be a shame for the city to accept nothing less than a design that exemplifies its pride in its history, and its architectural history - similar to the other facades of City Hall, the former Alexandria Police Department, the old Alexandria Hospital or the Bostetter Courthouse, where previous architects' designs aspired to be worthy of its citizens.

I concur with the suggestions by Al Cox - please elevate the south facade design to be worthy of our pride.

Melissa Kuennen

--

Melissa B Kuennen
525 Montgomery Street #404
Alexandria VA 22314
melissa.b.kuennen@gmail.com
571.458.6588

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218 North Lee Street, Suite 310
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 549-5811

www.HistoricAlexandriaFoundation.org
HistoricAlexandriaFoundation@gmail.com

November 18, 2025

Nastaran Zandian (Chair)
Robert Bentley (Bud) Adams
Margaret Miller
Theresa del Ninno
Frances Pratt
Andrew Scott
James Spencer
Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

By email

Re: BAR#2025-00370 - OHAD, BAR review of the Request for Alterations at 301 King Street and 108 North Fairfax Street (City Hall and Market Square), November 19, 2025

Dear Chair Zandian and BAR members:

We are writing to supplement our preliminary comments on the proposed renovation of Alexandria's City Hall and Market Square Plaza. We first provided those preliminary comments in our letter of April 10, 2025, which is part of the public record and available for your review.

We continue to believe that while there is much to praise about the proposal, the application by the Department of General Services contains elements that do not satisfy the criteria established by the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the BAR's Design Guidelines. Additionally, the Applicant continues to ignore express guidance provided by members of the BAR, legitimate concerns of members of the public, and the basic precepts of the national standards for treatment of landmark historic properties.

Board of Architectural Review
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Moreover, as the BAR hearing on November 5, 2025 demonstrated, the application before you does not comply with the basic requirements that your procedures demand from every other applicant for a Certificate of Appropriateness: namely, a complete set of design plans for your review—and review by the public—before the commencement of a public hearing. The presentation at the November 5th hearing included entirely new material that the public had no opportunity to review, and which members of the BAR had likewise never seen. Throughout the hearing, the Applicant treated its application more like a Concept Review than a hearing on a Certificate of Appropriateness. This resulted in members of the BAR being called upon to make suggestions that constituted “designing from the bench,” and worse, being asked to abdicate their responsibilities of public review in favor of future staff review of the type architectural details that would ordinarily be the subject of public hearing for any other applicant.

In our view, the City and the public are best served by proceedings that follow the long-established procedures and standards applicable to all buildings in the Old and Historic District. Only by avoiding shortcuts — however well intentioned, and however expedient they may seem — can the City and the public prevent needless controversy and associated delays.

I. Historic Alexandria’s Interest in the Proposed Construction at City Hall

As you know, Historic Alexandria Foundation (“HAF”) was formed in 1954 “to preserve, protect and restore structures and sites of historic or architectural interest in and associated with the City of Alexandria, Virginia, to preserve antiquities, and generally to foster and promote interest in Alexandria’s historic heritage.” In furtherance of this mission, we are vitally concerned with the proper administration of the Zoning Ordinance in the two Historic Districts, the proper functioning and observance of the process and jurisdiction of the Board of Architectural Review (“BAR”), and the preservation of the historic fabric of our City.

HAF is both an owner of real estate in the Old and Historic District of Alexandria (410 South Washington Street), and the holder of preservation easements on numerous properties in close proximity to the property under review. These include Landmark properties at 711 Prince Street, 811 Prince Street, and major contributing properties to the Old and Historic District at 207 Prince Street, 229-231 S. Pitt Street, 301 S. St. Asaph Street, among others. We provide tens of thousands of dollars each year in grants to support worthy and important restoration work on historic properties in the Old and Historic District and elsewhere in the City. These have included major financial support to The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum (105-107 S. Fairfax St, 1/4 of a block away from Market Square Plaza), and the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House (517 Prince Street) as well as the City’s Office of Historic Alexandria. Moreover, our membership includes property owners and taxpayers throughout the City of Alexandria, including those in close proximity to the proposed project.

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II. The Importance of the Subject Property to the City and the Landmark Historic District

Alexandria City Hall defines the character of Alexandria. Not only is it a National and Virginia Historic Landmark of great importance, it is also the centerpiece of the our town: “From the earliest days in Alexandria's history to the present, the Market Square has been the established center of the city.” *Historic American Buildings Survey* (HABS Va-33), available at <https://www.loc.gov/item/va1295/> (visited Nov. 18, 2025)

We are pleased to note the sensitivity toward maintaining and preserving much of the historic fabric that makes our City Hall so attractive and unique. However, as has been repeatedly stressed during public hearings, both by the members of the BAR and by concerned members of the public, the current plans remain incomplete and fail to address substantial concerns, apparently in favor of a rushed design process.

III. Concern Over Rush-to-Judgment and Avoidance of Rules Providing for Full Public Review, Assessment, and Comment

Along with many other members of the public, HAF is greatly concerned about the rushed nature of this project, the most prominent public undertaking in our City. On the night of November 5th, just as the hearing was commencing, the Applicant presented new and still incomplete proposals, without providing copies to the BAR, and without prior disclosure to the public or the BAR. This is contrary to the basic requirements imposed on every other applicant. Rather than exemplifying of the highest standards of compliance, the City has chosen to disregard the instructions that all applicants for BAR review must follow:

“Applications for the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) must be in and complete a minimum of 30 days prior to the hearing date.” *BAR Application Instructions* available at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/BAR-Public-Hearing-Application.pdf> ¶ 1 (visited Nov. 18, 2025).

“Applications without the required supporting materials will be deemed incomplete and will not be scheduled for hearing by the BAR.” *Id.* at ¶ 3.

“The Board may also defer an application for restudy during a public hearing for a variety of reasons **including, but not limited to: submission of additional information/materials**; revision of the project scope of work; or, to address other concerns. When revised information is received by BAR staff the application will be redocketed for a BAR hearing.” *Id.* at ¶ 9 (emphasis added).

The insistence by the Applicant on obtaining BAR approval for plans that they themselves acknowledge to be incomplete constitutes poor governance at best. The

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public, the BAR Staff, and members of the BAR have all been deprived of the period of deliberation that the rules are designed to ensure. Indeed, no private construction project would ever be allowed to proceed based on the shifting and incomplete plans presented by the Applicant here. Because this is a City-government project involving a landmark City property, the BAR should be exercising its most searching and careful review, not its most rushed.

IV. Concern that the Size, Scope, and Effect of the Rooftop Addition Are Not Being Fully Appreciated.

While we applaud the removal of mechanical structures that have accumulated on the roof of City Hall over time, we see no justification for the addition of the proposed penthouse. Public testimony has correctly identified the fact that the sight-line diagrams provided in the application do not accurately depict how the penthouse entertainment space will be viewed by the public. See Application A39-A40.

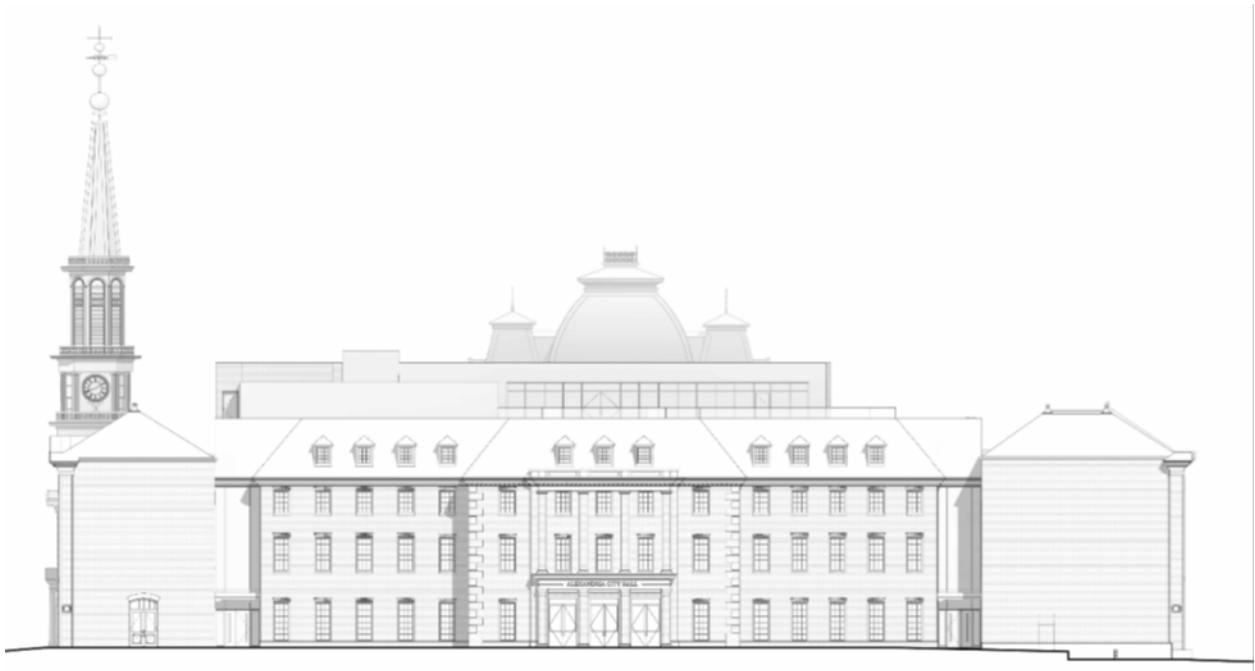
Sight lines from midway down S. Fairfax and S. Royal Streets, the center of the Tavern Square plaza, the Carlyle House Museum Grounds, and other vantage points will all provide more extensive views of the penthouse than the proposal acknowledges. Moreover, the iconic south Market Square elevation of the building — long cherished by residents and visitors alike — will be transformed in a manner that few fully appreciate. The proposed alteration to this elevation will be so jarring that the applicant appears to attempt to obscure it, as shown in the rendering below.



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City General Services Memo at 2.

In reality, a full elevation view makes clear that the public face of City Hall would include a modern, glass-enclosed behemoth sitting atop a historic landmark,



Needless to say, it remains HAF's view that the proposed penthouse addition is contrary to the requirements of Alex. Zon. Ord. §§ 10-105(A)(2)(a)-(e), (g), and that any approval of it would fail the ordinance's mandate to "prevent any construction, reconstruction, alteration or restoration incongruous to such existing building or structure [and] area surroundings." Alex Zon Ord. § 10-105(A)(1).

The penthouse is also inconsistent with numerous provisions of the Board's design guidelines. In particular, the guidelines for additions to commercial buildings provide that:

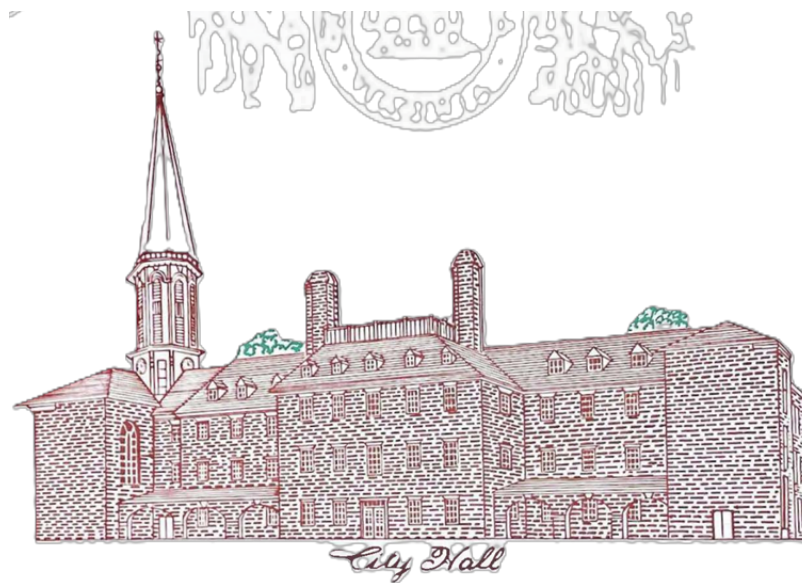
"The design of an addition should respect the heritage of the historic building to which it is attached as well as adjacent buildings. The Boards generally prefer addition designs that are respectful of the existing structure and which seek to be background statements or which echo the design elements of the existing structure." *City of Alexandria, Virginia, Design Guidelines, Additions to Commercial Buildings* at 3.

Likewise, the guidelines instruct that "[t]he roof form should reflect the roof forms expressed along the blockface." *Id.* at 5. The proposed roof treatment bears

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no relation to anything seen in the surrounding neighborhood. There can be no question that the proposed rooftop addition violates the guideline precept that “[a]s a general rule, the stylistic characteristics of additions to commercial buildings should reflect the historical architectural styles found within the historic districts.” *Id.* at 2; *see also* HAF Letter of April 10, 2025.

V. Concern Over Unnecessary and Inappropriate Alternations of Colonial Revival Portions of the Landmark Structure



C.T. Washburn (1963).¹

The Historic Alexandria Foundation has an overarching concern with the proposed design insofar as it seeks to revise the City Hall façade to “improve” the Colonial Revival infill addition that has served as the face of Alexandria for more than sixty years, and which is itself a historically significant feature of City Hall.

Adding additional embellishments to the intentionally restrained façade of City Hall is the type of alteration that preservation principles rightly discourage. The first four preservation standards promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior explicitly caution against the type of makeover now proposed:

¹ C.T. Washburn, *Historic Chart of Alexandria, Virginia* compiled by Historic Alexandria Foundation 1959-1962 (revised in part 1963) Prepared by The Department of City Planning, Alexandria, Virginia (cover).

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1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use **that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.**
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or **alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.**
3. Each property **will be recognized as a physical record of its time,** place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as **adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.**
4. **Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.** *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: Rehabilitation as a Treatment and Standards for Rehabilitation 1-4* (emphasis added).

Departing from these principles risks producing a “Mr. Potato Head” structure with a mismatch of styles, effects, and intentions.

Many of the concerns raised at public hearings about revising the Colonial Revival portion of City Hall arise directly from these foundational preservation principles: unanimous Board requests for restoration of the chimneys; wide-ranging objections to the glass-enclosed stairwells; and the detailed stylistic critique offered by former BAR staff architect Al Cox. Each of these objections reflect, in different ways, the same fundamental problem with the proposed design: the overt effort to alter the exterior of City Hall for the sake of alteration, in disregard of the original design concept of the Colonial Revival southern façade.

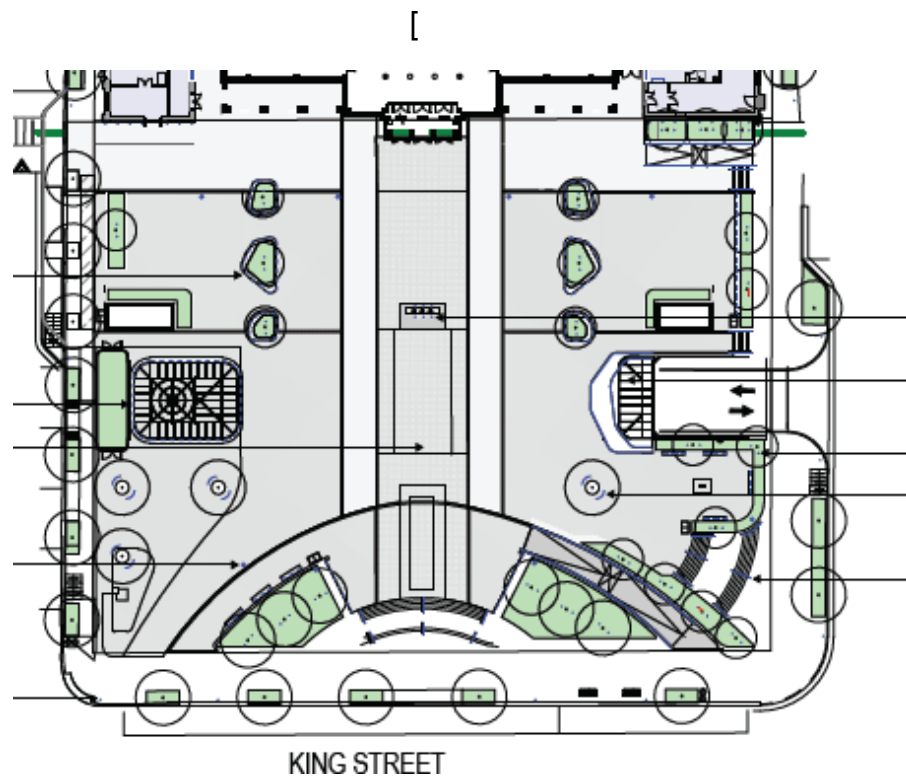
VI. Need to Separate Consideration of Market Square Structures from the Rest of the Project

We share the concerns expressed by members of the public and the BAR regarding the hasty conception and design of the permanent shade structures proposed for placement in Market Square Plaza. We believe the Applicant would be well served by withdrawing that portion of its plan and submitting it for separate review, allowing for full and thoughtful consideration of the issues raised thus far.

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VII. Permanent Constriction of North Fairfax Street will Limit Access to Vital Historic Resources.

We reiterate our concern (see HAF Letter of April 10, 2025) regarding the proposed alteration of the sidewalk and street along North Fairfax Street. The historic streetscape of Alexandria is one of the City's greatest treasures. The precise dimensions of our historic streets were laid out by George Washington himself — including the intersection of King and Fairfax Streets.² Yet the proposed plan for Market Square Plaza (A23) shows a bump-out on the 100 Block of North Fairfax Street that would narrow the width of the street at this historically important intersection.



See also A43, A49 (Proposed Aerial View).

On the same street and block as the proposed bump-out and street narrowing stand some of Alexandria's most significant historic properties including The John Carlyle

² See *A plan of Alexandria, now Belhaven* available at <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3884a.ct000223/?r=0.087,-0.209,1.474,0.888,0> (visited Nov. 15, 2025)

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House,³ the Bank of Alexandria,⁴ and the Alexandria Visitors' Center at the Ramsey House. Furthermore, anyone familiar with Old Town's traffic patterns knows that the corner of King and Fairfax forms a bottleneck, particularly when buses and trucks attempt to turn from North Fairfax onto King Street, and especially during market days. The annual George Washington Birthday Parade crosses this intersection. The Scottish Christmas Walk turns the corner of North Fairfax and King Street. A plan for Market Square Plaza that imposes a permanent narrowing of this vital intersection will impair the public's access to, and enjoyment of, one of the City's most important blocks and it is well within the BAR purview to prevent such incursion on our City's "setting, streetscape [and] environs," Alex. Zon. Ord. § 10-105(A)(2)(c).

In sum, because of City Hall's importance to Alexandria, its citizens, and visitors, this application requires the same rigor, transparency, and fidelity to historic standards required of every other applicant in the Old and Historic District. The current proposal, presented without complete plans and containing substantial departures from both preservation principles and the City's own regulations, puts at risk the very character that makes Alexandria unique. City Hall and its surrounding public spaces are too important to be hastily reshaped without the opportunity for full and proper review.

Thank you for your consideration of our statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Historic Alexandria Foundation
By:

/s/ Robert Weinhagen
President

cc.

William Conkey
william.conkey@alexandriava.gov

³ See https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/VLR_to_transfer/PDFNoms/100-0010_Carlyle_House_1969_Final_Nomination.pdf (visited April 10, 2025).

⁴ See https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/VLR_to_transfer/PDFNoms/100-0004_BankOfAlexandria_1973_Final_Nomination.pdf (visited April 10, 2025).

FW: [EXTERNAL]BAR on the city hall renovation design

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Tue 11/18/2025 3:20 PM

To Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

Please pass along the email below.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
alexandriava.gov



The City of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary

From: Dino Drudi <dino.drudi@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 2:32 PM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR on the city hall renovation design

Historic district staff and BAR have done an extraordinary job impelling city staff to improve city hall's renovation design. Please continue pushing city staff into design improvements for an edifice that will outlive many of us. There was a consensus in favor of chimneys, which city staff working on the renovation seem reluctant to accept, but should be pressed to do so.

It is regrettable that BAR was forced into doing a continuance because city staff insisted on a certificate of appropriateness for what was a *de facto* concept review in which final drawings were not presented for some features while other features were presented as options for BAR to choose (like in a concept review). Consequently, the public has not had a substantive due process opportunity to comment on the design because the continuance entails no public hearing.

Dino Drudi
315 N. West St.
Alex., Va. 22314
202-526-0891

FW: [EXTERNAL]Comments on the City Hall Docket Item for Wednesday November 19

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Tue 11/18/2025 3:54 PM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

See below for another City Hall letter.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
alexandriava.gov



The City of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary

From: Scott Corzine <scorzine54@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 3:52 PM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments on the City Hall Docket Item for Wednesday November 19

Bill, I hope the city will continue to respect the architectural subject matter expertise of the BAR and consider its questions, suggestions and ideas, rather than force an "up or down" vote on any shortcuts the city may want to take. City Hall renovation is something we'll all have to live with for the rest of our lives, so now is not the time for the city to act in bad faith or force-feed the BAR a single suboptimal "choice." It's time to continue good faith efforts and go through due process and constructive engagement to arrive at the optimal design.

To prohibit residents and civic associations from speaking tomorrow night is anathema to the notion of constructive engagement. It reminds many of us how the city treats citizen input as a performative annoyance to be tolerated instead of thoughtful input to be respected and considered. To tell the BAR they must "take it or leave it" when it comes to retaining the chimneys (which are overwhelmingly supported), not considering more grand elements for the entrance structure, or looking at alternatives to lighted hyphens is the opposite of good faith due process.

The city will also violate its ordinance that "No recommendation by a committee [includes boards] for action by the city council shall be made without first offering an opportunity for public comment" if it does not permit public comment, regardless of how long it takes. It's "on the city" to have poorly

managed how its scheduled office moves from City Hall to other locations during the renovation transpired. Why silence the public and why ignore the architectural expertise of the BAR as a consequence of bad planning?

I hope the BAR will consider these issues and reinstate public comment.

I also ask you to forward this note to members of the BAR as part of the public record.

Thanks, Bill.

Scott Corzine
300 Queen Street

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FW: [EXTERNAL]for the BAR members

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Wed 11/19/2025 9:44 AM

To Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

Please pass along the email below to the Board.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
alexandriava.gov



The City of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary

From: Yvonne Callahan <yvonneweightcallahan@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2025 9:24 AM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]for the BAR members

Madam Chair and members of the BAR:

All of us are very grateful for your service to the community for the long hours that you devote to the betterment of our community. We are behind you 100% of the way.

The proposed renovation of City Hall has been a particularly arduous task, and it will, I fear, take more of your time and attention in the future.

The ability of individuals like myself to speak on this project has been curtailed, it would appear, at the hearing this evening. However, we appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our thoughts via email, which is far less satisfactory than a direct discourse.

Because of the scope and importance of this project, it has been difficult for persons such as myself to fully digest every particular element of the consultant's presentation. At this point, I remain primarily concerned with the south facade. It would appear that progress has been made in reaching a consensus, and I would respectfully urge you to work with whomever you are able to reach agreement on the details that will make this a landmark feature of the new building.

I am one of those who remain very unhappy with the removal of the chimneys, after you unanimously supported the position that they should remain; that was also the consensus of the public, I believe.

I think it is very appropriate to ask the City team why they were removed and how that can be justified in light of your sentiments in favor of their retention.

I am also concerned, as you probably are, by what drawings, depictions, or plans (if those are the correct words) that have not yet been provided to you to allow you to see all of the elements of the proposed design to the full extent that you can make informed decisions on what has been presented to you as more or less only a drawing.

If the package is incomplete in such a fashion, how can it be put out to bid? Would it be accepted were this proposal to come from a private developer?

I also remain concerned about the plaza, as it seems as if most of the suggestions made by you, or by members of the public, are ignored. We seem to be making recommendations, which are met by a repeated return to what we were presented with earlier. I would strongly urge that more consideration be given to the use of wrought iron such as was suggested at the November 5 hearing and is such a successful element of the Cluss design at the DC market. That would be another solid achievement and much more appropriate than anything termed "playful" that has been pressed upon us.

Respectfully,

Yvonne

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To: The Board of Architectural Review (BAR)
From: The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC)
Re: BAR Meeting Agenda Item #3 (BAR#2025-00370), Nov. 19, 2025

Dear BAR Members:

Dear BAR Members:

In regard to Item #3 (BAR#2025-00370) on the agenda of the Wednesday, Nov. 19 BAR meeting, the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission unanimously approved a resolution instructing me to briefly inform the Board of Architectural Review once again of our concerns about features of the city hall and Market Square redesign. As you know, I have spoken on HARC's behalf at several previous BAR meetings about three of those concerns, namely:

- The glass walls of the northwest portion of the expanded fifth floor, which, even with the proposed slight reduction in their height, will remain far too visible above the roof of the historic Adolf Cluss building, marring its historic character and, in particular, clashing with the iconic Latrobe steeple. Designed by renowned Federal Period architect Benjamin Latrobe for Alexandria's earlier 1817 city hall, the steeple rapidly became such an Alexandria landmark that the city had it meticulously reproduced for inclusion in the design of Cluss's 1872 city hall.
- The glass and metal "hyphens" on both sides of the 1961 Colonial Revival addition facing Market Square, which will clash with both the Second Empire and Colonial Revival features of city hall far more than those features ever clashed with each other. Most importantly, the hyphens contain an unattractive stairwell that will be lit from within at night, creating a jarring distraction from important enhancements of the Colonial Revival south façade.
- The proposed redesign of the 1961 addition's central pavilion, which, although greatly improved over the original redesign, with its stark, modernist entry, could profit from the introduction of features even more congruent with its Colonial Revival façade.

HARC is also concerned about two other aspects of the proposed city hall and Market Square renovation:

- We deplore the proposal to eliminate the false chimneys on the south façade of city hall, and we thank BAR members for their unanimous vote to either retain the current chimneys or design new ones whose proportions will maximize their congruence with other façade enhancements. We believe the chimneys are not only singularly appropriate for the Colonial Revival façade, but will also help achieve the BAR members' stated desire to focus visitors' attention on the central pavilion, with its greatly enhanced south entrance.
- We consider the modernist shade structures proposed for Market Square are out of keeping with the historic styles of City Hall and other nearby buildings, and we

would like to see Market Square structures more compatible with the square's historic location.

Thank you very much for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

John J. Patrick

Member, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

November 19, 2025

Chair and Members of the Board of Architectural Review
City of Alexandria

Re: City Hall—Market Square renovations

Dear Chair and Members:

I am writing to request that the Board of Architectural Review (“BAR”) take whatever actions necessary to ensure that the “shade structure” design submissions (plural) from the city’s architect/consultant be replaced or altered to more closely align with those currently situated outside the Eastern Market in Washington, D.C. In the November 13, 2025 memo from Jeremy McPike, Director of the city’s Department of General Services, he requested the BAR approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the alterations at 301 King Street and 108 N. Fairfax Street, with the following conditions: Item 1. **Market Square Structures:** “Work with staff on the final design and detailing of the canopies, elevator enclosure and seating steps to be consistent with the submitted renderings.”

It is unclear to me as to which renderings of the “structures” (aka “shade structures”) were actually submitted. The renderings that were included in the docket packets for the November 5, 2025 hearing were not the ones that the architect/consultant presented--onscreen only--to the BAR that night. As at least one of you noted, the new renderings were not provided to the members of the BAR in advance of the hearing, nor were they even handed to the members during the hearing (or included in the docket packet for the public to review). Which renderings are the ones to which Mr. McPike refers?

The Guidelines for Accessory Structures (both residential and commercial) adopted by the BAR on May 25, 1993 clearly specify that “**Free-standing accessory structures should complement, not compete with, the architecture of the main building.**” (boldface type added). I submit that no renderings submitted to the BAR complement either the Adolf Kluss building or the subsequent addition—and therefore are in violation of the BAR’s own Guidelines. The Guidelines further specify that “The materials of accessory structures should follow the historic usage of materials.....The materials of accessory structures should not detract from the materials of the main building.....Exterior finishes for accessory structures should be selected to complement the main building.” The architect/consultant has stated that a portion of the roof shown on at least one of the renderings would be partially constructed of aluminum, a metal that is used in more contemporary structures than either of the structures that comprise City Hall.

As you know, the Eastern Market was also designed by Adolf Kluss, and over time has also been the site of markets similar to the ones that are held on Market Square. I am attaching photographs pulled from the many sites that show details from the accessory structures outside the Eastern Market building itself, along with historical photographs that show how long similar structures were in place on the site. The interior shots of the current structures show that metal can indeed be used to complement the newly-renovated Alexandria City Hall—just as these complement another beloved Adolf Kluss building. I submit “sustainability” is not just related to materials—but also to ensure that building designs—even accessory buildings--don’t reflect a particular fad at a given time.

Thank you for your dedicated service to the city and the residents who want to preserve our architectural resources.

Respectfully,
Carol P. Black
Member of the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission
(this is my personal submission, not on behalf of HARC)

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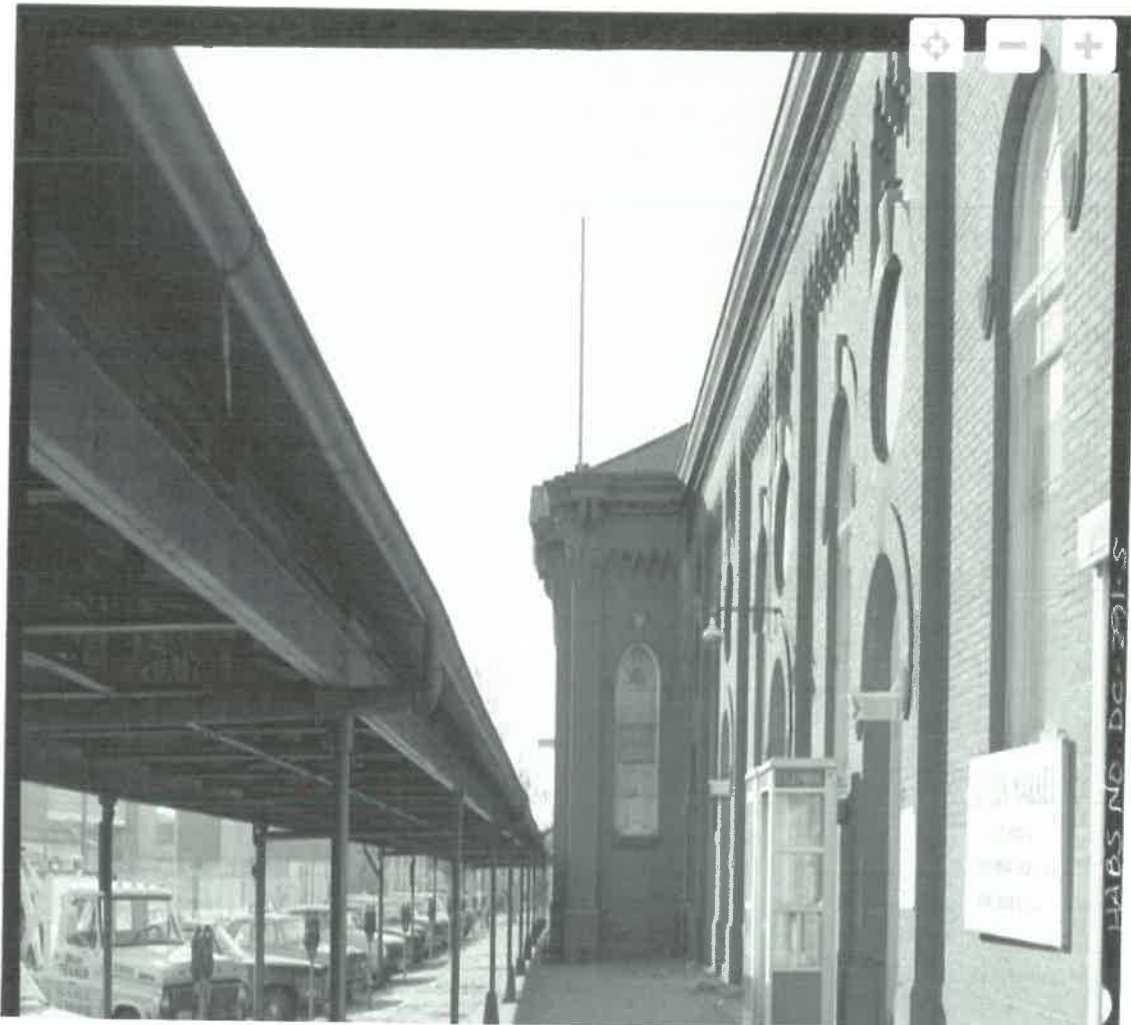
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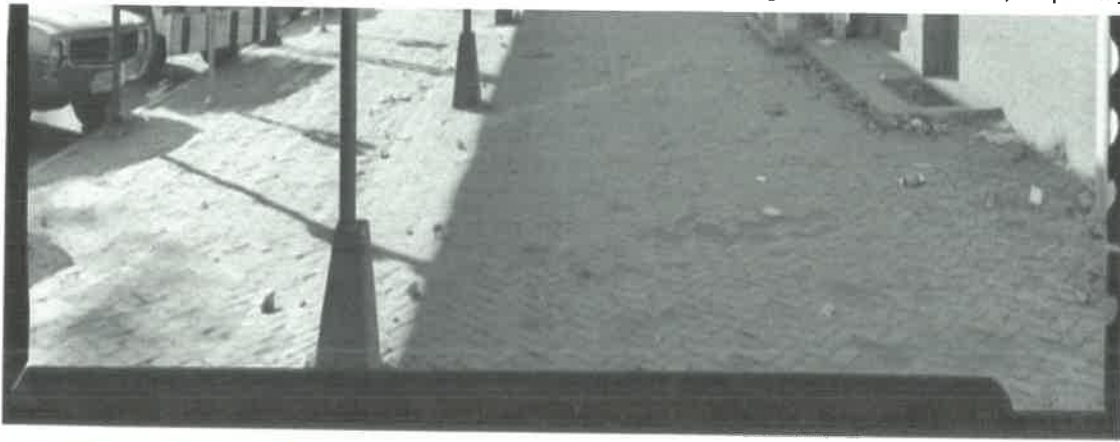
PHOTO, PRINT, DRAWING

5. Detail, east side - Eastern Market, 7th Street Southeast, Washington, District of Columbia, DC Photos from Survey HABS DC-291

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[Image](#) Image 5 of 12 [Go](#) Pages [◀](#) [▶](#) View [Single image](#) [Go](#)





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About this Item

Title

Eastern Market, 7th Street Southeast, Washington, District of Columbia, DC

Names

Historic American Buildings Survey, creator

Cluss, Adolph

Hoagland, Alison K., historian

Null, Druscilla J., editor

Boucher, Jack E., photographer

Created / Published

Documentation compiled after 1933

Headings

- markets
- District Of Columbia--District Of Columbia--Washington

Notes

- For an aerial view that includes the market, see photo #2 in Eastern Market Metro Station (HABS DC-670)
- Significance: Last of the city's markets to continue in operation.
- Survey number: HABS DC-291
- Building/structure dates: 1872-1873 Initial Construction
- Building/structure dates: 1908 Subsequent Work
- National Register of Historic Places NRIS Number: 71000998



Medium

Photo(s): 12



(<https://easternmarket-dc.org/>)

 (<https://www.facebook.com/EasternMarketDC>)  (<https://twitter.com/easternmarketdc>)

 (https://www.instagram.com/easternmarket_dc/)  (<https://www.yelp.com/biz/eastern-market-washington>)



Our History

Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plans for the city of Washington designated space for local markets. Eastern Market, completed in 1873, emerged from this original plan. It was designed by a German-born immigrant named Adolf Cluss. A renowned local architect of his time, Cluss also designed the Smithsonian Arts and Industries Building, which to this day is a prominent building on The Mall.

As Capitol Hill's population grew in the early 20th Century, new additions to Eastern Market, consisting of the Center and North Halls, were added. During these expansions, Eastern Market was unofficially recognized as the "town center" of Capitol Hill.

Life at the market progressed uninterrupted into the 21st century until one fateful spring day in 2007. In the early hours of April 30, 2007 the Capitol Hill neighborhood woke to the sound of fire sirens and the smell of smoke. In a matter of hours, Eastern Market was critically damaged by fire. Though the cause of the fire is still debated, the response was unanimous... the market must be rebuilt! The day after the blaze, Mayor Adrian Fenty pledged to rebuild the damaged market and restore its historic architectural features. In an unprecedented public-private partnership, the Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee, the Capitol Hill Community Foundation, and the Government of the District of Columbia joined to preserve not just an architectural edifice, but the livelihoods that the market sustained and the community the market had fostered.

In the days after the fire, the Foundation supplied the South Hall merchants with resources that enabled them to continue to operate outdoors on the Farmers' Line. Simultaneously, the city built a temporary home for the merchants...the East Hall. The East Hall sheltered the merchants until the historic market reopened on June 26, 2009.

Eastern Market is one of the few historic public market buildings left in Washington, DC and the only one that has retained its original public market function. The Eastern Market building is designated as a National Historic Landmark. The market has been in continuous operation since 1873.

225 Seventh Street, SE Washington, DC 20003

(P): 202-698-5253

market.manager@dc.gov

(mailto:market.manager@dc.gov)

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Hours of Operation

Indoor Market

Tuesday to Saturday- 8am-6pm

Sunday - 8am-5pm

Outdoor Market

Saturday & Sunday - 9am-4pm

Tuesday - 12pm-4pm

Monday - CLOSED

Be a Vendor (<https://easternmarket-dc.org/become-a-vendor/>)

Gallery (<https://easternmarket-dc.org/our-gallery/>)

North Hall Rental (<https://easternmarket-dc.org/event-space/>)

EMCAC (<https://easternmarket-dc.org/emcac/>)



(<https://www.facebook.com/EasternMarketDC>)



(<https://twitter.com/easternmarketdc>)



(https://www.instagram.com/easternmarket_dc/)

([https://www.yelp.com/biz/eastern-](https://www.yelp.com/biz/eastern-market-washington)

market-washington)

(<https://discover.citywalkerapp.com/place-details/district+of+columbia/washington/eastern+market>)