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**A statement by Bert Ely to the Alexandria City Council
regarding on-site parking at the Robinson Terminal developments**
February 21, 2015

Mr. Mayor and members of Council, I am Bert Ely and I am here today to speak, as co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront, about the potential inadequacy of on-site parking at the proposed Robinson Terminal developments.

That inadequacy arises in two regards – insufficient parking for residents and their guests and insufficient parking for the large restaurant operations planned for both developments. Because of insufficient on-site parking, these developments will create additional parking demand outside the developments. Put another way, neither development will be entirely self-sufficient with regard to the peak demand for parking spaces that they will create.

The developers try to whistle past that graveyard by saying that there will be sufficient space in nearby garages to park cars that cannot be parked within the development. However, even today, at peak times, nearby garages, that is, those a short walk away, are often full, and they are not cheap!

Where do visitors and restaurant patrons try to park today – on nearby streets when at peak times residents on those streets are struggling to find a parking space, too. This intense competition for parking spaces is at its worst on warm summer evenings. Even more troubling, we are facing a continuing loss of existing parking spaces along the waterfront through the dramatic downsizing of the Boat Club parking lot and the forthcoming loss of all public parking along the east side of Strand between Prince and Duke.

The parking inadequacy of the new developments is quite evident in the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) has been filed for the South Robinson Terminal property, which the Planning Commission is scheduled to hear on April 3. That DSUP requests a substantial reduction in the amount of required on-site parking. Part of the justification for the parking reduction is premised on utilizing 21 on-street parking spaces in the unit block of Wolfe Street that already are fully utilized at peak times.

Based on information presented to the Waterfront Commission Tuesday morning, the DSUP for the North Robinson Terminal development will include a request for a substantial reduction in on-site parking. The sketchy parking data presented to the Waterfront Commission clearly indicates that the developer intends for a portion of the peak parking demand created by the development to be parked in nearby garages and streets already saturated with parked cars.

Given the deliberate reduction in public parking spaces in the waterfront area already underway, which will worsen parking problems even if the Robinson Terminal properties were not developed, Council should adopt the policy that both Robinson Terminal properties must be able to accommodate, on site, all of the peak parking demand they create as well as all resident parking demand, specifically for the third, fourth, and fifth cars that some of those residents will own, including cars owned by adult children living at home.

To incentivize the developers to do just that, the DSUPs for both terminal developments should explicitly state that residents of the condominiums and townhouses to be built on those properties cannot obtain parking permits in their respective parking districts. Residents of the two developments should still be able to obtain guest parking permits, but no permanent parking permits.

Now is the time for Council to act, before the existing parking nightmare in Old Town is exacerbated by the Robinson Terminal developments.

Thank you for your time. I welcome your questions.

K. Schloeden

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As you know, a pipe burst at the Beatley library on Monday and flooded the first floor of the building. We want to thank the police and fire department who first responded, and the city's General Services team who quickly arranged for the cleanup. I'd especially like to thank Jeremy McPike, Tan Cross, Donna Pollucci, and Terence Davis, as well as the others from IT services who worked overnight on this emergency. The building was closed to the public this week, but I'm happy to say, is open again today.

The 4000 community members who participated in our needs assessment said that materials are a clear priority for our 1 million visitors a year. Our current materials budget is \$360,000 which represents \$2.40 per capita. The national average is around \$4.00 per capita. Our materials budget has declined 37.5% over the past 10 years. That's pretty drastic.

Having attended several of the recent City budget exercises, I am well aware of the revenue shortfall we are facing, and the need for each city agency to find efficiencies and cut costs. Therefore, we are proposing a matching plan to increase the materials budget. The Library Foundation, the tax exempt arm of the library which can accept private donations, will try to raise \$50,000, IF the City will match the challenge with \$50,000, which you would put in reserve. In addition, the library is applying for grants which would allow it to add another \$50,000 to this challenge. I want to make clear that the library budget as it stands is not flush enough to come up with this extra money on its own. We have cut hours and given up or left vacant every possible position we can. If these grants don't pan out, The Foundation will still challenge you to match what we can raise.

We hope you will accept this matching grant proposal.

I'd like to speak towards our Capital Improvement needs. In 2014, thanks to funding from the Beatley Friends, we conducted an independent study on the Beatley building to pinpoint the causes of so many leaks. The recommendations have been given to General Services, and they have already accomplished a lot. But to fully solve the problems is estimated to cost \$1 million dollars. We know that the city doesn't have that amount to spend in any one year, but we would like to get on the CIP list for the next five years. We also want to reiterate the library's need to reclaim the ground floor of the Burke Branch Library. The needs

assessment participants said they want digital media labs and additional technology training, more community meeting spaces and more early literacy and homework help spaces. The ground floor at Burke will enable us to achieve these requests. At the moment, we are only asking for money to design the space.

We would like to hear that this space is reverting to the Library.