

Torpedo Factory Art Center Operating Rules and Procedures

This document sets forth rules and procedures related to the Torpedo Factory Art Center ("TFAC"). "Landlord" refers to the City of Alexandria, Virginia. "Tenant" refers to tenants and subtenants.

1. Working and Interacting with the Public.

- a. In order to continue the tradition that artists' studios are working places rather than just shops, artists will spend a majority of their time in the studio producing artwork, not just sitting and selling. Group artists are expected to work on their art in that studio on the day they are in the studio. To the extent possible, photographers should work in their studios, and will always be available to educate the public.
- b. Work must be the artist's original concept. It must be produced by the artist or under his/her direct supervision. Work of other artists who are not juried into TFAC may not be displayed or sold in the studios or workshops.
- c. During the required hours the studio is open to the public, the artist must work in full view of the public, not behind walls and barricades except for reasons of safety or if working from a live nude model. Studio hall windows are not to be blocked by anything other than the studio address sign, a small notice board no more than 9" x 12" in size, and posted hours. Exterior windows and those that provide visual access to other studios should be clear and unobstructed except for art requiring natural light (e.g. stained glass).

2. Guidelines for Working Conditions.

- a. Noise should be kept to a minimum and be related to the needs of the working process only. Vacuum cleaners or other noisy cleaning equipment may not be used between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Radios, telephones, answering machines, and other equipment should be set on low volume.
- b. Children brought in by artists or children in classes must be supervised. They must be kept under control and in the studio or classroom area.
- c. Pets will be limited to dogs, which must be kept in the studio and must be leashed when walking through public areas. Dogs may not be left overnight or unattended for inappropriate amounts of time (to be determined by the Landlord). The Landlord may order the removal of any pet deemed to be a nuisance, uncontrollable, or a danger to artists, visitors, or any pet brought into the TFAC by any Tenant or visitor. Any Tenant or staff who bring any dog to TFAC must sign a Pet Agreement to indemnify the Landlord from all liability associated with such pet's presence in TFAC. In addition, a current rabies vaccination certificate must be available.

3. Special Equipment. Tenant must obtain the advance written approval of the Landlord in order to install and operate special equipment, including but not limited to, kilns and welding equipment.

4. Hazardous Activities, Materials, and Equipment. The Landlord has the right to regulate and prohibit potentially hazardous processes, the use of hazardous materials, equipment, machinery, and supplies and the disposal of such materials. Materials and equipment of a hazardous nature must be used and stored carefully and in compliance with fire regulations. Toxic sprays (fixatives, varnishes, oil- and lacquer-based paint, etc.) may only be used in a designated spray booth. In case of emergencies, all Tenants should understand the use of fire

- extinguishers, the location of water, the location of fire pull boxes, the evacuation stair routes for their part of the building, and the location of the defibrillator. In case of accidental spillage, the Landlord must be notified immediately.
5. Tenant Maintenance or Construction. In accordance with the terms of its lease agreement Tenant maintenance or construction which produces heavy or toxic fumes or loud noise, may only be done when the TFAC is closed to the public, and upon consultation with the Landlord.
 6. Use of Public Areas.
 - a. Tenants may not use public space as an extension of their leased premises for any purpose (including signs, artwork, and storage) without the written approval of the Landlord.
 - b. Use of the loading dock (for parking and/or disposal of trash) and carts must not be such to prevent their use by many people. Use of the loading dock is for loading, unloading, and trash removal. On evenings when event rentals are scheduled the loading dock accessibility by Tenants will cease at 4:30pm. In addition, the Landlord may on occasion limit access to the loading dock.
 - c. After any work is completed on the dock, the dock must be cleaned up.
 - d. Trash must be disposed on the lower level of TFAC. Glass must be wrapped or boxed. Per City Code, hazardous waste must be removed from the building and taken to a hazardous waste disposal site; this is the responsibility of the Tenant. All Tenant trash must be taken to the loading dock and not be put in hall trashcans or given to those cleaning the building. Large objects are the responsibility of the Tenant to dispose of.
 - e. Carts must be returned promptly to the loading dock.
 - f. Repair costs for damage to the loading dock, loading dock door, or carts are the responsibility of the offender.
 - g. Parking is limited to thirty (30) minutes for pick up and deliveries. Tenants must list their vehicles and studio numbers on the blackboard. A fine of \$25.00 will be charged after two (2) warnings for overtime parking.
 - h. Under no circumstances is spraying permitted in the loading dock area or anywhere other than those areas equipped with proper ventilation.
 7. Emergency Contacts. All Tenants must designate an outside emergency contact. This individual must agree to contact the Landlord in the event that the Tenant is unable to perform his/her duties under the lease or sublease and to be contacted by the Landlord regarding the Tenant's status.
 8. Emergency Representatives. All artists must designate another artist to serve as an emergency representative in the event that the artist becomes physically or mentally incapacitated. The emergency representative will be given a key to the studio and access to all supplies and materials. In the event that it is necessary to physically move an artist's work without his/her presence, the emergency representative will perform or supervise this activity.
 9. Tenant Security Alarm Systems. Tenants with security alarm systems will provide alarm keys, which will be accessible to the Landlord to reset in case of false alarms.
 10. Tenant Lock Replacement. All lock replacements, at Tenant's expense, must be coordinated with the Landlord, who must be given access to all Tenant occupied spaces.

11. Tenant Access.

- a. Tenants will have access to the public areas of TFAC between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. on all days the TFAC is open. This access is only for Tenants, but not the general public or other invitees.
- b. Tenants must apply to the Landlord for use of the public space for meetings or other events.
- c. All Tenants may have controlled access by non-tenants outside of normal working hours, under the following conditions:
 - i. The Tenant will be responsible for meeting and escorting the invited person(s) to and from the public entrances to the leased premises. The Tenant will be solely responsible for those individuals during the entire period such person(s) is in the TFAC.
 - ii. In the case of classrooms and atelier, after-hours use must be supervised by the Tenant or its representative. The Tenant is responsible for training its representatives in building rules and procedures. Designated representatives may be staff, teachers, affiliates, or classroom monitors.
 - iii. In the event the Tenant desires to have an opening or other special function in his leased premises outside of normal working hours (that does not use public space), the Tenant will provide advance notice to the Landlord in writing and the Tenant will be responsible for any necessary building security and staff services. The Tenant will be solely responsible for those individuals during the entire period such person(s) are in the TFAC outside of normal working hours.
 - iv. No access will be permitted which might conflict with an event scheduled under the afterhours leasing schedule. The Landlord, whose decision will be final, will make decisions as to whether such access will be in conflict.

12. Events in the Public Space. The Landlord has the exclusive right to schedule events in the public space for groups and individuals that meet certain specific criteria and pay the rent to the Landlord. Access to the TFAC by the Tenants and public during such functions shall be controlled by the Landlord and will be subject to the event contract.

13. Evacuation Plan. All Tenants and staff should familiarize themselves with the Evacuation Plan and follow the instructions provided.

14. Clean and Safe Work Environment. It is the goal of the Landlord to provide a clean and safe work environment and it is expected that all staff and Tenants will help maintain it. Anyone discovering unsafe situations or work practices should immediately notify the Landlord so that safety problems can be identified and addressed.

15. Use of Torpedo Factory Art Center Name and Logo. To the extent the Landlord can control the use of the Torpedo Factory Art Center trademark, the use of the Torpedo Factory Art Center name will be managed by the Landlord. Additionally, any events or communications initiated by others desiring to use the Torpedo Factory Art Center name must be submitted to the Landlord for review and approval. The Landlord recognizes that the artist Tenants are responsible for marketing and promoting themselves as individuals. In furtherance of this recognition, the Landlord gives permission for the tenant artists to use the Torpedo Factory Art Center name and logo in the promotion of their own work according to the Guidelines for the use of the name Torpedo Factory Art Center and the "Torpedo Factory Art Center Style Guide".

16. Use of Images of Artists or Art. The Landlord recognizes that the visual art and artists are the property of those individuals. No use of these images will be made by the Landlord for any reason without the express permission of the artist. This permission does not extend to photographs of the TFAC that may include studios or photographs of the artists at work.
17. Coordination of Communications, Events, and Services.
 - a. Events. It is the intent of both the Landlord and Tenants to attract visitors to the TFAC, as such the Landlord plans, manages, coordinates, and facilitates special public events with the intent of attracting visitors to the art center and engaging them in the activities of the art center. In furtherance of this goal, the Tenants will actively work with the Landlord by encouraging artists' participation in activities and open studios.
 - b. Cleaning and Painting. Tenants must annually take part in cleaning and painting the exterior façade of the studio or gallery and the tasks of the annual Clean-up Day as requested by the Landlord.
 - c. Use of Public Areas. The management of events within the TFAC is directed by the Landlord. If any Tenants desire to use space outside of their Leased Premises, the space will be made available in accordance with the standard building rental policies.
 - d. Building Maintenance and Related Services. Building maintenance and related services will be handled by the Landlord. Requests for service and notifications of problems should be submitted in writing to the Landlord.
18. TFAC Days and Hours of Operation. TFAC shall be open to the public all year with the exception of the following dates: New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. TFAC's hours are as follows: every day except Thursdays 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m.
19. Hours.
 - a. To keep TFAC open and vital for visitors it is essential that studios be open.
 - b. The required hours per week for each studio are as follows:
 - i. Single artist studios must be open to the public a minimum of 1456 hours per year (this averages 28 hours per week).
 - ii. Two-artist studios must be open to the public a minimum of 1872 hours per year (this averages 36 hours per week).
 - iii. Three-artist studios must be open to the public a minimum of 2080 hours per year (this averages 40 hours per week).
 - iv. Four or more artist studios must be open to the public a minimum of 2496 hours per year (this averages 48 hours per week).
 - c. Hours must be met during the hours the TFAC is open to the public.
 - d. Artists must clearly post hours open on their doors, even if this changes day by day.
 - e. Although a studio's minimum open hours are described in terms of average hours per week, the studio may be open fewer hours during some weeks and extra hours during other weeks and still fulfill the minimum yearly hours requirement.
 - f. Regardless of how many hours have been worked ahead of time or will be made up for later, no studio may be closed for more than three consecutive weeks at a time.
 - g. In order to meet the hours requirements, subtenants may be sought.
 - h. Artists must be present in their studios in the TFAC the specified number of hours.
 - i. Artists may also use studio assistants. However, assistants do not relieve artists or studios of their hours obligations. As assistant must be conversant with all aspects of

the studio artists' work and be prepared to communicate with the public. An assistant may not display, promote, or sell his/her own work in the studio. j. All artists must keep accurate contemporaneous records of studio hours worked. Records must be made available to the Landlord upon request.

20. Lease Guidelines.

- a. Occupants. All artists occupying studio space must be either tenants or subtenants whether rent is shared or not. (Students, apprentices, assistants, and gallery members are not occupants.)
- b. Subleasing. In accordance with the lease agreement, the Tenant(s) (who has a lease with the Landlord) may sublease the studio in accordance with the Landlord's process and documents which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - i. Requests for subleases must be submitted in writing to the Landlord. Such requests must be made by all signatories to the lease.
 - ii. An artist may not sublease for more than a total of four months in a calendar year except during a leave of absence (as described herein).
 - iii. Subleases may only be entered into with juried artists on the wait list.
 - iv. Subleases will only be permitted using the sublease document provided by the Landlord.
 - v. A sublease can only be entered into upon the written approval of the Landlord, which requires the Landlord's review of the sublease.
 - vi. The sublease will have as an attachment a document listing the rent charged, amount and location of display area and workspace available to the subtenant, and the number of hours to be kept by the subtenant. This shall be provided to the Landlord prior to the approval of the sublease. Rent charged to the subtenant is not to exceed rent paid by the artist for the entire studio. When applicable, other expenses of the studio will be agreed upon by all parties in writing.
 - vii. In case of hardship or unusual circumstances, appeal may be made to the Landlord.
- c. Leave of Absence for One Year.
 - i. When an artist wishes to take a leave of absence for up to one year for study or other valid reason, he/she must submit a written request to the Landlord.
 - ii. During the term of the lease, only one leave of absence is permitted.
 - iii. The tenant remains responsible for the studio rent as specified in the lease.
 - iv. The artist may sublease the studio.
 - v. Co-tenants may decline to sublease but must then pay the full rent.
 - vi. If there is no sublease, the artist on leave is not counted when calculating the minimum number of hours the studio must be open.
- d. Multi-artist lease. If a co-tenant desires to terminate his/her lease, the remaining co-tenants may seek the Landlord's permission to:
 - i. Enter into a new lease to add a juried artist from the wait list to the studio for the remainder of the 36 month term of the original lease by submitting a written request to the Landlord or
 - ii. Sublease in accordance with the lease and the Landlord's requirements as set forth herein.

- e. Studio Vacancies. Landlord will establish guidelines in consultation with artists when a space becomes vacant.

21. Guidelines for Workshops.

- a. A workshop is a studio containing equipment and facilities shared equally by a group of at least five artists dedicated to the purpose of creating work in, and advancing knowledge of, a specific medium.
- b. Each member of the workshop shall be considered a signatory to the lease and subject to all conditions therein.
- c. The studio must be of a size to permit the majority of members to work at one time. Space and major equipment must be shared equally.
- d. Workshops may present membership candidates to the Landlord for approval if the candidate has first met with the approval of all workshop members. If approved, candidates become workshop members. However, candidates gaining membership via this process may not lease or sublease in other studios without being a juried artist.
- e. Additional members may be drawn from the juried list. If there are no appropriate artists on the waiting list in the workshop's medium, one juried artist from another medium may join the workshop.
- f. Costs of the studio, including rent, must be paid by equal assessment or out of commissions and sales established for this purpose.
- g. The workshop must be open at least 40 hours a week during public hours. An effort should be made to be open at all the hours of the TFAC. Each member of the workshop is required to meet the individual artist's minimum hours as set forth herein.
- h. Any group considering themselves a workshop or intending to become one under these guidelines must have their workshop approved in writing by the Landlord.

22. Guidelines for Galleries.

- a. The purpose of a gallery is to present to the public juried work by a broad spectrum of artists which meets the highest standards of aesthetic excellence and craftsmanship, and to provide many artists the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled juried shows.
- b. The organization and jurying of shows will be such as to ensure the highest quality:
 - i. All shows will be juried. There will be a minimum of 10 shows per year. A minimum of 5 shows per year will be juried by a qualified juror from outside the TFAC. The gallery may appoint a member to work in conjunction with the juror. Shows shall be selected in accordance with the criteria established by the gallery and approved in writing by the Landlord.
 - ii. Work exhibited will follow criteria for original work as stated herein, excepting the requirement that members' work be created on the premises.
 - iii. The galleries will make every effort to present varied shows of high quality. Only work juried for the current show may be exhibited.
- c. The gallery will fulfill an educational role by providing information to the public on the relevant media.
- d. The gallery will be open to the public during normal TFAC hours (a minimum of 50 hours per week) and will be open every day that the TFAC is open. The gallery will be staffed by a gallery member or staff person familiar with the medium.

- e. The gallery representative will keep the Landlord informed of gallery activities.
23. Standards and Practices for Fine Arts and Fine Crafts. To further implement these rules, the following standards and practices have been established with particular regard given to quality and craftsmanship.
- a. Originality.
 - i. Work must be the artist's original concept. It must be produced by the artist or under his/her direct supervision.
 - ii. Commercially made supplies and parts that are not incorporated into the artist's work must not be exhibited or sold separately (e.g. uncut stained glass, jewelry chains, commercially produced beads and findings, among others).
 - iii. Commercial supplies and parts must be only a minor element of the finished piece so that it will show the hand of the artist.
 - iv. Framing or repairs of work other than the artist's own work is not permitted at TFAC.
 - v. Original work is that which is conceived and executed by the artist. Only limited assistance is acceptable in the execution of the work.
 - vi. Emphasis of artist's work should be on one-of-a-kind pieces or responsibly sized (in numbers) editions.
 - vii. Any artist using technology that yields multiples, in any step in their process, must provide information about the process to visitors or purchasers.
 - viii. The term "Original Print" is reserved for hand-pulled prints from a physical matrix.
 - ix. No commercially produced article will be displayed with or as original art unless it functions as a minor part of the original final work. (Examples of supporting parts: frames, sculpture bases, jewelers' findings, beads, etc.)
 - x. Kits are not to be sold in studios.
 - xi. Artists may sell commercially produced cards.
 - xii. The only books and catalogs that an artist may sell in his/her studio are those in which the artist is represented.
 - xiii. Artists shall have the freedom to grow aesthetically but must adhere to the standards and practices for the medium in which they are working.
 - xiv. Artists using purchased components must present a finished piece in which the focus is on his/her own design rather than the purchased components.
 - xv. Information will be available in each studio to identify and explain the methods and materials used in creating the work.
 - b. Medium-Specific Standards and Practices.
 - i. Art Glass – stained glass, etched/engraved glass, fused glass, flamework, cast glass, enameling
 - 1. No commercial patterns or kits allows.
 - 2. No imitation stained glass, such as plastic overlay, is allowed.
 - 3. Multiples of design are acceptable.
 - 4. Containers that are not food-safe will also be labeled.
 - ii. Ceramics
 - 1. Original; and subsequent castings.
 - 2. Food containers must be food-safe. Containers that are not food-safe must be clearly labeled.

- iii. Engraving
 - 1. Only hand engraving is acceptable.
 - iv. Fibers
 - 1. Emphasis should be on one-of-a-kind pieces and not production work.
 - 2. No direct use of commercial patterns or kits.
 - v. Jewelry
 - 1. The concept and the hand of the artist must be the focus of all of the work.
 - 2. Original; and production pieces.
 - 3. A jewelry piece should not be just the sum of its parts, but must become an original concept.
 - 4. Purchased components that evidence significant artistic involvement, i.e., carved stones, strung beads or other materials, can only be used as a minor contributing part, both in visual volume or concept of a finished art work.
 - vi. Musical Instruments
 - 1. Majority of work done in the studio should constitute making of new instruments.
 - vii. Painting, Drawing, Collage, Mixed Media
 - 1. Original, and subsequent reproductions. Any reproductions must be accurately labeled as reproductions.
 - viii. Photography and Digital Art
 - 1. Photographic prints for display and sale in the studio must be either
 - a. Produced entirely by the artist or
 - b. Produced by a printer-craftsman (either commercially or custom) following the specific instructions of the artist as so indicated. Photographers who do not print their own work must so indicate.
 - ix. Printmaking
 - 1. Original, and subsequent reproductions.
 - 2. Original prints are limited works in which the matrix (plate, stone, block, film, positive, stencil, computer image, etc.) is conceived and executed by the artist. The Edition must be produced by the artist or under his/her supervision.
 - 3. If a print is produced in its entirety by the artist, the abbreviation "imp." (Impressit) may be placed after the artist's signature to so indicate.
 - 4. In the case of artist collaboration within TFAC, each artist should sign the print.
 - x. Sculpture.
 - 1. Original; and subsequent castings. Sculpture may be cast outside TFAC if the materials used in casting cannot safely or realistically be used inside TFAC by the artist (e.g. metals, resins).
 - 2. Every sculpture will be durable, safe, and well crafted.
24. Communication. The success of the TFAC is based upon a collaborative relationship between the Landlord and Tenants. Therefore, to encourage open communication the

Landlord will designate a liaison to be available regularly by appointment to meet with Tenants about concerns related to the TFAC. Tenants must first submit their concerns in writing to the Landlord. The Landlord can assist with matters related to leases between the Landlord and its Tenants and the operations of the TFAC.

25. Conduct. TFAC is an open and collaborative environment, as such everyone should treat others with respect and courtesy; express their ideas in an open and helpful manner; demonstrate honesty and integrity in their comments and actions; listen and let others express their ideas and opinions; and if a decision is made with which you do not concur, agree to disagree and/or use appropriate means of civil or civic recourse, and move on.
26. Reporting. The TFAC is a public space and strives to provide a welcoming and positive environment for visitors, staff, artists, and students. In view of this goal and the common interest in the success of TFAC, Tenants and staff should report any activity that is contrary to this mission to the Landlord.
27. Modification. These rules may be modified at the discretion of the Landlord. This includes modifications to insure compliance with public laws, ordinances, and regulations to protect the TFAC, or public areas, and the overall public health and safety of the TFAC.

Date: August 29, 2016



December 8, 2021

City Council
City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Wilson and Council Members:

On behalf of the board of the 400 members of Visit Alexandria, we appreciate the work that led to the development of three potential scenarios for implementation of the vibrancy and sustainability plan for the Torpedo Factory Art Center. **We strongly endorse Scenario Two** – the Custom Program.

We write this letter in support of changes to make the art center sustainable and financially viable by living up to its promise as a creative and economic driver of a lively arts district and a top arts attraction of national renown.

Alexandria is fortunate to have been named a Conde Nast Top Three Small City in the U.S., the fourth straight year we have made the list. When we look at the other cities on the Conde Nast list (e.g., Aspen, Charleston, Santa Fe, Savannah), it's clear that arts and culture is a distinguishing competitive advantage that all have in common, and which sets these small cities apart. If Alexandria is to remain in the top tier of America's great small cities, we must remain competitive on this attribute too, and a 21st century Torpedo Factory should be the hub.

In particular, we have reviewed the three options for investment and **the Custom Program provides a middle ground of advancing change decisively in a timely way** within a framework that offers options for mixed uses, public/private partnerships, first floor redesign, new arts uses and more.

If we are to move beyond the visionary phase to actual implementation, it will require a spirit of compromise, along with public engagement, strong political leadership, communication, planning, financial analysis, prioritization, deadlines, and tight project management. Absent those elements, the default outcome will be to maintain the

status quo and continue to underutilize this incredible community asset for another decade.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the plan and offer to help in any way that we can whether that is through marketing, communication, research, convening business leaders or any other role that you believe Visit Alexandria can provide. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Ellis', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Kate Ellis, Board Chair, Visit Alexandria

Cc: Mark Jinks, City Manager
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Stephanie Landrum, President & CEO, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership

Gloria Sitton

11:40
12-14-21

From: deirdre barton <deirdredb@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]City of Alexandria plans to consider elimination of up to 40% of artist studios at the well known Torpedo Factory

[You don't often get email from deirdredb@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Dear Mayor and City Counsel Members,

I had the pleasure of visiting family in DC and Alexandria for the Thanksgiving Holidays. Other family members came from Buffalo, NY, Atlanta, GA and my family from Brunswick, Maine. We were informed of the Torpedo Factory by family there, friends of ours before we left and other city residents saying "make sure to visit the Torpedo Factory".

And we very happily did.

What a terrific time we had with the welcoming and knowledgeable artists who shared art, their skills and techniques with our group, plus the live music, plus stopping at other restaurants and businesses in the town to eat and shop.

I learned of the considered plans to eliminate the first floor of artist, thus reducing the numbers and really sense of the place, leaving only upper floors for the artists.

And To replace with what?

Another coffee shop, one of the "big" name clothing, sports, or other retail store with goods that can all be now ordered on line or chain restaurants? They are in every city in America now and the homogenous flavor is not enticing for locals and visitors to want to make a stop or stay in those towns.

The charm and character of Old Town Virginia- protected architecture, narrow streets and sidewalks and old historic places is the drawing/winning card that most places do not even have to play.

I hope you rethink the plans and work to find another way to bring "revenue" not at the expense of the Torpedo Factory's purposeful and inclusive service to the Town.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Barton
Brunswick, Maine

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

From: Yvonne Callahan <yvonneweightcallahan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 6:32 PM
To: Justin Wilson; Del Pepper; John Chapman; Amy Jackson; Canek Aguirre; Elizabeth Bennett-Parker; Gloria Sitton; Mo Seifeldein
Subject: [EXTERNAL]OTCA statemenet regarding Torpedo Factory

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council:

We are writing to you concerning the Torpedo Factory Art Center and its future.

You are once again being presented with a consultant's report that provides three concepts to explore for the future of the Torpedo Factory, the resident artists, and the city Department of Archaeology. As you know this is the latest of many studies. There have been so many that most of us have forgotten how many there have been. You might have forgotten as well.

As has happened in the past, you are being asked to give a green light to concepts or alternatives that are lacking in substance, that provide no clear guidance, and that remain virtually devoid of factual analysis. Furthermore, it has come before you—again—with no substantive outreach to the citizens of Alexandria and to the Boards and Commissions appointed by Council to provide meaningful input, advice, and guidance.

It is our understanding that HARC hasn't even been given a presentation by the Office of the Arts although HARC has specifically asked for a meeting.

We believe that the concept review the Council is being asked to adopt is deeply defective for the following reasons:

1. The plan before you has—once again—been prepared and is now being submitted to you with minimal or no input from the citizens, the artists, the city boards and commissions, and the public at large. For a city that prides itself on transparency, the Office of the Arts has been anything but transparent. In the past, Council has made it very clear to the Office of the Arts staff that more civic input, more consultation, and more involvement of interested parties and stakeholders was expected. In February 2021, you specifically instructed the Office of the Arts to engage with all interested and involved parties. Your firm directives have, again, been ignored. As far back as May, the public was informed that the stakeholders would be chosen by the consultant. The consultant, in turn, has consulted no one except the Office of the Arts. The lack of communication has been so striking that the Waterfront Commission has formally noted that it is unable to perform its duty to provide comments and recommendations on the plan presented to them only last week.

OTCA reached out to the Office of the Arts in May. We were assured that outreach by that Office would occur. However, it has not. The Office of the Arts chooses to ignore everyone except the consultants. We were once told that the consultants would reach out to stakeholders, but that did not occur either.

2. It is striking that the Office of the Arts is considering renovations to a building that is in the Old & Historic District with no consideration or recognition of this fact. The proposal appears to endorse renovations to or a rebuilding of the Torpedo Factory building that are totally inappropriate in the historic context of both Old Town and the building itself. Even aside from the fact that the concept review fails to provide any firm

numbers on the cost of removing concrete walls to be replaced with glass walls - to name but one study suggestion -- there is no mention whatever of the appropriateness of such actions or its effect on the historic fabric of a building that is more than 100 years old and an iconic structure in its own right.

3. The Office of the Arts also fails to make adequate reference to the continued use of the Torpedo Factory building - or even a part of it -- by the Department of Archaeology. While some analyses have shown that the Archaeology Museum actually draws as many visitors as the artists' studios --if not more -- the Office of the Arts has consistently ignored both the physical presence of the Office of Archaeology and the future needs of that important Office now charged with the maintenance and preservation of the ship hulls being stored off site. The current study makes no reference at all to the much-needed expansion of the Archaeology Museum mission in the City of Alexandria. To ignore this fact is to put the preservation of the ship remains in great peril, and yet that is precisely what the Office of the Arts has done.

4. The Office of the Arts has provided no firm data as to the cost of any of the three scenarios that are delineated. We are viewing only shopped photographs of what a roof structure or what a glass wall on the first floor might look like, and how the spaces could be reconfigured on the first and second floors. (Nothing at all was said of the 3rd and the 4th floors, which of course means that Archaeology was again ignored.) You are thus presented with pictures taken in other venues, but with no information at all as to how one plan or another will fit within the Old & Historic District, much less how much it will cost to build glass walls or a rooftop deck. That looks suspiciously like an invitation for another study, perhaps by the same consultant.

5. Information that we have seen from City records indicates that every year for at least the last few years the Torpedo Factory Art Center has returned approximately \$200,000 in positive cash flow to the City general budget. We hold that the economic, cultural, and community benefits of the TFAC project extend well beyond walls of the Torpedo Factory building itself, even if City maintenance of the building resulted in negative cash flow. However, the positive cash flow in recent budgets further illustrates that the Torpedo Factory Art Center and the management model that has included substantial artist leadership should be carefully fostered rather than discarded or drastically revamped. To quote Mayor Wilson in his November 2020 newsletter," For that vision to be maintained, all progress on this project should be suspended, while a reorganization is undertaken that includes important roles for both the artists and the Department of Archaeology. The City has managed many properties throughout the years, and it can do so in this case once there is an overhaul of the current management system.

Respectfully,

Stephen Milone

President, Old Town Civic Association

Yvonne Weight Callahan

Vice-President, Old Town Civic Association

Elizabeth McCall,

Former President, Old Town Civic Association

Former Chair, Alexandria Archaeological Commission

Former Co-Chair, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission



Alexandria Waterfront Commission

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

1108 Jefferson Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

40
12-14-21

December 10, 2021

Honorable Mayor & Members of City Council

**Re: Waterfront Commission comments regarding the Torpedo Factory Art Center
Implementation Strategy**

The Waterfront Commission (WC) and its 21 members is comprised of private organizations, City Boards and Commissions and City residents from throughout the City. The WC was created to advise City Council on issues related to the Waterfront and implementation of the Waterfront Small Area Plan.

The WC supports reinvigoration of the Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC), including maintaining the TFAC as a center for the arts, creating a lively draw for visitors to the City and Alexandria residents, creating a more welcoming entrance to the center from the waterfront, and continuing the role of working artists as a major feature. WC is encouraged by the City's progress over the past year in completing a series of studies that underpin the City's scenarios and the WC's recommendations to City Council.

As described in this letter, the WC has reviewed the illustrative scenarios for TFAC investment prepared by City Staff. We recommend City Council pursue the Custom Program scenario.

At a special meeting of the WC on December 6, 2021, the WC received a presentation from City staff on the Torpedo Factory Implementation Strategy which included financial information. Staff outlined three illustrative scenarios for reinvestment in the center, the Incremental, Custom Program, and Ground Lease Scenarios.

The WC endorses the Custom Program scenario as the best path forward to reinvigorating the TFAC, in partnership with various private and non-profit stakeholders. It offers the best opportunity to make timely investments in the facility and provides a balanced mix of space allocation and programming potential. The Custom Program scenario best facilitates continued use of TFAC as an arts center, including space for working artist galleries and other arts uses such as performing arts, culinary arts, glass blowing, and other uses.

In contrast, the Incremental Scenario would take too long to implement and upgrade facilities and would not result in significant changes in the offerings of the TFAC. The Ground Lease scenario is not commercially viable with continued operations of an arts center. The WC recommends both the Incremental and Ground Lease scenarios be dropped from further consideration.

The WC recommends further study of the conceptual proposal to add a restaurant to the TFAC. The WC favors any arts-complementary activity that will generate the income needed to sustain the TFAC and attract people, regardless of whether it is a restaurant or other activity. We urge the City to continue to evaluate the potential to locate a restaurant or events venue on the rooftop, third floor, or elsewhere in the building.

The WC encourages any future financial evaluations of TFAC prepared by the City to consider the financial impact of sales tax revenues generated throughout the TFAC.

The WC supports the next steps outlined by City staff, including a 12–18-month community engagement process featuring public involvement, a design charrette, cost estimation/value engineering/prioritization of needs and further financial analysis and evaluation of public private partnership options- steps that will occur in parallel with continued implementation of the vibrancy plan.

The WC stands ready to review and advise on specific recommendations for future management and use of the facility as plans and designs evolve, and to continued collaboration to implement the Waterfront Small Area Plan. We recommend City Council endorse the Custom Program for further investment in the TFAC.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Thayer", followed by a horizontal line.

Stephen Thayer, Chair
Alexandria Waterfront Commission

cc: Alexandria Waterfront Commission Members
Mark Jinks, City Manager
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Julian Gonsalves, Assistant City Manager - P3, Office of City Manager
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Jack Browand, Staff Liaison, Alexandria Waterfront Commission



*The Honorable Mayor Justin Wilson and Members of the Council
City of Alexandria, Virginia*

*RE: Torpedo Factory Art Center Implementation Strategy
December 9, 2021*

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council:

The new Torpedo Factory Art Center (Art Center) Implementation Strategy presents new space planning and development paths and options for the Art Center. One of the duties of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) is to “to advise City Council with regard to policies that will strengthen the arts and further public access to the arts and cultural matters.” In that spirit, the ACA would like to offer its considerations related to the proposed Art Center Implementation Strategy.

The second of the three Space Planning Scenarios, the Custom Program, is the strongest of the three options. It continues the essential goals of vibrancy and sustainability, ensures City leadership in the trajectory of the space, provides increased funding through private interest, and retains the Torpedo Factory as an arts-driven institution. The Art Center serves many constituencies. This is the path that best accommodates those artists who are the heart of this space. The *Alexandria Arts Alliance* also recommends the Custom Program as outlined to Council in a separate letter.

While the Arts Commission recommends the *concept* of the Custom Program, it does so with the following caveats:

- The ACA recommends an increase in **community engagement and that the City implement a more collaborative approach going forward.** The ACA asks that it explicitly be involved in this process – via a Commissioner representative/s. It was previously implied that the ACA would be more involved in the process. This has not happened. The ACA recommends forming a task force including key community stakeholders such as representatives from the ACA, arts community, tourism, planning, and economic development.
- **The ACA supports continued provision of studio space to a wide-range of artists, embracing inclusivity and diversity.** The ACA recognizes the need to adjust existing space plans to create vibrancy and engagement. At present, the ACA is concerned regarding the proposed amount of artist space in the Custom Program – especially as it pertains to the first floor of the Torpedo Factory. A glassblowing site has been proposed as an option for the first floor. An operation such as this would require improved and proper ventilation. The Commission believes that presented examples for the first floor do not necessarily meet the best use of the space and some may pose a public health risk. Further exploration to create arts-based engagement

opportunities should be considered and would be best accomplished through a task force as noted above.

The Art Center is the City's most recognized landmark and cultural institution and is known worldwide. Old Town is an arts destination for international visitors in large part because of the Art Center. While recognizing the options of expanding and reimagining artist disciplines in the space, the ACA continues to emphasize the importance of keeping working artists and their studios as the central priority of the Arts Center. The presence of working artists has sustained the continuous community of artists and visitors at the Arts Center since 1974. An artist-focused enterprise also holds economic benefits building local commerce and serving as a draw to Alexandria's tourism industry. The ACA has received an increasing amount of public comment to this point at our public meetings, interactions, and via social media in regards to the Implementation Strategy.

The ACA heard from eleven citizens and artists at the November ACA Regular Meeting. The public comments received included concern regarding the proposed changes to the Torpedo Factory. To paraphrase one public comment: there is no lack of supply of restaurants and cafes surrounding the Torpedo Factory; there are great restaurants all over the DMV, but only one Torpedo Factory. Understandably, privatization would be one way to earn income through market rate leases rather than the current below-market artist leases. The building is overdue for many renovations and repairs, which will require substantial city funding to address. This is a time in which Alexandria needs to demonstrate a major financial commitment to the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and to the community of artists that call it home, and dedicated patrons that frequent its corridors.

All of us, both on the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Alexandria City Council, are at a historic moment. Our legacies regarding the future of the Torpedo Factory Art Center are aspects we should also take under consideration. The Arts Center is perhaps more in focus at this juncture than any other time in the last several years. A transition to permanent privatization of the building – with emphasis on the first floor – may prove to be a much more dramatic change than the transition of the Torpedo Factory to City management in 2018.

The ACA appreciates the opportunity to provide this recommendation to City Council. The ACA remains optimistic that the Torpedo Factory will continue to be a world-class arts destination and the cultural jewel of Alexandria.

Most Cordially

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Kelley, Chair
Alexandria Commission for the Arts

Cc: Members, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Mark Jinks, City Manager

Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager

Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager

James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities

Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Office of the Arts (RPCA)

Matthew Harwood, Staff Liaison, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

40
12-14-21

Dear Councilman Chapman,

My name is M. Alexander Gray (Alex). I grew up in the City of Alexandria and I have fond memories of Alexandria City Public Schools. Since 2014 I have maintained a studio at the Torpedo Factory Art Center. I have always been an artist from earliest childhood and the Torpedo Factory has given me the chance to flourish as an artist in a way that few other places could.

In late of October of 2021, the City's plans for the Torpedo Factory - some of which included the removal of large numbers of artist studios - were made public. In response, I started a petition on change.org, asking for signatures against any plans that would displace artists from their spaces or reduce art-making space any further. In just over a month, that petition has received over 6,600 signatures.

For your respectful consideration, I would like to share a small sample of the comments left by signers of the petition.

Sincerely,

M. Alexander Gray

A stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of several vertical strokes followed by a horizontal line and a small upward flick.

"The Torpedo Factory is sacred. Do not make any changes that reduce its space or its number of artists. Be more creative and solicit ideas from the art community."

Joanna Stover, Alexandria

"As a City resident and voter, I view the proposal as the destructive confiscation of a high-brand public good, for no legitimate reason."

Mark Williams, Alexandria

"I enjoy seeing all the artwork on ALL floors of the Torpedo Factory!"

Theresa McFadden, Cambridge MD

"[The] Torpedo Factory is a resource for artists and for the community. Don't let it be wrecked by people who know the price of everything and the value of nothing."

Julia Holcomb, Leesburg

"...I would be devastated if the ground floor galleries were disposed of and the artists scattered. I have been so inspired by so many artists...throughout the factory for all those years. Please do not take away the artists' studios and livelihoods!"

Carol Brobst, Woodbridge

"I can hardly believe this is under serious consideration. Please leave the Torpedo Factory as it is."

Holly Kenney, Alexandria

"...what it being proposed is just not right."

Denise Gray, Alexandria

"The artists are the linchpin of TFAC. Stop messing with their livelihoods and with the visitors' experiences. TFAC is a rare commodity centered on the unique experience of meeting artists, watching them work, and purchasing one-of-a-kind art pieces. Alexandria doesn't need any more restaurants or bars!"

Rebecca Long, Washington

"Shrinking the number of artist studios is killing the appeal and original intent of the Torpedo Factory. It will no longer be a world class art center."

Mary Beth Gaiarin, Alexandria

"Both visitors and locals in the DMV area love meeting and buying from the local artists...Keep the artists in The Torpedo Factory for everyone to enjoy. The art and artists are a destination for many each year."

Michele LeFrancois, Alexandria

"Not only is this [unfair] to the artists but as a tourist city, Alexandria already has tons of restaurants, even new ones along the waterfront. The Torpedo Factory is an asset to the city that provides something unique, inspiring, and iconic to Old Town. When I travel to other places and talk about my hometown, the Torpedo Factory and its artists are one of the first things that people talked about when they say they have visited Alexandria before. There are very few things one can do in Old Town if the weather is cold, too hot, or rainy, but The Torpedo Factory is the perfect place to go on such days, as well as any day in the year. Please don't destroy Alexandria's contribution to art and culture."

Shelley Castle, Alexandria

"...the Torpedo Factory is...a local and national treasure. Do not remove artists from their livelihood and their space. In the long term these studios serve as a destination point for those visiting Old Town; it's an economic driver. Leave it alone."

Lloyd Wolf, Arlington

"The Torpedo Factory and its artists make this a unique spot to [Northern Virginia]. More commercial stuff detracts and is not needed or wanted..."

Susan Lafferty, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory artists are a mainstay of Old Town and Alexandria. We need them and they need to stay."

Fran Vogel, Alexandria

"...I have taken many friends that live in Europe there for a visit"

Kevin Wilson, Washington

"Let's not kill the golden goose. We have a great arts center which draws tourists. Let's not ruin it."

Paul Friedman, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory is a unique treasure to our community. We don't need more restaurants and new development."

Fawn Kildoo, Alexandria

"Alexandria leadership has lost its collective mind! How dare they shut down so many working artists?"

Andrea Seiger, Washington DC

"I love and need that place! So does Alexandria!"

Mary Jane Ruhl, Alexandria

"There is enough restaurant and entertainment spots already in Old Town. We do not need another failed food court. Keep our culture."

Christine Walika, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory is an institution in Old Town. With...dozens of eating establishments just outside its doors there is no reason to sell food in there. Keep it classy, people!"

Melanie Irons, Reston

"The artist studios in the Torpedo Factory are an icon of Old Town. To get rid of them would be a big detriment to the area."

Samantha LaRoche, Alexandria

"As a...frequent visitor...to the art studios at the Torpedo Factory, I continue to support artists and the need for spaces to continue working AT THEIR PROFESSION. KEEP IT!"

Kipp Inglis, Lodi, CA

"The Torpedo Factory is a one-of-a-kind place that means so much to so many artists and all the rest of us who love what they create there!"

Helena Morrison, Fallbrook, CA

"Artists are vital to the community. Let's support them!"

Jennifer Paxton, Bethesda

"The Torpedo Factory is a unique setting in which artists can work and patrons/tourists/budding artists can interact with that work and its creator. More restaurants are not needed. We need creativity on display!"

Kim Miller, Burke

"Alexandria must not abandon its commitment to the arts. This is the whole reason why my family lives here! This is unacceptable, and I desperately plead to Mayor Wilson to drop this proposal."

Evan Williams, Alexandria

"I grew up going to Old Town and even after moving away I have greatly appreciated visiting the artists' studios at the Torpedo Factory, for many years. I would not visit the proposed restaurants in there - we can find many other nice places to eat in Old Town. Please let the artists stay!"

Lisa Clausen, Seattle, WA

"The artists of Northern Virginia and particularly Alexandria depend on the Torpedo Factory as a workplace and showplace for their trade...Please save this place as a cultural go to spot in our city."

Judy Davis, Alexandria

"The artists make the Torpedo Factory - there are plenty of food, specialty shops in Old Town but the artists make it unique and different."

Amy King, Springfield

"Doesn't Alexandria already have enough restaurants and entertainment spaces? Why destroy art space for more of the same?"

Judith Towle, Washington

"These changes are absolutely unnecessary!!! There's plenty of retail and restaurant space around the waterfront already - don't ruin the space for artists to work. Art is vital to the community!!!"

Samantha Nichols, Springfield

"I believe arts should be front and center in the community."

Megan Maher, Silver Spring

"We need the artists there! The city of Alexandria can surely come up with another way to make money!"

Margaret Robinson, Alexandria

"These plans are soulless. Stop turning Alexandria into a sanitized corporate playground for Amazon HQ2 employees."

Jesse Robinson, Alexandria

"...The Art center is the main draw to Old Town Alexandria, no one would come for just another overpriced restaurant group."

Luis Artes, Alexandria

"...the City needs to think more long-term and about the history and draw of the Torpedo Factory."

Terri Stevens, Haymarket

"Mayor Wilson and Council, I am shocked and appalled by the proposed plans. The Torpedo Factory and these artists must be left alone or brought into the conversation for changes that do not ruin the very nature of this inspiring and unique environment. Keep the first floor as it is!"

Alan Friedman, Rockville MD

"Keep this unique feature of Old Town and support artists in the process!"

Emily Guerrero, Atlanta GA

"...I am completely against the destruction of the unique character of Old Town through the incessant development of high rises and other domestic real estate...The Torpedo Factory is a landmark and essential to the expression of valued other than the amassing of money. Do not kick out artists for more revenue!"

Gail Weigl, Alexandria

"This is a great ART-inspiring place. There are a lot of restaurants in Old Town and only one Torpedo factory!"

Nataliya Ioffe, Vienna

"The Torpedo Factory is my "happy place" where I go to escape the mundaneness of day-to-day suburban life and enter a world of elevation and inspiration. I first visited the Torpedo Factory as a 6 year old with my grandpa who was an artist when it had just opened, and have going back ever since. We have drab food malls all over Northern Virginia, and an aching lack of beauty and art. The Torpedo Factory artists bring in visitors from all over the world. Protect this special and one of a kind treasure!"

Laurel Bosma, Reston

"Beautiful cultural building. We need the artists."

Katerina Voudouris, Reston

"The artist studios are an essential part of torpedo factory and I love going to see them. Let's keep things as they are. We are lucky to have this space and these artists here."

Lauren Barkume, Capitol Heights MD

"The city seems more preoccupied with transforming the Torpedo Factory into a tourist attraction than supporting its local artists."

Ana Cavalcanti, Baltimore

"I support artists who are creative and economic force for Old Town."

Kerrie Blevins, Minneapolis MN

"The art center is an invaluable resource for artists in the DMV and further afield. Please do not turn a good part of this marvelous center into a tourist attraction. Alexandria has many quality historical attractions; don't go tacky."

Diane Threlkeld, Bethesda

"Torpedo Factory is the precious place both artists and visitors!! There are a lot of restaurants and retail shops around...the Torpedo Factory needs artists!!"

Hiromi Minemura, San Diego CA

"This is a crying shame that the City of Alexandria would consider reducing the size of such a wonderful asset to the community. Please do not go forward with your plans to reduce the number of artists by 40% and change this to whatever you consider a tourist attraction. Just the worst idea in a time when we need art more than ever."

Diana Russell, Bethesda

"That art space is one of the BEST things in Alexandria!"

Marilda Averbug, Potomac MD

"The Torpedo Factory Art Center has been a center for artists for years. Why get rid of the artist studios which are open to the public to visit? How many restaurants and cafes does Alexandria need? It is a unique cultural treasure, and it should stay that way."

Dona Davis, Alexandria

"The artists are the ones who saved Torpedo Factory and have paid for it with their commissions for years. They deserve to stay."

Sheila Cornish, Ashburn

"This is the place I go to see local artists."

Karen Strause, Bethesda

"The Torpedo Factory is an icon and a unique economic, cultural and artistic asset. IT MUST BE PRESERVED!"

Arlene Fleming, Great Falls

"Community input should be solicited and question why addition of a restaurant given how many currently exist in old town, and displacement of artists seems very inappropriate. I think other options should be solicited and presented for public voting and selection."

Theresa Cruttenden, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory Artists took this section of Alexandria from a run down...warehouse district and turned it...into to a tourist destination...Give control back to the artists, jury new artists in only on their talent and quality of creative works in a blind jury. And stop try to kill what has arguably rescued Alexandria from being just another warehouse slum.."

Mike Himmerich, Borrego Springs CA

"I love the Torpedo Factory. I've taken many classes there and have participated in Open Figure Drawing over the years. Please do not alter this great art center with its living, breathing, working artists. There are plenty of places to eat nearby without taking away artists' studios in the art center."

Amy Mann, Centreville

"Keep the artists and the Art right where it is!! As a resident of Alexandria I... want the Torpedo Factory to stay and enrich our town!!"

Frank Feige, Alexandria

"Culture activities make significant contributions to community health...Local government has an obligation to do things that support healthy community life. Artists have invested years to make a thriving cultural center at the Torpedo Factory. Support it. Don't destroy a bright spot in the community... Support the Torpedo Factory. Keep culture, imagination and individual entrepreneurship alive in Alexandria."

Claudia Vess, Kensington MD

"Studio artists are the heart of the Torpedo Factory. They express themselves with their own truth, free from pretense and hidden motives, as teachers, dreamers, and creators. They are not an obstacle to be swept aside. If the Alexandria City Council votes to remove artists and their studios from the building, it will be a terrible blow to the arts community in the mid-Atlantic region. It will set a precedent that money conquers all; that the arts are disposable. It would be a message to the world that the arts are just a diversion, an inconvenience that can be disposed of, a placeholder until something (seemingly) better comes along, not a force to enrich and give meaning to peoples' lives."

M. Alexander Gray

"Torpedo Factory for the artists and art galleries; Alexandria does not need...additional restaurant facilities."

Helene Vonnegut, Alexandria

"...The Torpedo Factory is priceless and an Alexandria institution. Do not take away the unique characteristics of Old Town Alexandria. Those artists and the Factory are part of the landscape there"

Lisa Carter, Ashburn

"This is terrible. The artists of this area so very frequently get screwed out of studio buildings...They aren't a lucrative enough investment for greedy property owners. For years I have followed how artists are constantly getting pushed out of spaces because the properties are so valuable."

James Dadey, Silver Spring

"Artists...are an integral part of any society and should be valued as such. We [must] stop expecting artists to work and sell in environments once discarded or forgotten only to revitalize them, make them "look more appealing" and then allow greedy corporations to take hold...and kick them out to rent to higher paying clients. This is a part of gentrification at its worse that we see happening all over the DMV. Artists need an affordable place to work and sell their art and it should be valued by their communities as a sacred space...As we know, many seek out the area specifically for the Torpedo Factory and all its treasures (artwork ad artists alike!). There has to be a way that retail and other growth can happen while also simultaneously maintaining support for the local artists & not kicking them out..."

Friedeman Paige, Gaithersburg

"...it would be a deep loss to the community for the artists to leave."

Anna Leong, Washington

"I would like as little change as possible to take place at the Torpedo Factory. It is a true artist hub in Alexandria and a wonderful place to shop!"

Betsy Meholick, Alexandria

"I'm signing because, I am a fellow artist and one of the things I like to do when I go down to Old Town is go see the Torpedo Factory, especially having attended their anniversary a few years back where the Mayor was present and said some moving words of what the artist studios mean to him. I find it sad he would turn his back on it now."

Brian Flaherty, Arlington

"Oh c'mon. Don't need extra food and river views."

Aaron Buchsbaum, Rockville

"This unique supportive artist community has been a destination for so many visitors from outside the Alexandria area. Do not destroy this exceptional art center in the name of greedy progress. Support the artists. DO NOT eliminate their space which may eliminate their ability to support themselves. Instead stand beside them and keep this treasure."

PG Gordon, Potomac MD

"I believe that the arts in the Torpedo Factory are the most important tourist attraction besides the Potomac waterfront. Plus the artists are served greatly by having working studio space. It is a win-win for all. Why destroy something that works so well for all...? There are enough restaurants throughout Old Town already. The classrooms, galleries are already filling many of the ideas that are being suggested as draws."

David Carlson, Arlington

"Artists help bring communities together with their creative spirit... They help define and strengthen our collective humanity, and need our full-blown support! By providing outsiders a reason to visit and spend money in other local businesses, they also serve as powerful economic engines for communities."

Richard Allnutt, Fairfax Station

"The Torpedo Factory is a beloved historic landmark and...iconic! We also love our artists! The city should not be imposing its stupid ideas in this way! I'm sure the developers in this town are getting rich beyond their wildest dreams — but they should LEAVE THE TORPEDO FACTORY ALONE!!!! ...Is NOTHING sacred? Management companies: get your money elsewhere!!!!"

Kitty Ray, Alexandria

"Art is more important than MORE food. Plenty of options there already!"

Erika Lehman, Washington

"... [I] know how important the Torpedo Factory is not just for the artists, but also for the region. It has been a focal point and a very large reason for people from Maryland and the DC area to travel to Alexandria. Eliminating that artist creative space will create a void of regional visitors. I always list the Factory as a "must see"...to friends who are traveling from a different state/ region. I always get an excited thank you from those who went. Don't lose a valuable landmark and a thriving artist colony..."

Maida Barron, Solon OH

"No doubt, the building needs to be brought up to code. Nonetheless, the cost estimate for structural additions for mixed use purposes appear substantially underestimated. Additionally, City project management resources do not have a great track record for keeping projects on time, within cost, and in alignment with construction/code practices. If art is as cherished as voiced by respective city leaders, responsible city departments, commissions, etc., such mixed-use proposals negate their lip service. Such mixed-use proposals could have been more easily and cost effectively incorporated in adjacent waterfront developments overseen by the City."

Pamela Corsini, Alexandria

"I'm signing this because the Torpedo Factory is a historical monument to Old Town Alexandria and cultivate community, creativity and the arts. It would be shame to see the artists displaced and this part of town erased/evicted."

Vigianti Tanudjaja, Springfield

"The Torpedo factory needs to stay as studio space for artists!"

Andrew Gallagher, Reston

"I support a way forward that keeps all the artists in the Torpedo Factory at affordable rates and I also support the revitalization plan which would bring more people to the venue to buy their art!"

Eric Weiner, Washington

"[The Torpedo Factory is] an essential aspect of Old Town Alexandria's culture. To take away half of it for money just shows greed and will lessen the Old Town experience."

Kristen Sears, Alexandria

"I am a successful artist today because of the classes I took at the Torpedo Factory, so I know how important it is to artists and [aspiring] artists. But to me, an even more compelling reason for maintaining it as an arts center is the cultural impact on the community. So many people have never had the privilege of being around art and artists. They may be interested and curious but uncomfortable visiting commercial galleries and even museums. The Torpedo Factory has always been a welcoming place where people are comfortable viewing art, talking with artists and maybe even finding an outlet for their own creative urges. There are plenty of cookie cutter restaurants, shops and so forth on the waterfront and in the area. There is only one Torpedo Factory. It is a treasure that should be nurtured and protected."

Patricia Williams, Falls Church

"Artists need a place to work and sell their art."

Markus Nechay, Secaucus NJ

"The artists of the Torpedo factory is one of the areas' biggest cultural draws. It would be such a step backward not to recognize the asset of having this center! Please leave it alone!"

Amy Barker-Wilson, Elkton MD

"The Torpedo Factory is a local treasure and turning it into a glorified food court is ridiculous..."

Erin Bush, Washington

"We need more art!"

Maura Florimonte, South Riding

"Kicking artists out of the Torpedo Factory makes no sense. The Torpedo Factory is...an Alexandria institution and the city will be worse off with less studio space."

Katherine Bongiorno, Alexandria

"Please protect one of Alexandria's cultural institutions."

Allen Mueller, Alexandria

"The Torpedo factory is what sets Old Town apart. It is a magnet for those who appreciate art."

Elizabeth Berry, Falls Church

"We need the arts everywhere, in everyone's life..."

Robin Clarke, Washington

"Well, it turns out the head of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership is also head of the Alexandria Restaurant Partners -- owners of most of the waterfront restaurants. No wonder the master plan for the proposed Torpedo Factory destruction features HUGE space for his restaurants!"

Jane Podesta, McLean

"Arts are vital to any city. And artists are a great resource."

Diana Cole, Warren RI

"The city's plans are shortsighted. The Torpedo Factory Art Center is a big part of why Old Town Alexandria is a nice place to go. Without it as a real art center, Old Town is something closer to just another open-air mall..."

Burton Griffith, Reston

"The arts spaces need to be preserved. This is a special place in our area and would be a crime to kick it out."

Sheila Advani, Nantucket MA

"The Torpedo Factory should be preserved as a national treasure. We don't need restaurants and cheap tourist shops in this space. We need to keep our special community of artists in this historic spot."

Hilda Kroll, Alexandria

"The art and artists at the Torpedo Factory are what comes to mind when I think about visiting Alexandria. It has been such a pleasant part of any day I spend at the waterfront with my husband. I will not be going to Alexandria very much if these artists' livelihoods are destroyed this way. How unkind...Other small businesses will be affected and may be on the chopping block next."

Alice Whealin, Arlington

"I believe the Torpedo Factory should remain a place for artists to teach and make art!! There are enough restaurants in Old Town!!"

Emily Pfeiffer-Russell, Bakersfield CA

"This is a crazy idea. The shops in the Torpedo Factory are the main reason I go to Alexandria when I visit. Limiting the artist spaces will seriously diminish the appeal."

Julie Sandell, Seattle WA

"I love the TF since I first went in 1978. Preserve culture!"

Cynthia Core, Arlington

"Before I moved to Alexandria, the only place I knew here was the Torpedo Factory because of the artists' studios. There are still many who visit Old Town entirely due to the artists' studios in the Torpedo Factory. The right thing is to support the arts but that choice also supports the economy of Old Town. We do not need more restaurants in Old Town, we need the arts. Don't be foolish!!!"

Lynn Russell, Alexandria

"The artists need this space!!!!"

Julie Kessler, Culpeper

"Artists are a vital part of any city's infrastructure...they benefit the community in more ways monetarily than any business could."

Michael Mooser, Wayne PA

"The Torpedo Factory is a unique venue devoted to art and anything that diminishes the focus on artists should be refused."

Sheri Bergen, Springfield

"Art is a vital part of society...support what...enriches your city. Restaurants are a dime a dozen and often don't stay in business that long. ...I love a good restaurant but supporting the arts over a few more restaurants is paramount. My question to your city is WHY is the Mayor so concerned about adding more restaurants in this specific area? Follow the money. And please support your art community!"

Heather Frazier, Denver

"Artists are what make a city vibrant and interesting, and commercialism is no replacement for creative workers."

David Berzonsky, Charlottesville

"We have only one Torpedo Factory and many bars and restaurants. People come for the art, not a bar."

Paula Sullivan, Alexandria

"If there are updates to the Torpedo Factory, let's ensure it uplifts the existing artists and future artists to continue to exist, create, and draw the community in. ...restaurants and bars aren't the only thing we value in Old Town."

Nick Hall, Philadelphia PA

"Restaurants are plentiful in this area and there is no need for more. The [Torpedo Factory artists] are what make this area an actual attraction. I live in Denver and when I was there, I went to buy art. THAT is the draw. Keep the artists! Keep the unique identity."

Margaret Bobb, Denver CO

"A space housing artists studios adds to the community."

Beth Coffey, Decatur

"The City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts has been chipping away at the Torpedo Factory as an art center for years. They've turned studios into cafes (which failed twice), a river view conference room for themselves, offices for themselves and now one of our largest art studios is a vaccination clinic. They do not understand the importance of keeping as many of the studios for artists.. and now this-- the whole first floor will have no art studio. That will be the death knell of the Torpedo Factory as an art center."

Mary Beth Gaiarin, Alexandria

"I'm signing because the Torpedo Art Factory is a historical treasure. ...cutting the artists for more restaurants and shops shows that the City of Alexandria does NOT treasure the arts and puts profits over artists."

Anna Kiss, Alexandria

"This is a vital resource for artists in Alexandria."

Kevin Duncan, Hyattsville

"Do we really need more restaurants in that part of Old Town? The ones down there already struggle to survive. More competition won't help them. The Torpedo Factory art scene is a truly unique offering and destination. Why ruin it?"

Laura Anderson, Woodstock

"I enjoy the art at the Torpedo Factory and want to support local artists."

Amanda Turcotte, Falls Church

"[The] Torpedo Factory has been a huge draw for tourists, locals, students, social and political and cultural spearheads. It's got historical and fundraising backbone. The City would show its short-sightedness to jeopardize this Alexandria-specific art campus."

Katharine Taylor, Alexandria

"The artists need a 'home' to do their work, share their art with visitors who may just browse but more importantly also buy the art. [The] Torpedo Factory would be a ghost building without the artists and visitors."

Maria Zemankova, Arlington

"...Alexandria needs this as one of their attractions. Every city needs a creative working artist outlet. Keep the artist in this place."

Lisette Jarmon, Tucson AZ

"The Torpedo Factory is a great place to shop for wonderful art and crafts!"

Alan Banov, Kensington

"The Torpedo Factory is an attraction in its own right - full of artists and art events - and it brings people to the waterfront who might not otherwise go there. Supporting the arts and artists is one of the best things a city can do to ensure it remains vibrant and inviting to the people who live there."

Paige Totaro, Alexandria

"Support the Arts. We have plenty of restaurants and shops. More art, more artists."

David Schrader, Fairfax

"I enjoy visiting and seeing the artists have a space. As a visitor. I feel there are enough restaurants already. Support local artists!"

Christopher Jennings, Arvada

"I strongly support the artists and we DESPERATELY need more art in our communities..."

Louise Buchanan, Arlington

"...the arts...deserve to be supported by the public of Alexandria, not by other (food or real estate) industries. This appears to be a form of creeping privatization. The Torpedo Factory Arts Center is a jewel. Issue a bond to maintain the building as a sanctum for the arts!"

Jim Schulman, architect, Washington

"Art is essential to our growth, development and wellbeing!"

Karin Vent, Washington

"I value the uniqueness of the Torpedo factory and don't want this institution changed in any way that is detrimental to the fabulous and gifted artisans."

Marsha Wallace, Alexandria

"Artists should not be kicked out of their studios because the city's mayor and council want more revenue from restaurants. Also, food preparation and art do not mix..."

Laura Randall, Alexandria

"I wasn't aware of this until my wife mentioned it this evening and we participated in the virtual Arts Commission Town Hall. I'm not an artist...but the Torpedo Factory makes me weather the traffic and traffic lights and not much else. We've seen government and developers collude before and from what I've read, it looks like the beginning of the end for the artist community in Alexandria. I think if more people in NOVA were aware of this, there would be a revolt. We don't need "different kinds of art" there. That's a smokescreen for developers to say they'll do one thing and once the checks are signed, they're off to make whatever quick profits and move on. What will be left? Kitschy tourist traps and bar food. We've moved in and out of the area over the years and whenever we return, we always visit the Torpedo Factory and enjoy chatting with the artists. It's an international icon. You can't replace that community with more 'interactive' exhibits and food stalls..."

John Downey, Arlington

"This is unacceptable and sad use of power."

Jan Welsh-Roe

"The Torpedo Factory is a big part of what makes Old Town so wonderful and unique, giving it a wonderful flavor. The artists and their work bind the community together with a shared human experience that brings calm, happiness and meaning to our lives. The artists are the city's heroes, attracting and preserving this culture. We need to do all we can to protect the identity and values that the Torpedo Factory reflects through its artists and keep that special bit of serenity it brings to the people of Alexandria...by continuing to support our artists of Old Town and giving them the space and notoriety they deserve."

Sue Daniels, Alexandria

"Corporate greed should not replace the arts. Leave the Factory alone"

John Farr, Bowie MD

"I first visited the Torpedo Factory in the 1970s, when there were one or two studios and a dream of creating a home for artists, local and from afar, where the public could interact with artists, watch them work, and purchase their art. The dream has been a reality for many years, and deserves support and a future. If Alexandria is not to become just another slickly presented tourist mecca, but a living community, it needs to maintain the offbeat reality of the Torpedo Factory: its history as a factory and its second life as a vibrant artistic community."

Molly Mastrangelo, McLean

"There are plenty of spaces available for restaurants and retail...There is very little for the arts around the DMV. Leave the Torpedo Factory alone."

Susan Saltos, Arlington

"I care about the arts and we do not need more restaurants/retail in this area"

Lily Knol, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory is perfect as is and such an extraordinarily special part of Old Town!"

Rae Pica, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory is a very important landmark in Alexandria. There is plenty of space elsewhere to put in more restaurants or shops. Please leave the artists alone."

Rosa Davis, Alexandria

"Being able to watch people practice their art is amazing. Reducing the number of studios at the TF goes against the welcoming, artistic vibe of Old Town."

Giselle Dupuis, Arlington

"Alexandria already has enough restaurants. It needs the TF."

Wayson Jones

"The Torpedo Factory is a unique space that serves the arts, artists, and the community. It is an icon! It is one of my favorite places to visit in Alexandria."

Lisa Wubben, Cape Canaveral FL

"I'm signing because I'm tired of money hungry government officials and corporation steamrolling all culture out of the DMV area."

Grace Plihal, Silver Spring

"We need spaces for art and local artisans in our community"

Sarah Forman, Washington

"I'm signing because everyone, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG, need to be exposed to the possibilities in life, art, expression, and being true to ones self."

Rita Blocher Valaes, Annapolis

"I don't think removing the artists' studios on the first floor is a good idea..."

Patricia Harris, Alexandria

"Alexandria has sold out enough. Do away with the art and the last of Old Town's character goes with it."

Chris Anderson, Alexandria

"The favored plan not only significantly reduces artists' space, but the proposal destroys the architectural character of this historic industrial waterfront building."

Gail C Rothrock, Alexandria

"At the age of 78, I declare wholeheartedly that the world needs more artists, not more restaurants and cookie-cutter retail. ♥ Artists!"

Carol Ann Felker, Arlington

"This facility brings our community the joy and education of different styles of art and engagement with local artists. Alexandria needs this!!!"

Stephanie Drennan, Alexandria

"Art is pivotal to the heart of our society. To think about restaurant commerce over [an] established art center demonstrates a big deficit in priorities. I am an artist and would not patronize a restaurant/ retail converted Torpedo Factory."

Molly Rowell Mallek, Washington

"Keep all the artists!"

Alexa Glock, Alexandria

"There are enough restaurants in the immediate vicinity. Don't turn the Torpedo Factory into a third-rate mall. Art has been and always will be critical to our culture. I've been proud of Arlington and Alexandria for promoting the arts."

Barbara Radwan-Wiehe, Arlington

"The artist space is one of the elements making Old Town unique. The last thing needed (and the least imaginative) is to add more stores and food. Let the existing shops and restaurants thrive. There already enough space for them. Let kids and visitors enjoy learning and experiencing art, culture and personal creativity, along with the familiar retail of every other town to visit."

Gaylyn Mercer, Boulder CO

"The Torpedo Factory artists studios have [produced] high quality original art for years, and also support tourism. When guests come to town we take them to visit the unique local spots in Arlington and Alexandria, like the Torpedo Factory with its wonderful varied artists work. Please do not bring in commercialism. Alexandria has lots of restaurants and shops. Artists need spaces to work and show their art. We need artists who give their gifts from the heart! Do not destroy them for commerce!"

Judy Funderburk, Arlington

"Protect our artists and work with them to find an alternative without taking away the studios. There is plenty of space for entertainment elsewhere. I've lived in NoVA my entire 44yrs and the Torpedo Factory has been for the artists. What we need is more culture and arts, not bars, restaurants, or condos."

Divya Shenoy, Washington

"Mr. Mayor: Please work with the artists for a new solution and not take away the Torpedo Factory from them."

Sudhakar Shenoy, Alexandria

"The concept of space and encouragement for working artists should take priority and commercialization of the facility has already gone too far and discouraged our former frequent visits."

David Carr, Arlington

"Artists have always been the heart, spirit and life of the Torpedo Factory; its essence and reputation. Destroy that and something joyous and proud which we can celebrate in Old Town is lost."

Judy Cranford, Arlington

"The Torpedo Factory artists are an asset to Alexandria and the wider DC metro area. This proposal would vastly decrease studio space. Please don't do it"

Natalie Goldring, Arlington

"Alexandria needs The Torpedo Factory as much as the artists need it. As one of the most unique attractions in Old Town, it brings visitors to town who not only spend money in the city, but at the Torpedo Factory and with the artists as part of their livelihood. Locals also frequently support the Factory and the businesses/artists who utilize the space. The Torpedo Factory not only offers studios for artists, but it provides historical information, a cultural destination and creative opportunities. The city cannot continue to sacrifice its own soul because it is blinded by dollar signs generated by generic, cookie-cutter dining and attractions. Stop encouraging ill-advised growth at the expense of small businesses, art communities and the like...Don't be close-minded and don't sell-out the Torpedo Factory and its artists. Thank you."

Lesley McGrew

"My grandmother had a studio here. I've been coming here since I was little with my mom and now that I am 21 years old I drive myself up every other weekend to come see the art and speak with the artists. Genuinely one of my favorite places in the whole world and I would be heartbroken if something like this happened"

Kat Vera, Front Royal

"I love the creativity within the Torpedo Factory and want this unique place to survive and thrive as it is."

Kim Harder, Alexandria

"The Torpedo Factory is... [an] attraction that gets visitors to the area, who then spend money at the surrounding shops and restaurants. Taking away...space for more retail and restaurants that are similar to ones you can find anywhere else will hurt the character of the building and will be counterproductive. Most places don't have a place like the Torpedo Factory."

Rachel Sloan, Arlington

"The Torpedo Factory is a gem and has been an artist's paradise for quite some time. No need to reduce it by building some mickey mouse restaurant."

Adam Mazzatenta, Alexandria

"I ask Alexandria to support the arts - if not for art's own sake (which should be more than enough) than in its own self-interest for keeping this unique space as a tourist draw. I know I wouldn't bring family and friends to Alexandria nearly as often without the Torpedo Factory with 'all' of its wonderful studio spaces. Alexandria doesn't need more retail and restaurants."

Stephanie Schmelz, Arlington

"I am signing because This is the only place that artist can display their work all together in one place here in Alexandria. What an exciting place for visitors and residents like to see the magnificent work that's done by our local artists. Please do not take over the Torpedo Factory! Let the Artists use this building for all to enjoy! It is a treasure!"

Gail Kropf, Alexandria

"The world needs more art and less cheap retail."

Lisa Maguire, Alexandria

"I love the Torpedo Factory and want [all] the artists' studios to remain. The last thing needed in old Town Alexandria are more restaurants! The artists belong and I do not want The Torpedo Factory to reduce the number of artist studios."

Nancy Gauchey, Lorton

"This is commercialization which will turn it into just another venue and reduce its artistic merit. Shame on the City Fathers!"

Connie Graham, Alexandria

"Having lived in Old Town I know firsthand that the Torpedo Factory is an amazing local treasure!"

Paulette Mussman, Port Saint Lucie FL

"I love the Torpedo Factory and would not want to see these very talented artists displaced."

Cassandra Smith, Arlington

"The arts and space for artists need to be encouraged-not diminished-in Old Town. The Torpedo Factory is...a working art space. This is another proposal that has little to do with what Alexandria residents want and more to do with some farfetched vision for a completely different city that the City government...wants."

Joan Hartman Moore, Alexandria

"The artists are the reason the Torpedo Factory Art Center is the top tourist attraction in Old Town Alexandria. This doesn't need "fixing"...The whole needlessly expensive proposal for changing the character of the Torpedo Factory Artist Center to enhance the meaningless concept of "vibrancy" (which is never defined) is just a crock."

Dorothy Gray, Alexandria

40
12-14-21



December 7, 2021

To: Alexandria Commission for The Arts

Position on the Torpedo Factory Art Center – The Case for Change Scenario Two

The Torpedo Factory Art Center is at a critical juncture and the stakes could not be higher. After decades of studies and studies of the studies, City Council is poised to decide which implementation framework will lead to achieving a 21st arts center of national reputation at the top of its field in programming and practice that reflects and responds to fast moving changes in our society today; a center that serves the needs of a 21st century audience which—as the Smith Study reports—has expectations for interactive, immersive experiences, special events, temporary exhibitions, and contemporary art; and a center that contributes to the fullest extent possible to the artistic and economic vitality of the City of Alexandria—one of the top small city destinations in the U.S.

Change is not a negative, but a plus. As the City's Art Center, the 90,000 square foot building must expand its vision. As the Alexandria Arts Alliance board reviewed the three frameworks, one stood out as the pathway to achieve the goals above—the **Custom Program (scenario two)** where 'the City would manage and fund capital improvements in a mixed-use space to enable subsidized art uses and market rate revenue generating use options that will help pay for a portion of the rehabilitation.'

The reasons behind our support of this framework are:

- We support the City of Alexandria addressing the urgent capital needs of the building, while at the same time reimagining the center to better serve the entire community as a major arts venue and arts catalyst.
- We support increasing the economic sustainability of the arts center utilizing a healthy mix of earned and unearned revenue strategies; and support exploring a broad range of public/private partnerships and economic development funding tools and opportunities.
- We support continuing to provide studio space to an ever widening and inclusive range of artists working in current and new arts disciplines and across disciplines, working with the city to reimagine studios to engage audiences in meaningful ways. For artists who may be displaced during construction or due to changes in use of the building it is our

hope that the city will assist artists to find alternative, affordable space in the city, thereby activating new spaces for arts uses in other parts of the city.

- We believe that the rooftop is deserving of further study and should not be taken off the table at this early juncture of the discussion of possibilities, and we encourage Council and Staff to study it further. The rooftop of the Center is a tremendous opportunity that we now know comes with a high price tag; a once in a generation opportunity to activate the rooftop in the center of the waterfront may generate tens of millions of dollars in value for City residents depending on the programming. We do not suggest it's an easy decision since the cost is also likely to be in the tens of millions, but we believe that the benefit may well outweigh the cost after further analysis.

As the city moves forward, it is our hope that a broader group of stakeholders will be engaged. We suggest forming a task force including more voices from the arts community, tourism, planning, economic development, business associations, artists, and residents. We believe a collaborative approach will result in a final product that will exceed the collective cultural, financial and civic needs of our city.

These are broad stroke recommendations. The hard and difficult work is ahead as the technical aspects of the building, funding scenarios, and design plans are worked through in more detail. It is worth the effort if in the end we achieve a state-of-the-art city arts center with a national reputation for embracing change rather than fighting it, an arts center that engages locally, nationally and globally.

Signed,

Alexandria Arts Alliance Board of Directors

Robyn Ambrose

Melinda Kernc

Vaughn Ambrose

Michelle Kozlak

John Bordner

Jason Longfellow

Susan Amber Gordon

Patricia Miller

Carolyn Griffin

Kelley Organek

Keith Jabati

Joan Singer

Ulysses James

Patricia Washington

Cc: Mark Jinks, City Manager; Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager; Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities; Stephanie Landrum, President & CEO, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership



40
12-14-21

December 10, 2021

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council:

On behalf of the Old Town Business Association we encourage you to take a proactive stand and move forward with positive change for the growth of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. We strongly endorse Scenario Two-the Custom Program. We support change to make the art center sustainable and financially viable. This facility should be enhancing the artistic and economic vitality of the City of Alexandria.

We support continuing to provide studio space to artists while we engage in new opportunities. Let's expand our horizons to include mixed uses, public private partnerships, first floor redesign, rooftop possibilities, as well as new art uses.

We have so much to be proud of in Old Town, and this facility deserves attention and commitment. We encourage you to embrace change and engage our community leaders with a goal and deadlines to create and implement a plan for a financially sustainable, artistic cultural center.

Sincerely,
Charlotte A. Hall
Managing Director
Old Town Business Association

Message to the Mayor and City Council

To: Mayor Justin Wilson, Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, and City Councilmembers Canek Aguirre, John Taylor Chapman, Amy Jackson, Del Pepper, and Mo Seifeldein

From: Torpedo Factory Artists and Friends

Date: December 14, 2021

RE: The Future of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center

We are united about at least three things.

First, artist studios should not be removed from or shrunk on the first floor. As the first engagement with the public, it's essential they remain.

Second, we once again need a creative gift shop, as was there prior to the City taking control of the property. It was both a money-maker and was a place where visitors could look for help if they had questions.

Third, given the 50th anniversary of the Torpedo Factory is in 2023, we need to develop a short-term plan to prepare for a year-long celebration. Such a plan must include doing as much work as possible to improve the building and changing management so that the artists are once again respected and involved in the decisions related to fixing it and making it a vibrant and exciting place in which to work and for the public to visit. Additionally, we should express our thanks to Marian Van Landingham as part of our celebration. One way may be for artists to create work in tribute to her.

It has been suggested by some that the artists are opposed to any change. That's not true. The artists support appropriate change, but change that is arrived at in concert with the community of artists and associations that make up the Torpedo Factory. The idea of top-down decision-making that largely excludes the artists would be a mistake. Artists, the Art League and Archeology, must all be considered stakeholders and have a place at the table. Discussion must start here so that misunderstandings are eliminated and everyone is empowered and has a stake in how the Art Center moves forward. The artists on the first floor help define the purpose and the first impression for every visitor who walks in. That should not be eliminated in any plan.

The brilliant idea at the origin of the Torpedo Factory is that it would be converted from a place that made weapons for two World Wars, into a place that makes art. Each Artist is required to produce art in their studio, and they are chosen through a rigorous selection that considers not just for the art they make, but for the process in which they

make it. There are other Art Centers, like Lorton Workhouse, but very few places where the public can watch artists at work and talk to them in their studios. This is a public service that they provide that brings visitors to Alexandria and has made downtown a vibrant place. Over 600,000 visitors a year, more than ½ the number that visit Mt. Vernon, walk through the doors and go to shop, eat, and enjoy our waterfront. They add cultural and economic value to our city, and giveback to our city in many ways.

The Torpedo Factory is an international tourism attraction that has been used as an integral element to the marketing of Alexandria since 1976, when we celebrated America's Bicentennial, and has inspired art centers all over the country. It has been a key factor in Alexandria winning plaudits as a place that respects and promotes the arts and, more importantly, as a place where tourists should visit. Artfinder declared Alexandria second in the amount of Art bought in the United States. Alexandria has two different Art festivals, and artists at the Farmers Markets and galleries throughout the city that might not be there if not for the Art Center.

We got into this situation because the City government has failed to effectively manage the Torpedo Factory during the 5 years it has been in charge.. The Office of the Arts has failed to effectively communicate with the artists and the facility has been allowed to deteriorate. Artists have had to pay for their spaces, even as they were locked out due to covid 19, and the Art Center is still closed two days a week. Artists have been almost universally unhappy with the director and the management, which they had no hand in choosing. A new director should be chosen in consultation with stakeholders. In order to move forward, everyone must move together to help the Art Center and the artists emerge successfully from the last two years during a pandemic, and bring back vibrancy through the creation of Art.

The Mayor has expressed his opinion about the Torpedo Factory in the following way: "My focus is on deriving a structure for the operation (*emphasis added*) of the Factory that expands the vitality of the Factory; improves its financial sustainability; improves its diversity; and ensures the success of Alexandria's premier arts destination long into the future." Funding the Torpedo Factory should certainly be a consideration, but not the only consideration. Diversity is an important goal, and the Torpedo Factory has provided a place for women to have a safe creative place to earn a living pursuing their passions for years. We are certainly glad that the Mayor has a commitment to the Art Center as a destination for years to come, maybe the *next* 50 years.

Mayor Wilson says "I am confident that working together we can achieve these goals". Yet, what would a new structure look like? Who would be placed in control of it? Would the interests of the artists, who run businesses, be protected? Would they even be involved in decisions impacting their lives? Would self-interested business-people in town be given that control? Much is unclear, yet if the Mayor and Council vote for the

so-called "Custom" plan, it would direct the new City Manager to move in this direction, rather than give him the chance to examine for himself how best to manage it. Essentially, it would undercut the new City Manager and new City Council Members before they have even taken office.

The Torpedo Factory is special because it's a visual arts space that allows people to see art being made by the artists. Further, in return for the opportunity to be located in the Factory, the artists must devote a significant portion of their day interacting with the visiting public. While they enjoy this, it is a service that takes time from producing their art. The artists have been chosen by an objective process that examines the quality of the art produced, without any idea who is producing it. Yet, there is no reason given for repeating the jury process for the current artists. Lacking a valid reason, the city should not be wasting the time and effort involved in doing so, when other issues are pending makes no sense. It also may pit artists in the building against each other, so therefore be counterproductive at a time when we all should be coming together.

The Art Center works because it is a collective where artists can collaborate, share, and customers have a selection of art to choose from and can find art to their taste. Visitors buy art because they get to talk to the Artist who makes the work, and see them making the work. It is not just about being exposed to Art in a static way. One result of the jury process has been that many more women have, through merit, been accepted into the Torpedo Factory than might otherwise have been the case given the discrimination in our society as a whole and the art world in many places. This is a tremendous success that is unknown to most people since there has been literally no effort to tell that story by the City. In fact there has been little effort to market the Art Center as a must see destination unique to Alexandria. Its 50th Anniversary in 2023 will be a great opportunity to tell its story and to hear from its founder Marian Van Landingham.

It is said that the artists receive a rental subsidy, yet the term is misleading because it is both hard to measure the real value of the retail spaces in the Torpedo Factory and, unlike other retail businesses, the businesses in the Torpedo Factory have an obligation to interact with the public to show how their art is created and to let people watch. This requires considerable time. While the artists are happy to do it, it doesn't change the reality that no other retail businesses on the waterfront, or elsewhere in the City, have such obligations. Great Art has also had a long history of benefactors, whether it be the Medicis in Renaissance Italy, DaVinci and Michelangelo's patron, or the National Endowment for the Arts, the MacArthur Foundation, the Guggenheim's or cities around the country that support arts in their communities because they help make it a vibrant place that people love to visit. Subsidizing a public communal space where artists work should not be seen as a bad thing, but a public benefit that a well managed city can afford, because it knows that Art has a benefit beyond the bottom line.

As for the value of the retail space, what makes it difficult to compare to other retail businesses is that other such businesses face the public on the street. This makes access easy and allows for displays to draw people in. Neither of those assets is available to Torpedo Factory businesses on the first floor let alone the second and third. Moreover, while the building itself is an art-deco treasure, the City has allowed it to deteriorate. It could have spent the past five years fixing the electrical and HVAC system, the bathrooms, and other aspects that are in need of repair, but it didn't. Such a building could not demand the same rental retail rates that other buildings on the waterfront charge. A building that is a draw creates a higher market rate for the buildings around it, including the other city owned property the city receives income from that now houses 3 restaurants, an office building with a communal work business on the ground floor, and a world class waterfront that draws visitors.

Our City has an international treasure and must treat it as such. If we torpedo the Torpedo Factory to provide space for another restaurant, demand a market rate return, or turn over the space to private hands, we will be making an irreversible mistake. Our City has poorly managed the Torpedo Factory for about 5 years and now claims that due to that poor management changes should be made that would fundamentally alter what once worked well and makes this place special.

How do we return vibrancy to the Torpedo Factory

1. Hiring management committed to its success and willing to engage with the artists in a comprehensive way to achieve it.
2. Create space for young people to make things on the third floor, while keeping artists on the first floor who can be observed creating art, so people understand what is special about the space.
3. Using the grand hall for art displays by artists, such as the highly popular paper mache animals, collaborative work, and live performances such as dance, music and First Night events.
4. Reinstating the summer Visiting Artists Program where artists would go through a jury process and then, at their own expense, take over a studio for a month or two so the resident artist could have time off to teach, take a workshop or recharge their artistic energy.
5. Providing guests a better station with more information at the entrances, self-guided

tours and docent tours to make it easier for students and the public to schedule visits that would ensure engagement with artists.

6. Examining how similar visual arts centers in other cities, such as Charlottesville, have created incubator programs to increase the racial diversity and enable younger artists to be represented.

7. Reinstating the successful gift shop, perhaps with a small coffee shop for those seeking to take a break without leaving the property. If feasible, the coffee shop might also have a waterfront entrance.

8. Confer with the artists and new management to assess where the archeology office and the Art League should be located to make the first floor more engaging or create more space for Art Studios.

9. Return the studios taken by management for conference rooms, etc... to use by artists, creating space for new and diverse artists to be added.

10. Have a budget for marketing the Torpedo Factory, which would include proper signage outside, distribution of engaging materials and digital messages to local hotels and appropriate entities in DC and MD, as well as appropriate national and international outlets.

11. Bring diversity to the building with a docent program engaging diverse school groups to the building.

12. Adding wind turbines or solar panels to the roof should be evaluated. It would not only help our effort to slow manmade climate change, it might ultimately lower the heating and air conditioning costs of a building with very high ceilings.

Finally, given the concern that the "Custom" has too long a gestation period to prepare for the 50th anniversary and requires the removal or reduction of artist studios on the first floor, we call upon the Mayor and City Council to reject passing any plan this month. Instead, we urge our legislators to direct the new City Manager to use all the information gathered in this process along with new staff to prepare his own plan for the City to follow to meet the short-term goal of being able to effectively celebrate the 50th anniversary, while looking to the future for changes that can't be achieved in that time frame.

Marian Van Landingham

M. Alexander Gray

~~Wes Barker~~ ~~Barker~~ (TFAA)
Molloy O'Rourke
Anson Lijethy
Covey

Paul Alan Friedman

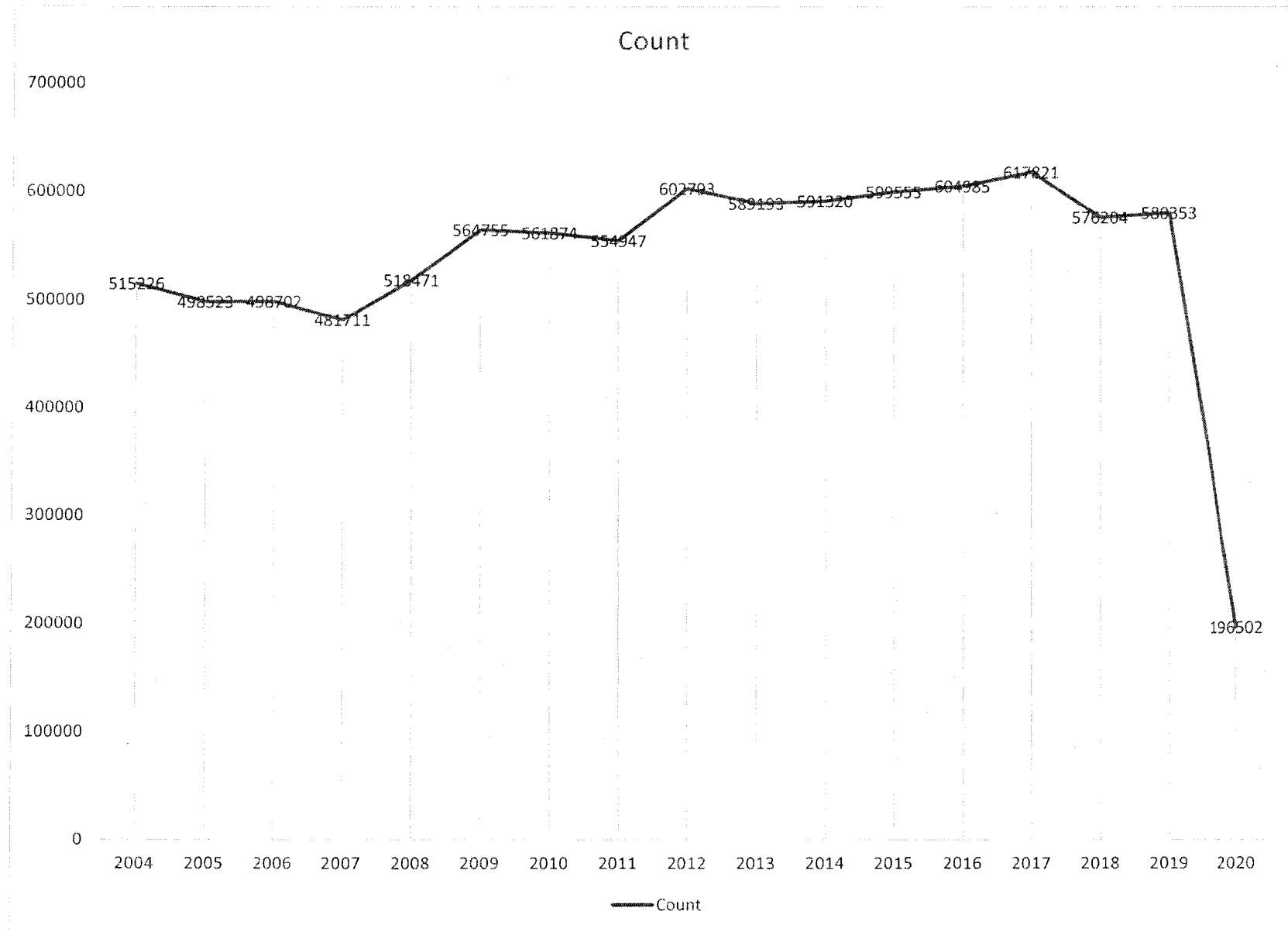
Boyd Walker

~~Lisa Sch~~ TFAA
Gloria Barbre
Lurt Enchaves

Mary McHarris
John F. McHarris
Wahine

Torpedo Factory Art Center

Door Count, 2004 – 2020



Action Plan for Vibrancy & Sustainability at Torpedo Factory Art Center

January 2020

CHORA
SMITHGROUP

Overview: For over a decade, various stakeholders of the Torpedo Factory Art Center have commissioned numerous studies, reports and plans for review and comment pertaining to issues at the Art Center. The issues ranged from governance, management and financial issues, to articulating a shared mission, purpose and vision for the enterprise. Several of the stakeholders indicated that the TFAC has evolved into a more inward-looking organization without clear programming for the community, and that it needs to evolve towards looking outward.. Further, the main takeaway goal from the 2017 Community Engagement Report was stated as a need to “broaden and deepen the Art Center’s community connectivity.” All stakeholders agreed that change is necessary for the good of the community and to reestablish the Art Center as a leader in the art world.

The Torpedo Factory Art Center has had a long and distinguished history culminating in the 70s and 80s as a model for placemaking and unique way for the public to see artists at work. Today, the public has multiple ways to consume art and the novelty of seeing art being made is varied across the country. Less being left behind; the Art Center must adapt to an ever-changing landscape of 21st century art institutions to regain its place as an arts leader.

Some of the elements this 21st Century Art Center should embody include:

- A new look at the state and content of the 21st Century arts with special attention to the intersection of art and technology through newsworthy programing;
- Identifying the viewer or visitor as equally important in the art process as the artist;
- Promoting the core role of the arts in human-wellness, creative expression, and empathy.
- A successful response to the changing expectations of contemporary audiences for interactive, immersive experiences, special events, temporary exhibitions, and contemporary art;
- An updated strategy for assessing and meeting the contemporary needs of artists and the arts community;
- Non-traditional life-long learning opportunities, especially for older adults;
- Inclusion and diversity in both audiences, artists, and art;
- Art and arts education as economic drivers;
- Effective collaborations with community and arts organizations, both for profit and not-for-profit sectors;

Culminating the stakeholder studies, reports and plans, the City of Alexandria commissioned a “Study of Studies” to cull the best recommendations and directions from all 15 of those previous efforts (appendix reference), as well as provide fresh insights to create the 21st Century Torpedo Factory Art Center. To that end, this 24- month short-term and 5-year long-term plan have been developed to distinctly grow the Art Center into the future.

This short-term action plan represents an immediate response to the challenge of creating a 21st Century Art Center. To effectively move the Art Center in a positive direction, and address some immediate, short-term improvements.

Through the City’s sound management of the Torpedo Factory Art Center over the past several years, a solid set of management procedures and practices have been established, providing a sound foundation for next steps including: space leasing and studio-management policy and practices, first floor upgrades, sustainable fiscal policy and practices and experimental events to test and evaluate a more public-facing

Art Center. Events such as the Late Shift art parties and weekend long Torpedo Beer and Wine Gardens have showed audiences are hungry for new experiences.

Additionally, the City has proven that Old Town is ready to enjoy, consume, and experience a 21st century art experience thanks to the results of the temporary public-art installation at Waterfront Park, *Mirror Mirror* by New York based SOFTlab. *Mirror Mirror* and the new Art Center events have increased visitation and the media profile of Old Town through contemporary, publicly accessible, art.

While the outcomes and results of this short-term action plan are being executed, the long-term plan needs to be developed. The long-term plan would include an architectural plan for the renovation and repurposing of the entire building while also creating a detailed business plan to ensure a sustainable financial future for the Torpedo Factory Art Center. In addition, the long-term plan will align the Art Center program with the City of Alexandria's strategic plan, the City's arts, waterfront and economic development plans, and other City plans.

Together, this short-term action plan and long-term plan will combine to shape a 21st Century Art Center ready to successfully and sustainably serve the City of Alexandria and greater community for the next decade.

Executive Summary: Torpedo Factory Art Center Action Plan 2020-2022

The City's management of the Art Center has stabilized the organization and created a sound foundation upon which to plan and move forward and shown the hunger for a 21st century art experience at the Waterfront. Based on the recommendations of prior studies and the current Art Center management, this short-term action plan is designed to achieve priority results and outcomes to establish a foundation for a renewed Art Center. The goal is to improve the efficiency of operations and sustainability of the Art Center while also broadening and deepening its connections to the community and re-configuring the first-floor spaces to create a more dynamic public experience of the Art Center.

Three interconnected Core Strategic Directions (CSDs) are included to guide the Art Center's action steps. The CSDs and the actions and outcomes are derived from the *Study of Studies* and the related recommendations as well as with conversations with community organizations, including Visit Alexandria and Economic Development Partnership.

Each of these CSDs have a series of related actions and outcomes to ensure that the Art Center proceeds steadfastly in these strategic directions. Parallel to the execution of this action plan, the long-term plan (addressed in CSD #3) will be developed to include a full strategic plan for the Art Center with a new architectural program for the entire building, a sustainable financial plan and business model and a strategic plan to guide the development of the Art Center over the next five years.

The CSDs are listed as follows and outlined in the following pages:

CSD #1: Re-establish the Art Center's Identity for a 21st Century Audience.

CSD #2: Curate the Building, with a Focus on the First Floor, for Improved Visitor Experience and Artist/Studio Program.

CSD #3: Establish Policies and Procedures that Identify the Art Center as a High Performing Organization and Rebuild the Art Center's Role as a Leader in the Country.

Core Strategic Direction #1: Re-establish the Art Center Identity for a 21st Century Audience

Increasing the number of guests and increasing the intensity of their learning and artistic experience will make the Art Center a premier arts destination for the region. Interactive, immersive experiences, family fun, festivals and art fairs are all ways to increase the public engagement and enjoyment of the Art Center.

The re-imagined Art Center, with its emphasis on public engagement and alignment with the City's art and waterfront development plans, will create a new personality and identity for the Art Center. This new identity will need to be marketed to a wider audience. This CSD will also support the increasing and diversifying of audiences through improved marketing and public relations efforts.

- 1. Action:** Curate a roster of public events/programs to evaluate initiatives of varied offerings to include community favorites, family friendly, media worthy, and new artistic media that promote the core role of the arts in human-wellness and creative expression, as well as championing life-long learning.
Outcome:
 - a. Develop a systematic process for selecting partners and events/programs that include artistic, professional, and ethical standards as well as matching the goals of the Art Center.
 - b. Art and Food/Drink: Celebrate food as art in a food/drink centered event/festival, utilizing regional restaurants and or breweries.
 - c. Art and Technology: Implement a “when art meets technology” event that explores the contemporary intersection of art and technology, utilizing regional partners such as colleges.
 - d. Art and Family: Plan and schedule an additional family “Make-it” event(s) or programs (in addition to Art Safari in October) featuring family-friendly and educational experiences.
 - e. Experiment with “on the road” pop-up offerings to be located throughout the Waterfront and City.
- 2. Action:** Expand the artist studio program to better reflect contemporary best practices, diversity, and public interaction.
Outcome:
 - a. Design and implement an impeccable, credible, artist selection process to determine studio leases. Grounded in best practices, selection is based on art quality, ability to work and interact with the public, working for greater good of Art Center/community, and diversity including media, place in career, and personal background.
 - b. Similar to current “Post Grad Residency” at the Art Center, establish specific short-term studio residences for specific demographics such as career level or new media.
 - c. Offer artists professional and business development seminar(s) (open to all).
- 3. Action:** Expand the role and impact of Target Gallery, the Art Center’s critically acclaimed contemporary art gallery, by promoting the core role of art in human wellness as expressed in Action 1 above.
Outcome:
 - a. Establish Target Gallery as a focal point within the Art Center by merging marketing efforts and public facing interaction while in the building.
 - b. Develop new, newsworthy elements to the Target Gallery roster of exhibits.

4. **Action:** Establish new Art Center attributes towards a refined identity, maintaining an independent and unique marketing strategy and tools within the larger City framework.

Outcome:

a. Attributes should include:

- i. Unique
- ii. Dynamic
- iii. Vibrant
- iv. Family-friendly
- v. Welcoming
- vi. Memorable
- vii. Diverse
- viii. Creative

Core Strategic Direction #2: Curate the Building, with a focus on the First Floor, for Improved Visitor Experience and Artist/Studio Program

To meet the needs and audience expectations of a 21st Century Art Center, the Art Center will need to be re-conceived. Public spaces and amenities, artist studios and galleries, and the relationship to the waterfront will be reshaped to serve the new purpose of the Art Center.

Evaluate and develop initiatives that better curate the visitors experience. Focusing on the first floor, create art experiences that engage the visitors in art making and experiencing professionally curated, newsworthy exhibits.

1. **Action:** Re-design and evaluate the first floor as a space that is more visible, interactive, hands on, accessible, with an ever-changing experience for visitors.

Outcome:

- a. Identify, utilize, and upgrade space on first floor for studios/workshops with hands-on opportunities, specialized technology, and an ability to be viewed as spectacle, such as printmaking and glass making.
- b. Relocate and upgrade existing studio space to accommodate new “public-facing” first floor features (see 1.a above).
- c. Develop a “Make-It” space for families on first floor.
- d. Expand the Target Gallery into an upgraded space to provide additional exhibition space and increase its visibility in a more central location).
- e. Investigate moving The Art League Store to first floor.

2. **Action:** Re-design and evaluate the third floor to afford better use of space for a greater audience, more programs, and income potential.

Outcome:

- a. Identify and repurpose space to institute a large inviting flexible, technologically updated, publicly accessible/rentable lecture and event space capable of accommodating more than 100 people and hosting events during open hours that minimally disturb working artists.

3. **Action:** Re-design and evaluate the building to create opportunities for diversity and increasing the Art Center’s role in the Waterfront Small Area Plan.

Outcome:

- a. Establish Waterfront as primary entrance.
- b. Plan, design and implement an experimental café space within the building.
- c. Prioritize use of space/space allocation throughout the building with a focus on the first floor to determine highest and best use.
- d. Develop intentional plan and use for common areas to include expanded exhibit opportunities and how rentals utilize the building.
- e. Identify, utilize, and upgrade studios for specific short-term studio residences for specific demographics such as career level or new media.

Core Strategic Direction #3: Establish Policies and Procedures that Identify the Art Center as a High Performing Organization and Rebuild the Art Center's Role as a Leader in the Country

As the Art Center re-imagines itself for the 21st century, it will need to challenge its internal policies, practices, and business model in accordance with best practices and industry standards to become a sustainable organization. Its resources will have to be optimally deployed to maximize the impact of every dollar.

Operations should be refined to ensure a fiscally sustainable Art Center that is entrepreneurial in its policies and practices, diversifies revenue opportunities and attracts artists.

1. Action: Develop a clear and compelling Mission and Vision for the future of the Art Center.

Outcome:

- a. Build new Mission and Vision affirming purpose of the Art Center, broader City goals and objectives, and a unique identity that resonates with the community and artists.

2. Action: Update the Art Center's policies, procedures, and standards, to fit external facing direction and be in line with a 21st century Art Center and allow for Art Center to operate as an entrepreneurial and fundraising organization to ensure vibrancy and sustainability within the larger City framework.

Outcome:

- a. Update the Operating Rules and Procedures tied to the leases to align with the CSDs.
- b. Phase in a lease holder re-jurying process to ensure vibrancy and vitality based on new artist selection process addressed in CSD #1.
- c. Research best practices and methods for effective internal and external communications and engagement.
- d. Modify open days and hours to meet needs of visitors and lesson artists fatigue/ provide more private studio time.
- e. Test dynamic pricing for services offered, including private event rentals, premium programs/events, and studio leases, using a model similar to the City Council approved RPCA Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery Policy.
- f. Align staff to priorities and duties determining optimal deployment of resources.
- g. Explore and test alternative marketing and business tools to allow for greater entrepreneurial and fundraising flexibility.

3. Action: Plan for the next five - ten years.

Outcome:

- a. Develop a comprehensive business plan / financial model to support strategic / fiscal decisions including a fiscal analysis, analysis of fundraising or private support, analysis of food services in the Art Center, and revenue plan.
- b. Plan and implement a marketing and branding effort, to include future new logo, signage, website, and other marketing tools, and design a marketing campaign.
- c. Identify a consultant to conduct a holistic facility assessment following the ASTM E2018-15 standard. Identify building maintenance issues and plan for implementation of updates.
- d. Identify firm to commission an architectural plan for space reallocation to be developed in concert with programing and identity outlined in CSD #1 and #2.

Gloria Sitton

From: Kevin Greenlief
Sent: Monday, December 13, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
Cc: Mark Jinks; Julian Gonsalves; Kendel Taylor; Emily Baker; Laura Triggs; Sarah G. Taylor
Subject: RE: Torpedo Factory Sales Tax Revenue + Grocery Tax Revenue

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Sorry for the delay of my response.

I'm afraid we don't have information for the "Farmers' Market." These are all individual merchants and any sales made at the Farmers' Market would be reported as part of their total sales from their other locations. We have no way to isolate these sales.

As to the Torpedo Factory, we looked at FY19 (pre-pandemic) and FY21 (impacted by the pandemic). Below is the comparison. This is for active retail accounts (artists, galleries) at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union Street~

FY19: We had 175 active artist/gallery accounts, with only 170 reporting taxable sales. This amounted to \$6.658 million in gross retail receipts for the artists. At our 1% Local Sales Tax, this amounts to \$66,577 in Local Sales Tax, or an average of \$392 Local Sales Tax per artist. If you exclude the top 10 grossing artists, the average Local Sales Tax drops to \$140 per artist.

FY21: We had 123 active artist/gallery accounts, with only 98 reporting taxable sales. This amounted to \$1.99 million in gross retail receipts for the artists. At our 1% Local Sales Tax, this amounts to \$19,900 in Local Sales Tax, or an average of \$203 Local Sales Tax per artist. If you exclude the top 10 grossing artists, the average Local Sales Tax drops to \$92 per artist.

As to the "Grocery Tax," I'm roughly estimating the potential loss to us at about \$4.4 m. to \$5.5 m. in General Fund Sales Tax. Overall, this represents between 14% - 17% of total General Fund Sales Tax. I believe we'd also lose some state revenue to the Schools, but I'm not sure as to that amount. IF we lost at the same percentage, I think this would be around \$2.5 m. - \$3 m. for the Schools, but they'd need to verify.

The range depends on the details of legislation that may be proposed by the Governor elect. We have approximately 83 Grocery Stores in the City, although this is a liberal definition in that it includes 7-11's (which sell bread, eggs, milk, etc). The lower end of the range is if the legislation just prohibits a tax on grocery store sales of "food purchased for human consumption and essential personal hygiene products..." (Va. Code § 58.1-611.1). The higher end of the range is if the legislation were to prohibit our 1% Local Sales Tax on all grocery store sales.

I hope this helps.

Kevin

Kevin C. Greenlief, Assistant Director
Revenue Division, Department of Finance
City of Alexandria, Virginia

301 King Street, Suite 1700
Alexandria, VA 22314
www.alexandriava.gov/Revenue
703-746-3962 (office)
703-216-2278 (cell)

From: Kendel Taylor <Kendel.Taylor@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 13, 2021 6:46 AM
To: Elizabeth Bennett-Parker <elizabeth.bennettparker@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: Emily Baker <Emily.Baker@alexandriava.gov>; Laura Triggs <Laura.Triggs@alexandriava.gov>; Kevin Greenlief <kevin.greenlief@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Re: Torpedo Factory Sales Tax Revenue + Grocery Tax Revenue

I'm sharing your request with Kevin. He will be able to share what we have and how long it will take to generate additional information.

Thanks.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Elizabeth Bennett-Parker <elizabeth.bennettparker@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Sunday, December 12, 2021 9:45:09 PM
To: Kendel Taylor <Kendel.Taylor@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: Emily Baker <Emily.Baker@alexandriava.gov>; Laura Triggs <Laura.Triggs@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Torpedo Factory Sales Tax Revenue + Grocery Tax Revenue

Hi Kendel,

I hope you're well. Pre-COVID at some point I had asked if it would be possible to figure out the total sales tax revenue from OTFM and/or the Torpedo Factory. I think you had indicated it would be; the Waterfront Commission has recommended that this be included in any future financial analysis for the Torpedo Factory. Would it be possible to get this number? (And how long would that take?)

Also, if the state grocery tax is eliminated, what would that cost Alexandria in lost revenue?

Thanks so much for your help!

Warmly,
Elizabeth

Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
Vice Mayor
City of Alexandria
Elizabeth.bennettparker@alexandriava.gov

Studio Number	Name1	Name2	Title	Organization (if any)	Address2	
3	Lynn	Goldstein			22039	sublease
3	Cindy	Richmond			22003	
4	Tsolmon	Damba			22310	
4	Lawrence	Morris			20607	
5	Kurt	Anderson			22153	
6	Lois	Benson			22308	
6	Ruth	Gowell			22042	
6	Lori	Katz			20009	
6	Heasoon	Rhee			22207	sublease
7	Victoria "Tory"	Cowles			22307	
7	Minako	Oka-Hanig			22027	
8	Tara	Barr			22202	
9	VACANT (Café')					
14	Jennifer	Dunbar		Printmakers, Inc.	22314	
15	David	Allison		DAMA ART LLC	22302	sublease
15	Sheila	Flanders		DAMA ART LLC	22307	
15	Mary Anne	Warner		DAMA ART LLC	22302	
16	Lisa	Schumaier			22301	
17	M. Alexander	Gray			22302	
17	Betty J.	Grisham			22309	
18	Hyun Jung	Chung			22213	
19	Suan	Ying	Treasurer	Scope Gallery	22182	
22	Tracie	Griffith-Tso	President	Fire On	20190	
23	Dejan	Jovanovic		Jovanovich Inc.	22310	
24	Joan	Ulrich			22308	
25	Jamaliah	Morais			20003	
27	Mirella	Belshe			22314	sublease
28	Nancy	Yonehiro	Coordinator	Enamelists Gallery	22309	
29	Clara	Graves	Chairman	Potomac Fiber Art Gallery	20190	
30	Val	Proudki			22182	
31	Michele	Hoben			20002	
32	Tatyana	Schriempf		Schremko Design	22314	
33	Chris	Erney		Chris Erney, LLC	20607	
201	Jeaim	Lee-Coverley			22192	
201	Gretchen	Raber			22306	
201	Estelle	Vernon			20818	
202	Andrea	Gettings		Discover Graphics	20170	
203	Yoshiko	Ratliff			20009	
204	Marcos	Teixeira			20622	
205	Nan	Lopata			22314	
206	Susan	Sanders			22015	
209	Brandi	Couvillion			22314	
210	Gloria	Barbre		Gloria Barbre Designs	22314	
212	Tony	Man		Man, On-Chow dba Jewelry Creations	22307	
214	Gerda	Atzl			22042	
222	Matthew	Harwood			22042	
223	Natalie	Abrams		Abrams Wearable LLC	22314	
224	Rosemary	Covey			22302	
225	Marietje	Chamberlain			20190	
225	Gale	Wallar			22309	
226	Susan	Cohen			22304	
226	Jenae	Michelle			22314	
226	Leah	Sturgis			22308	
227	Angela	Esteve			22308	
229	Saya	Behnam		Design 4 Future LLC	20176	
301	Carol	Lopatin			22314	
301	Cindy	Lowther			22303	
301	Carol	Talkov		Studio C-Fine Arts LLC	22310	
302	Yoon	Sun Lim			22153	
303	Jenny	Nordstrom			20120	
303	Jenny	Nordstrom			22192	

303	Carol	Talkov			20733	
304	Anya	Shakeeva			22310	
305	Ganbaatar	Choimbol			22030	
306	Andrew	Parris			22309	
306	Marilynn	Spindler			22152	
307	Jennifer	Noda		Noda Wade Studios, LLC	22041	
307	Joey	Wade		Noda Wade Studios, LLC	22314	
308	Nancy	Fortwengler			20733	
309	Veronica	Barker-Barzel			22206	
309	Marianne (Min)	Enghauser			22306	
310	Matthew	Johnston		Tall Tulips	22314	
312	Sandy	LeBrun-Evans	Treasurer	Multiple Exposures Gallery	20017	
313	Christine	Cardellino			22102	
314	Diane	Lietzau		Glinting Glass LLC	20607	
316	Charlene	Nield			22304	
317	Karen	Fitzgerald			22303	
318	Zoya	Gutina			22304	
321	Marian	Van Landingham			22314	
322	Ann	Barbieri			20003	
322	Ellen	Delaney			22306	
322	Mary Beth	Gaiarin			22182	
324	Minwei	Liang			22306	
325	Patrick	Sargent		Printmakers Inc.	22314	
326	Margaret	Cerutti			22042	
326	Jolande	Goldberg			22207	
326	Nathan	Leibowitz			22314	
326	Mike	Stevens			22202	sublease
328	Sermin	Ciddi			22101	
329	Karen	Richardson			22314	
330	Jamie	Fine			22314	
331	Ahmed	Ansari			20124	
332	Luis Marcel	Deolazo			22314	
	Judy	Heiser			22301	
332	Judy	Heiser			22306	sublease
332	Marsha	Staiger			22314	
333	Beverly	Ryan			22304	
334	Lori	Katz			22306	
335	Alison	Sigethy			22306	
336	Laurie	Fields			22203	
337	Guy	Jones			22203	
337	Alvena	McCormick			22308	
338	Gwendolyn	Graine			22314	
338	Diane "Niki"	Pickett			20854	
339	Mary	Lynch			22303	
340	Christine	Parson			22032	
341	Lesley	Clarke			22302	
341	Berit	Estabrook			22314	
341	Nancy	Ramsey			22182	
342	Rachel	Collins			22314	
343	Tsetsentuya	Dagvadorj			22209	
344	Guido	Zanni			22193	
1.2, 21, 213A, 213B, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221 20, 311, 315	Suzanne	Bethel	President	The Art League		
	Veronica	Barker-Barzel	President	Torpedo Factory Artist Association		

From: Julian Gonsalves
Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2021 6:37 PM
To: Justin Wilson
Cc: Diane Ruggiero; Emily Baker
Subject: RE: Confirmed: 2x1/TFAC (Wilson)

We received the following information from Visit Alexandria.

Destination Analysts prepared a "Visitor & New Audience Research" study for Visit Alexandria in 2019. These questions were asked of potential traveling audience. In response to which attribute motivated visitation to Alexandria in which the % rating represents Interesting/Very interesting, "Over 80 working artists at the Torpedo Factory Art Center" came in 17th below surrounding tourist venues such as Mount Vernon, Del Ray, proximity to National Harbor. The top 5 were "1. Walkable, 2. Old Town Alexandria - a nationally designated historic district, 3. Potomac River waterfront setting – eyesight of DC, 4. More affordable hotel rates than Washington, DC, and 5. Beautifully preserved 18th- and 19th-century architecture.

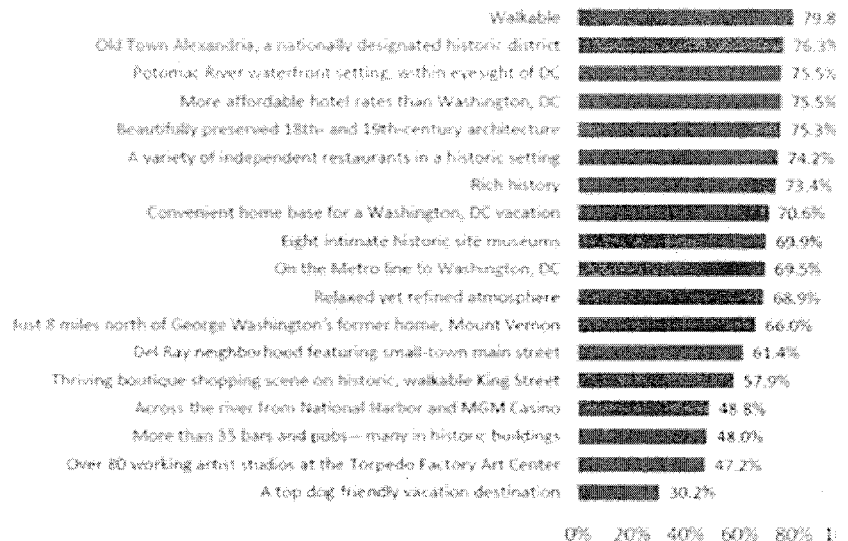
ALEXANDRIA ATTRIBUTES THAT MOTIVATE VISITATION

Of the Alexandria attributes tested, the ones that are considered most interesting in terms of motivating visitation to the city include walkability, Old Town Alexandria, Potomac River waterfront setting, affordable hotel rates and historic architecture. Nearly three-quarters of respondents also find a variety of independent restaurants in a historic setting (74.2%) and rich history (73.4%) to be interesting motivations for visiting.

Seven-in-ten travelers also felt that Alexandria being a convenient home base for a Washington, DC vacation was "interesting" or "very interesting" in terms of motivating visitation to the city.

Question: In terms of motivating you to visit Alexandria, VA, how interesting do you find each of the following attributes of Alexandria? Please use the five-point scale below where "1" equals "Very Uninteresting" and "5" equals "Very Interesting." Base: All respondents. 2921 responses.

Figure 17: Alexandria Attributes That Motivate Visitation
(Top-Two Box Score—% Rating Each as "Interesting" or "Very interesting")



An older 2014 Visit Alexandria survey notes tourist participation in various activities/attractions once they visited (Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association 2014 Advertising Effectiveness and ROI Study, prepared by Destination Analysts).

Figure 5.21: Which of the following activities and attractions did you participate in while in Alexandria, VA on this trip? (Select all that apply)

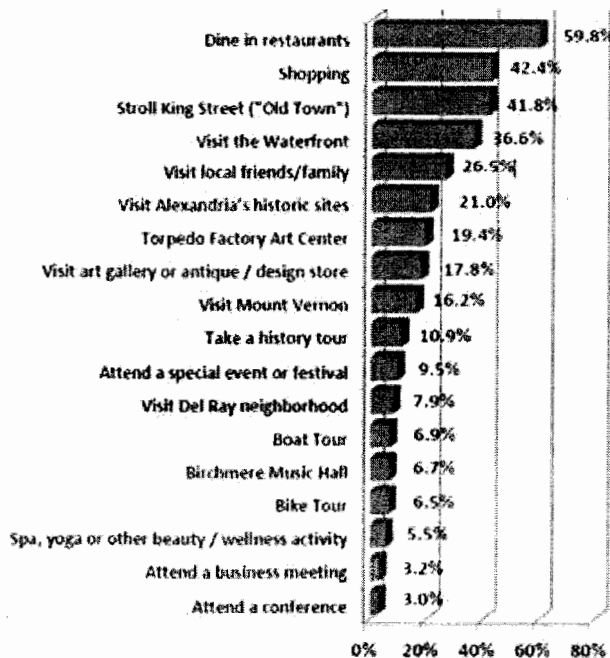


FIGURE 5.21 - Question 21: Which of the following activities and attractions did you participate in while in Alexandria, VA on this trip? (Select all the apply) Base: Respondents who visited Alexandria, VA. 495 completed surveys.

Julian J. Gonsalves, CFA, CP3P, LEED AP, ENV SP
 Assistant City Manager for Public-Private Partnerships
 City of Alexandria, Virginia
 Direct: 703.746.3710
www.alexandriava.gov

Privileged & Confidential Communication

This message may contain confidential and privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Kilo Grayson <Kilo.Grayson@alexandriava.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 11:57 AM

To: Kilo Grayson; Julian Gonsalves; Diane Ruggiero; Emily Baker; Justin Wilson

Cc: Mark McHugh

Subject: Confirmed: 2x1/TFAC (Wilson)

When: Wednesday, December 8, 2021 6:00 PM-7:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

40
12-14-21

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE DECEMBER 13, 2021

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MAYOR JUSTIN WILSON

SUBJECT: TORPEDO FACTORY NEXT STEPS

For over 40 years, the Torpedo Factory has been an iconic part of Alexandria, a location where visitors from around the world can interact with artists and the artistic process. The City-owned facility provides artistic small businesses with subsidized space and an opportunity to work alongside some of the best artists in our nation. The facility has been a core component of why visitors from around the world come to our City.

The City has been engaged in a community debate about the future of the Torpedo Factory for almost 2 decades. A facility long regarded as a national leader should be innovating, adapting, and progressing. Instead, Alexandria has been arguing and recriminating about the Torpedo Factory. This cycle must end.

In a 2010 study, the Management Analysis, Incorporated¹ told us that it was imperative to:

- Improve vibrancy and cultural and economic benefits
- Increase economic self-sufficiency
- Better nurture and grow artistic talent

In a 2016 study, The Cultural Planning Group² told us that the Torpedo Factory had been “mired in internal disagreements that have prevented it from keeping pace with changes in the field and evolving the model to be responsive to the needs of both artists and its community.” This study recommended:

- Establishing the Torpedo Factory as an independent, focused institution
- Streamline management functions
- Create a compelling vision
- Define a new relationship with the City

¹ https://www.torpedofactory.org/board_member_public/MAI%20Report.pdf

² <https://torpedofactory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Torpedo20Factory20Art20Center20CPG20Report20Revised20120312016.pdf>

In 2019, the Smith Group³ examined 15 studies that have been conducted, and made their own recommendations, including:

- Providing effective governance
- Improving the management
- Creating a distinct and unified vision, purpose and mission
- Develop a sustainable financial model
- Forge a new relationship with the City
- Enhance and enliven the physical space

On top of the various studies imploring change, our own boards and commissions have joined the chorus. In a letter last week, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts endorsed change at the Torpedo Factory, citing the promise of “increased funding through private interest” while urging “vibrancy and sustainability.” A day later, the Alexandria Waterfront Commission offered their support for “...reinvigoration of the Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC), including maintaining the TFAC as a center for the arts, creating a lively draw for visitors to the City and Alexandria residents, creating a more welcoming entrance to the center from the waterfront, and continuing the role of working artists as a major feature.”

While the studies, debate and acrimony surrounding the Torpedo Factory have continued, the City has worked to expand the amount of space in our community dedicated to the arts. Just north of the Torpedo Factory, the City created the Old Town North Arts and Cultural District Overlay⁴, implementing a zoning incentive for the creation of new real estate dedicated to arts and cultural uses. This zoning tool has already led to the creation of over 24,000 square feet of new space, with more than 75,000 additional square feet possible during plan implementation, which is approximately the same amount of space that the Torpedo Factory Arts Center comprises today.

With City Council approval of our first tranche plan⁵ for allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, the City included \$560,000 to create a Community Development Authority designed to hold and manage these real estate assets.

The volume of analysis that has been performed on the Torpedo Factory might exceed nearly any other issue facing the City in recent times. Perhaps more notable is the remarkable agreement that has emerged from this body of work. The findings and recommendations across the myriad of surveys are generally in alignment.

In Old Town North, we have made the largest-ever commitment of land-use policy to expand the arts in our city. At the Torpedo Factory, we are continuing to make our largest financial commitment to the arts. The City can and should expand its commitment to the vibrancy of our city by fusing together the planning and execution of the revitalization of the Torpedo Factory Arts Factory with the planning and execution of the Old Town North Arts & Cultural District as a comprehensive concept.

³

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/arts/TFAC%20SmithGroup%20Chora%20Report.pdf>

⁴ https://library.municode.com/va/alexandria/codes/zoning?nodeId=ARTVISPOVZO_S6-900OLTONOARCUDIOV

⁵

https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/budget/info/ARPA%20FINAL%20LIST%20TRANCHE%201_APPROVED.pdf

Per our request, our staff has brought us a series of alternatives to consider. While a decision to select an individual alternative would not be immediately actionable in its current form, the areas of broad agreement from the various studies provide a set of principles that can and should be adopted by City Council at this time.

I believe that Council should endorse principles and ask that our City staff work with partners (AEDP, etc) to return with a plan in alignment with this approach:

- 1) Create a separate public entity (e.g. Arts Community Development Authority) to consolidate Alexandria's artistic real estate assets (Old Town North arts space, Torpedo Factory and beyond) with the mission to:***
 - a. Strategically manage Alexandria's artistic real estate***
 - b. Take advantage of unique financing tools to rehabilitate, build-out and sustain real estate assets***
 - c. Provide a framework for future consideration of public/private partnerships***
 - d. Project financing and a schedule of City facility capital investments***
- 2) Ensure that the Torpedo Factory remains a world-class center for the arts, by defining a structure within the newly-created authority that:***
 - a. Implements the approved Action Plan for Vibrancy and Sustainability⁶, to build and sustain a high-quality arts program and visitor experience***
 - b. Retains a place for Torpedo Factory artists as the facility evolves***
 - c. Broadens scope of artistic expression included in the Art Center and throughout the district (e.g. performing arts, etc)***
 - d. Solicits and incorporates structural changes from the City's Race and Social Equity Officer to improve diversity of artists***
 - e. Retains a place for non-Art Center tenants (Art League and Archaeology Museum)***
 - f. Extends the Torpedo Factory brand: combine with the Old Town North Arts District (e.g. "The Torpedo Factory Arts District")***
 - g. Engage with all stakeholders to develop a coherent vision/mission for the Torpedo Factory and the connected Arts District***

I look forward to our discussion as we work to ensure the success of the Torpedo Factory and expand Alexandria's commitment to the arts for generations to come.

Cc: Mark Jinks, City Manager
Stephanie Landrum, CEO, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
Julian Gonsalves, Assistant City Manager
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, RPCA