

Support for SUP #2018-0111

Christopher Erney <chriserney@yahoo.com>

Mon 2/4/2019 2:35 PM

Inbox

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

To the Alexandria Planning Commission,

I am writing to offer my support for SUP #2018-0111, the "Outdoor Food and Craft Market" that is being considered for the brick area outside of the Torpedo Factory.

As a long-time Torpedo Factory artist and a past Artist Association President, I am very familiar with the location as well as the needs of tourists and visitors to this area. I talk to thousands of tourists and local visitors each year and I tell them about Alexandria's history, transportation, restaurants and activities and listen to their comments and questions. Based on that, I feel that ARP's proposal is a strong step forward in filling a basic need that we have had for a very long time on the waterfront dock area. Any additional seating along the waterfront is, of course, very welcome. This plan provides something even more important; an easily accessible place -especially for families, to quickly and easily stop, sit down for a few minutes and get a quick drink or snack without wrestling bags, strollers, children, dogs or bikes into a restaurant. Options for this type of quick, informal venue have been very few -especially since the food court closed several years ago.

I was initially concerned by one TFAC entrances that might be impacted by the location of the seating area, but my concerns were addressed by the site plan (there still is access by this northern-most door) and so I don't feel the location of the seating area will impact visitation into the TFAC. My hope is, that if anything, the increased activity so close to the TFAC might attract more potential visitors to the doors of our facility.

As for the "craft market" part of the concept, though I do not know exactly how this would work, I appreciate the consideration of ARP to make an effort to tie into the Torpedo Factory in some way. As it is now, there are already non-TFAC artists sitting outside the TFAC sketching and performing in nice weather, so I think any attempt to integrate these folks or others like them into a new proposal is a positive thing everyone, including the artists at the TFAC.

Personally, in the future, I would like to see the whole waterfront plaza area turn into a vibrant colorful arts district, celebrating Alexandria's history and the waterfront in new and interesting ways, I think the concept of the Outdoor Food and Crafts Market is a exciting new step in that direction. Currently, there are just empty bricks located at this site, and the fact that ARP's concept requires no permanent alteration to the site, to me, makes it an obvious, easy decision to go forward with. Choosing instead for tourist season 2019 to have absolutely no activity at this waterfront site versus trying a new venue that riverfront visitors might use and enjoy, would be a mistake. I hope you will grant SUP#2018-0111 to ARP.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Best Regards,

Chris Erney

Torpedo Factory Artist

Christopher Erney

2/4/2019

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Vola's North Patio Project

Suzanne Bethel <suzanneb@theartleague.org>

Mon 2/4/2019 5:15 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

Hello,

I'm writing to provide an endorsement for the proposed Vola's North Patio Project.

As a tenant of the Torpedo Factory, The Art League has an interior perspective on the attractions and services that are of interest to our daily visitors and student population. With an active community of over 7,000 students and member artists, we recognize that Vola's North Patio Project would help address some existing needs. Such as;

- Our students make weekly trips to the art center so fast and affordable food options are much appreciated.
- An outdoor gathering place would provide a welcoming spot for our family visitors during our children-focused events.
- The Project could provide an immediately approachable and creative public square that would help increase interest and traffic flow to and from the Art Center.
- The service patio could also be a supportive partner for community art events and plein-air workshops.
- The Project could also help reorient visitors to the waterside entrance as the "main" entrance to the art center—helping to create a more energetic public face to the building.

We hope that the planning commission will consider approving the project. Thank you for all that you do for our city.

On behalf of the League,

 The Art League

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