

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 30, 2014

TO: CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

FROM: HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF

SUBJECT: FIRST CONCEPT REVIEW OF 2 DUKE STREET
(ROBINSON TERMINAL SOUTH) BAR CASE # 2014-0113

Informal work session with public testimony on April 30, 2014:

SPEAKERS:

Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Planning & Zoning, gave a brief introduction and overview of relevant aspects of the approved Waterfront Small Area Plan.

Bob Youngentob, EYA, introduced the project and the project team.

Edna Johnston, History Matters, LLC, presented a history of the Robinson Terminal South site and how it evolved over time.

Shalom Baranes, project architect, presented the proposed site plan and requested architectural direction from the BAR. He stated that they did not want to create a “project” with obvious boundaries but wanted something more integrated and related to the surrounding area. He noted an intention to take the character, scale, pattern and materials found in the surrounding area across the project site. He also shared precedent images. He noted that while they wanted to capture some of the qualities and spirits of historic warehouses, they did not want to replicate the design.

Rick Parisi, project landscape architect, explained additional elements of the site plan as well as elevation changes relating to the pier, promenade and terracing.

Bert Ely, 200 South Pitt Street, asked how raising the site’s elevation will fit in with The Strand and the approved hotel. He asked how it will be coordinated and how it will transition at Harborside. He also inquired about parking

Timothy Morgan, South Union Street resident, made a comment about the context at the corners, stating that five stories may be too much adjacent to existing residential.

Carl Smith, 200 Duke Street, asked about traffic at the foot of Duke Street and how it will be handled.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Dr. Fitzgerald noted that many of the new warehouses had awkward proportions compared to historic warehouses. He preferred the contemporary row dwellings shown on Sheet 24 of the presentation. He said that overall he was impressed with the concept and liked the openness. He found it disconcerting that the proposal had so much more residential than what the plan envisioned. He cautioned against building “camel” warehouses and suggested that new construction should be modern or contemporary. He had a problem with the hotel mixing historicist and new. He noted that new buildings could be modern yet compatible but thought some of the precedent examples were not successful.

Mr. Neale thought the report and presentation helped to orient the project. Regarding 2 Duke Street, he thought it should definitely be saved but that since it was below the floodplain that it could possibly be moved to the NE section of the site. He did not think it should dictate the site planning so much and noted lots of historic buildings have been moved. He liked the east-west axis on the northern portion and recommended it be replicated on the southern portion, resulting in two allees through the site. He was troubled by the big block of building proposed on the waterfront. He did not recommend reducing the density but wanted the massing changed. He was enamored by the precedent images except for the pages of the large warehouses and noted that the Torpedo Factory was not a good precedent. He thought some of the examples were too massive. He suggested looking at the waterfront in Copenhagen which has five-story, large-scale masonry buildings with random fenestrations rather than a repetitive grid. He recommended restudy of the southeastern building to increase axial transparency. He liked the nine building configuration. He thought the project had lots of potential.

Ms. Roberts expressed concern about the permeability of the site from South Union Street to the water. She recommended breaking down the massing of the southeastern building. She thought that 2 Duke Street should be given more respect. She wanted greater pedestrian access and connection with the water.

Mr. Smeallie stated that the applicant was proposing new buildings, not renovations of historic buildings, so they should look like new buildings. He stated 100% support for Sheet 23 of the presentation which showed industrial loft residential buildings. He liked the Georgetown Incinerator building and thought that direction was appropriate for the bigger waterfront-side buildings but not the townhouses. He also liked contemporary design over modern design. He thought the project was a good, well-thought plan. He commended the history report and thought it nicely framed the dialogue. He agreed that the massing of the southeastern building should be broken down. He thought it was critical to connect the east-west axis on the site and study an additional axis in the southern portion of the block. He said that the density did not need to be reduced just rearranged. He advocated for contemporary architecture on the waterfront side and supported award-winning architecture. He said buildings should not look so bulky. He preferred leaving 2 Duke Street in its present location as it added to the quirkiness found throughout Old Town.

Mr. Carlin was in agreement with many of the comments already made by other BAR members. He said that we have seen the mistakes made in the 70's and 80's and those should not be

replicated. He emphasized the importance of deriving the essence of the overall architectural direction from character defining elements found in the Old & Historic District with appropriate contemporary design elements well integrated. He has always loved the Waterfront Plan model, and was especially attracted to the angled roof forms and variety of secondary roof elements shown which dominated the model and were shown for this site. He recommended pursuing a design which like the historic district, is timeless and enduring.

Mr. von Senden noted that grading was an issue on the site and could affect the massing. The height and massing will be more sensitive on the west side. He said that the project should not be overly repetitive. He thought that there should be more space around 2 Duke Street. He liked the massing of the waterfront views. He thought the terracing on the waterfront side could be very successful. He requested more information on the little 1940s brick building. He thought the air bridge was problematic. He stated that these buildings would be built in 2017 and should be contextual but not replicative. He stated that not every building needed to be at 50 feet. He cautioned against a wall of garage doors and liked the rear entries. He thought the project was off to a successful start.

Chairman Hulfish agreed that it was a good start, better than other project starts.

I. SUMMARY

Concept Review

The material now before the Board is part of a BAR Concept Review Work Session for the mixed-use project proposed at 2 Duke Street for the block bounded by Duke Street, South Union Street, Wolfe Street and the Potomac River, the site of the present warehouse complex locally known as Robinson Terminal South. The Concept Review Policy was originally adopted by the two Boards of Architectural review in May 2000 (attached). Concept Review is an optional, but strongly recommended, informal process conducted as a work session, usually under Other Business at a regular hearing or at a separate work session for unusually large projects, at the beginning of a Development Site Plan (DSP) or Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) application and is conducted prior to a formal BAR application for a Permit to Demolish or Certificate of Appropriateness. The Board's advisory vote at these work sessions is not binding on either the Board or the applicant and may not, therefore, be appealed.

The purpose of this policy is for the BAR to provide the applicant, staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council with comments relating to demolition of an existing building or of the overall appropriateness of the height, scale, mass and general architectural character of proposed new construction. This early step and ongoing BAR conceptual review process is concurrent with the development review process and is intended to minimize future architectural design conflicts between what is shown to the community and City Council during the DSUP approval and then later to the BAR for a Certificate of Appropriateness. If the Board believes that the area proposed for demolition, or that a proposed building's height or mass is not appropriate and would not be supported in the future, the applicant and staff should be advised as soon as possible. Due to this project's location on the waterfront, the Board must also make a finding of compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Standards.

Site History

The site includes a late-19th-century two-story brick warehouse identified as 2 Duke Street, as well as an aggregation of mid-20th-century metal warehouses, mid-20th-century brick buildings and a concrete pier. This block was the site of the prominent 19th-century, 4½-story Pioneer Mill, a grain mill which later burned, as well as a range of smaller industrial buildings and uses including shipbuilding facilities, storage and a railroad freight depot. The applicant has hired History Matters, LLC for historic research and a preliminary report is attached.

The history presented by the applicant to date illustrates that this waterfront block did not have the same development patterns as other historic waterfront blocks to the north. For example, the 1877 Hopkins map and later Sanborn maps show a significant range in building sizes, from two-story dwellings to the 4½-story Pioneer Mill, oriented in different directions and without clear through-block east-west alleys, common on other waterfront blocks. The early-20th-century Sanborn maps show buildings with large footprints as well as buildings with multiple additions. These commercial buildings were oriented and sited to maximize efficiency and function rather than to continue the residential development patterns found west of Union Street.

The applicant has had a contract on the property since 2013 and has met with Planning & Zoning staff for several months to consider various alternatives and perform due diligence.

Proposal

The purpose of this work session is to introduce the history and context of this site. No building elevations will be presented at this time, though precedent images of existing and historic buildings are shown for Board feedback. Due to the total transformation proposed for the site, the applicant is seeking Board input at this first work session on the appropriate scale, mass and direction for architectural character of individual buildings, as well as the relationship between these buildings. Information regarding uses, parking, grades and the flood plain are provided only for context and will be addressed separately through the development review process.

Existing Structures

The focus of the first concept work session is the proposed new construction, rather than demolition. However, it is obvious that almost no new construction may occur on this site without demolishing some or all of the existing buildings. Based on staff's preliminary research, and the report prepared by History Matters, only the two-story brick building at 2 Duke Street and the one-story brick building at 226 The Strand were constructed prior to the 20th century. Both of these late 19th-century industrial buildings are worthy of additional study.

A site visit to 2 Duke Street confirmed that the building still retains the original heavy timber roof trusses and framing, though the windows and north façade have been extensively modified. Staff strongly recommends that this building be retained and rehabilitated but acknowledges that alterations may be required to raise the building above the 100 year flood plain for adaptive reuse.

The building at 226 The Strand has suffered many unsympathetic alterations and additions and has a number of structural cracks above openings. The building does not retain its original framing and there is evidence of significant brick deterioration from flooding and rising damp, which is likely why stucco was later applied to the exterior. This building will require additional

site investigation and engineering analysis to determine whether all or portions may reasonably be preserved and interpreted or whether demolition may be appropriate.

The remaining buildings on the site appear to be 20th century warehouses with no particular architectural or cultural distinction that would likely not meet any of the criteria in the zoning ordinance for preservation. The only exception may be the small, freestanding brick warehouse at the southeast corner of the site, adjacent to the pier. Staff will tour the interior of this building on May 1, 2014 and report our findings at the next work session. Staff will investigate whether there are other potentially historic structures or components that should be retained and incorporated into the overall design.

Proposed Site Plan

As this is the first stage in the redevelopment process, this work session will focus on highlights of the proposed plan which include an extension of The Strand into the site where it will turn west and connect to South Union Street. There will be nine buildings in total—a collection of six townhouse rows on the northwestern quadrant of the block, two large mixed-use buildings located on the eastern portion of the block, fronting on the Potomac River, and a multifamily building fronting onto Wolfe Street. The waterfront buildings will have some commercial space on the first floor—entirely on the northernmost building and the northern half of the southern building—with condominium residential units above. Amenity spaces are proposed on the west side of these two buildings. The existing concrete pier will be retained and reused, as required by the Waterfront Plan. The proposal envisions a café and activity on the pier.



Figure 1. Applicant's proposed schematic site plan.

The promenade proposed as part of the overall waterfront park plan will continue along the Potomac River side of the block and will be approximately 25 feet in width. To the west of the promenade will be 25 feet of publicly accessible green space with terraces. The foot of Wolfe and Duke streets will be street-end public parks. No specific information on public art has been proposed but the applicant has indicated that it will be incorporated into the overall design though by practice the BAR does not review public or private art.

The portion of the site around 2 Duke Street, the northeastern building and portions of the southeastern multi-family building will feature “active frontage,” as required by the Waterfront Small Area Plan. The proposal includes porosity within the block and multiple pedestrian connections, including a clear site line from South Union Street via the extended The Strand to the pier.

The proposed massing study shows four and five story buildings, with a maximum height of 50 feet. While no architecture has been submitted as part of this initial concept review, the applicant has provided several precedent images that suggest a historically-inspired industrial/loft character for the masonry multifamily buildings, with flat roofs and large window openings set between pilasters or columns. Such a scheme could utilize traditional design details or be more contemporary reinterpretations of historic Alexandria warehouse forms and materials. The townhouses could represent clusters of small waterfront related buildings rather than replicate individual townhouse dwelling units that never existed on this site. The applicant’s images suggest that the waterfront buildings could be more open and contemporary in character. Based on comments from the community during recent cases, it may be appropriate to change the style, materials and architectural character in response to their context from one side of the site to the other and the street faces could be significantly different from the interior of this multiple building development. Staff and the applicant are, therefore, seeking feedback from the Board regarding the scale and architectural character that may be appropriate for various locations on the site.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS AND POTOMAC RIVER VICINITY STANDARDS

General Analysis of Plans and Further Study

The BAR’s *Design Guidelines* only require that new buildings be compatible with nearby buildings of historic merit and do not mandate the use of historic styles for new construction. However, they do state that where new buildings recall historic building styles, that the architectural details used throughout the building be consistent with that same style and that the building should not be a slavish replica of any particular building in the district. Additionally, the *Guidelines* note that “new and untried approaches to common design problems are encouraged and should not be rejected out of hand simply because they appear to be outside the common practices outlined in the guidelines.”

This particular site is important due to its prominence along the Alexandria waterfront and at the southern terminus of the core of the new waterfront park area. The site also presents great opportunities for creative yet appropriate buildings. Besides the 19th-century building at 2 Duke Street and perhaps 226 The Strand, there are no historic buildings immediately adjacent to this site. The approved five-story Carr hotel will be located to the north, circa 1980 townhouses at

Waterford Place are to the west and circa 1990 townhouses at Harborside are to the south. The scale and mass of these adjacent non-historic properties provide the immediate context for an appropriate scale and mass at this site. The Carr hotel will be 50 feet in height and the flat roof portion of the townhouses at Harborside actually reach to 54.93 feet and five stories above adjacent grade in some locations, according to City Surveyor's measurements. While no building elevations are shown, the site silhouettes on Sheet 24 of the applicant's package indicate that the buildings will be four and five stories in height. This overall height appears consistent with the height of adjacent buildings.

The approved Waterfront Small Area Plan envisioned two larger C-shaped buildings with two smaller buildings on this site (See Figure 2 below). The applicant's proposal features a different configuration, resulting in a reduction in the overall massing for the site by proposing nine small buildings. Further, the applicant proposes to have the two largest buildings on the waterfront, allowing for a transition from a smaller scale on the west to a larger scale on the eastern portion of the site (See Figure 1 above). The building silhouettes indicated by the proposed massing drawing generally appear to be acceptable. As the southern end of the core waterfront park area, these buildings will also help define and frame the park and activity areas.



Figure 2. Looking southwest to Robinson Terminal South in the Conceptual Massing Model approved as part of the Waterfront Small Area Plan.

The precedent images feature historic warehouses in Baltimore that have been converted into

industrial lofts—making use of both historic buildings and new construction that recalls historic buildings. Such an architectural vocabulary is consistent with the historic buildings found on the waterfront. As the Board may recall, much time was spent reflecting on warehouses and piers historically found on the Alexandria waterfront as part of the review process for the hotel at 220 South Union Street. During that time, the Board reviewed images of waterfront warehouses that were located in the general vicinity. The applicant’s historian has also uncovered images of the old Pioneer Mill that was located on this site (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Photograph of Pioneer Mills, 1861-1865. The west elevations of the two-story Soldier’s Mess house with the one-story attached kitchen and shed are viewed looking northeast. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections Branch, Vertical File Civil War 396).

A warehouse architectural vocabulary that is pronounced in its fenestration, rhythm and form, is certainly appropriate and a timeless approach in this particular location. The applicant has suggested that the townhouse rows in the northwestern portion of the site might read as a collection of small warehouse buildings. Staff supports such a design direction and notes that these townhouse rows should not read as individual townhouses in a variety of eclectic styles but rather should be thought of as a unified composition of waterfront buildings -- while providing enough variety to avoid a “barracks-style” appearance of identical units. Further, staff discourages any townhouse-style development which features typical alley configurations that are design afterthoughts with no sense of place and feature only asphalt surfaces and mechanical units. Staff has suggested more pedestrian porous and engaging alley environments with the applicant that could feature special paving and pedestrian doors as well as garage doors (Figure 4) not to be confused with the typical mews-style development discouraged by the *Design Guidelines* that is highly privatized and screened from the public realm.



Figure 4. Precedent examples for townhouses with activated public alley treatments, in both historic and contemporary architectural styles.

The applicant has also included precedent images with substantial glazing on a masonry building, such as at the Georgetown Incinerator in Washington, D.C. Although that specific design may not be appropriate in this location, staff encourages the exploration of contemporary elements with a foundation in traditional materials and forms, particularly on the waterfront side of the site. Compatible but contemporary buildings with a great sense of transparency on the waterfront side would allow these to be clearly distinguished from the historic buildings of Old Town and would enhance the gravitas of the authentic architecture of Old Town. However, transitioning from more traditionally-inspired buildings on the western portion of the site to contemporary interpretations of historic waterfront buildings on the eastern side must be smooth and logical.

Staff urges, based on the historic precedent of large industrial buildings on the site as well as an immediate context without historic buildings, that the applicant pursue well-designed buildings

that do not attempt to hide an upper story or artificially attempt to reduce the overall scale. Staff believes that the proposed site plan generally presents an appropriate scale and height. As has been learned from previous projects, the artificial division of a large building into smaller components can be challenging to execute. As the Board and several members of the public identified during previous waterfront architecture discussions, a simple and well-designed building is preferable to an aggregation of decorated boxes.

Due to the high level of activity proposed on the site as a result of the waterfront location and pier, as well as the inclusion of multiple through-block pedestrian connections, each building in the project must be well designed on all sides and considered from multiple perspectives. As the applicant designs the nine buildings proposed for this project, it will be essential in the future to provide detailed elevations of each building, as well as larger contextual views of how the different buildings and components interact with each other and the district as a whole. It will be a fine balance to successfully achieve what has the potential to become one of the most attractive blocks on the Alexandria waterfront.

Additional Standards to Consider for a Certificate of Appropriateness in the Potomac River Vicinity

In addition to the general BAR standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance, and the Board's *Design Guidelines*, the Board must also find that the Potomac River Vicinity Standards are met. A project located along the waterfront is subject to a higher level of scrutiny and design due to its prominent location.

Staff has included below the additional standards for the Potomac River Vicinity described in the Zoning Ordinance. Staff's comments as to how the Standards are satisfied or need further study are found below. At this point, without any architecture upon which to comment, it is impossible to note whether the additional standards are met and so recommends that the applicant continue to incorporate the standards as the design evolves.

Additional standards—Potomac River Vicinity.

Within the Potomac River Vicinity Height District, in addition to the provisions of [section 10-105\(A\)\(2\)](#), the following standards and guidelines, to the extent relevant in each individual case, shall apply in considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness by the Old and Historic District Board of Architectural Review, or by the city council on appeal, for any building in excess of 30 feet in height when such height has been authorized by a special use permit.

(a) The degree to which facades of a proposed building or buildings are generally in alignment with the existing street edges and express the 20- to 30-foot bay width typically found within the historic district. Techniques to express such typical bay width should include changes in materials; articulation of the wall surfaces; changes in fenestration patterns; varying roof heights; and physical breaks within the massing. Large expanses of unbroken or repetitive facades are disfavored.

The proposed site plan shows that the buildings will be sited at the property line and along the proposed extended The Strand, consistent with development patterns found along the waterfront. As the applicant works on the architectural scheme, the 20- to 30-foot bay

width, articulation of wall surfaces and an appropriate fenestration should be considered. The use of a multiple building scheme, more buildings than shown in the Waterfront Small Area Plan, will ensure that there are no large expanses of unbroken or repetitive façades.

(b)The degree to which building materials characteristic of buildings having architectural merit within the historic district are utilized. The texture, tone and color of such materials should display a level of variety, quality and richness at least equal to that found abundantly in the historic setting. The use of synthetic or imitative materials is disfavored.

Only high-quality, appropriate materials will be acceptable for this project.

(c)The degree to which new construction reflects the traditional fenestration patterns found within the historic district. Traditional solid-void relationships (i.e., masonry bearing wall by a veneer system) should be used in building facades which are directly related to historic streetscapes.

Precedent images indicate that the architectural design, particularly for the buildings fronting on South Union Street, Duke Street and Wolfe Street, will feature traditional fenestration patterns. Some precedent images suggest that modern curtain-wall glazing will be studied for the waterfront elevations.

(d)The degree to which new construction on the waterfront reflects the existing or traditional building character suitable to the waterfront. "High style" or highly ornamented buildings are disfavored. Also disfavored are metal warehouses and nondescript warehouse-type structures.

The applicant is proposing to remove the disfavored metal warehouses and has indicated that historic waterfront buildings with an industrial character will be the source of architectural inspiration. While well-detailed buildings will be required by the BAR, they should not be high-style or overly ornamented. Staff will continue to work with the applicant as they consider design alternatives.

(e)To the extent that any provisions of [section 10-105\(A\)\(2\)](#) are inconsistent with the provisions of this [section 10-105\(A\)\(4\)](#), the provisions of this section shall be controlling.

Alterations to Existing Buildings

The focus of the concept review is the proposed site plan and guidance for the overall design direction, however, it is important to note that at this time, staff supports a comprehensive rehabilitation of the historic building. As the photographs indicate, the historic building at 2 Duke Street has been altered including the addition of a new façade (circa 1989) on the north elevation and changes to the windows. Staff supports a scheme which removes the later north façade addition and rehabilitates the original façade and windows to the greatest extent possible. Due to the site's existing elevation, much of the site will be elevated above the flood plain and staff recognizes that further study will be necessary to determine how best to treat and preserve the historic warehouse, possibly considering the raising of the building to the new overall site elevation.

Although it is anticipated that the applicant will propose to demolish all other buildings on this site beyond 2 Duke Street, staff recommends a more comprehensive survey of the property to determine whether there are any other buildings or building fragments of merit that warrant preservation.

Additional Considerations

As a full-block project on the Alexandria waterfront, this project is subject to many regulations and guidelines. While some of these are beyond the BAR's purview, it is important that the BAR understand the larger review context so that their comments and opinions can best be incorporated, particularly during the conceptual review phase.

In addition to the Zoning Ordinance Standards and Additional Standards-Potomac River Vicinity and the BAR's adopted Design Guidelines, the project must also conform to the Waterfront Small Area Plan and related Zoning Ordinance sections. Specifically, Chapter 6 of the Zoning Ordinance requires the following for buildings located in the Potomac River Vicinity Height District:

(a) The degree to which imaginative and creative architectural solutions advance recreational access to and enjoyment of the historic waterfront from public streets and other public areas. Buildings should be in harmony with existing buildings of genuine architectural merit, to be found in the historic district.

(b) The degree to which the basic 30 feet height is maintained at the street faces and the waterfront face of the proposed building or buildings. To provide a transition, building heights over this basic height level should be set back from the street faces and waterfront faces.

(c) The degree to which the height, mass and bulk of the proposed construction are compatible with and reflect the traditional height, mass, and bulk of buildings and structures displayed within the streetscapes of the historic district.

(d) The degree to which imaginative and creative architectural solutions enhance views and vistas from public streets and other public-access areas along the historic waterfront. The waterfront faces of the buildings, in particular, should be designed and integrated so as to enhance pedestrian enjoyment of the waterfront, and the quality and character of the historic waterfront, as a totality, when viewed from passing vessels.

(e) The degree to which the use or uses of the proposed building or buildings are compatible with historical waterfront-related uses in the City of Alexandria

This particular section is important for the BAR to contemplate at this time because if the applicant requests a Special Use Permit for a 50-foot building, the zoning ordinance requires some sort of "transition" above 30 feet. During the review for the hotel proposed at 220 South Union Street, this required transition at 30 feet played an integral role in the design of the project. The BAR should discuss what would be considered appropriate ways in which to treat the 30-foot transition on the street and waterfront heights.

Next Steps

At this time, it is anticipated that the proposal may be reviewed by Planning Commission and City Council in early 2015. Due to the scope and scale of this project, it is anticipated that the applicant will work with the BAR at multiple work sessions prior to the formal DSUP application. Following City Council approval, the applicant would then return to the BAR with a formal application for Permits to Demolish and Certificate of Appropriateness.

At this time, staff recommends general support for the height, scale and mass and overall site layout. Staff recommends that the applicant continue to explore a design direction based on the general architectural vocabularies presented in the precedent images. It is recommended that the applicant continue to meet with BAR staff to study the architectural character, larger planning considerations and context as the design evolves before returning to the BAR for another work session.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends:

1. That the Board support the preservation and rehabilitation of 2 Duke Street and support the proposed demolition of the 20th century metal warehouses, with further study required for 226 The Strand and the small brick warehouse at the southeast corner of the site;
2. That the Board find the overall site layout to be appropriate; and
3. That the applicant continue to work with BAR staff to refine the site plan and explore architectural characters that are appropriate for the various buildings.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 – Supporting Materials*
- 2 – Draft Historical Overview Report*
- 3 – BAR Conceptual Review Policy, 5/3/00*

ROBINSON TERMINAL SOUTH

Alexandria, VA

BAR Work Session No. 1 Submission

April 23, 2014



ROBINSON TERMINAL SOUTH-ALEXANDRIA, VA | BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

1

- **Developer:** EYA
- **Equity Partner:** JBG
- **Architect:** Shalom Baranes Associates
- **Landscape Architect:** M. Paul Freidberg Partners
- **Land Use Counsel:** McGuireWoods
- **Civil Engineer:** Bohler
- **Marine Engineer:** Moffat & Nichol
- **Traffic & Parking:** Wells and Associates
- **Acoustical Engineer:** Polysonics
- **Archeological:** Wetlands Studies & Solutions
- **Historian:** History Matters

Robinson Terminal South Timeline

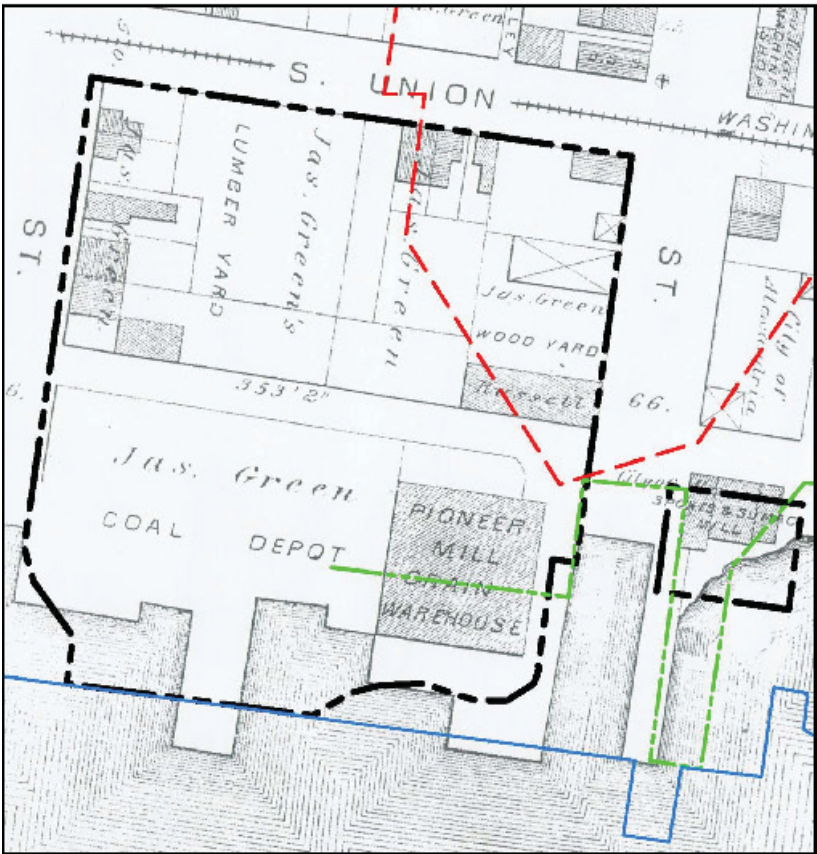
Waterfront Commission & Community Outreach*	Begin Spring 2014
Board of Architectural Review*	Begin April 2014
File DSUP Application	Fall 2014
Planning Commission Hearing	Winter 2015
City Council Hearing	Winter 2015
Demolition/Archeology/Flood Plain Process	Begin Spring 2015
Construction	Begin Spring 2016
First Occupancy	Summer 2017

*Ongoing process

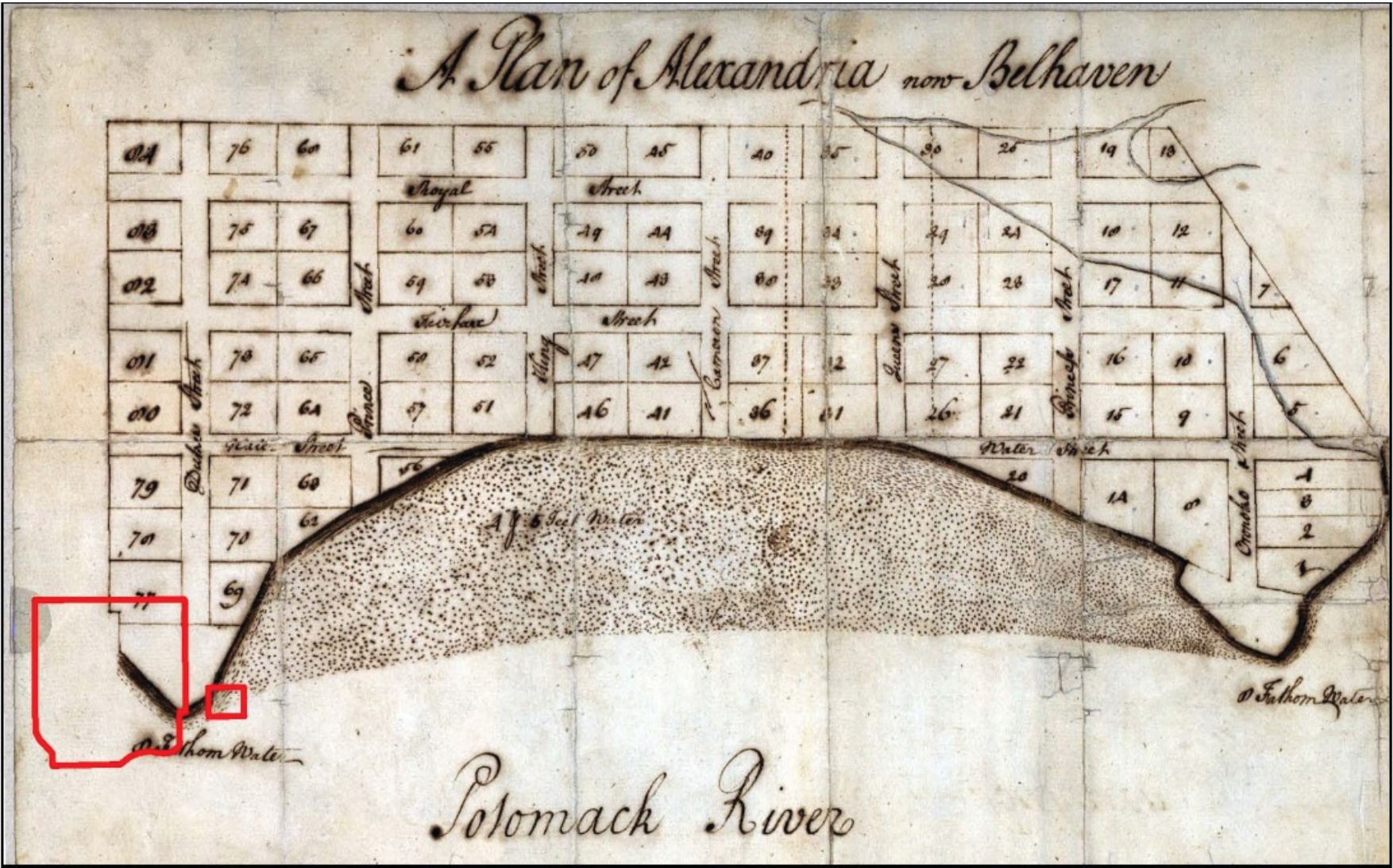
- Form
- Style
- Bay Width
- Height
- Building Width
- **Siting**
- Parking
- Fenestration
- Roof Form and Materials
- **Building Spacing**
- Architectural Detailing
- Materials
- **Building Orientation**
- Color

Process Step	Purpose	Timing
Preliminary Submission and Work Session #1	Site history, overall planning concepts and design direction	April 2014
Stage 2 Concept Submission and Work Session #2	Height, scale, mass, architectural language	June/July 2014
Refinements and Work Session #3	Height, scale, mass, architectural language	Aug/Sep 2014
DSUP Submission and BAR Hearing #1	BAR advisory vote prior to PC and City Council votes	Dec 2014 / Jan 2015
BAR Hearing #2 (if nec)	BAR advisory vote prior to PC and City Council votes	Jan/Feb 2015
Certificate of Appropriateness Process	Final BAR approval	Spring-Summer 2015

Robinson Terminal South Site
Alexandria Shoreline
1749-2014



1877 Hopkins Map



Plan of Alexandria, 1749

Point Lumley
1749 Shoreline

Robinson Terminal
South site
1845 Shoreline

Robinson Terminal
South site
2014 Shoreline



Alexandria Waterfront Birds' Eye View, 1863

Alexandria Waterfront: 1860s



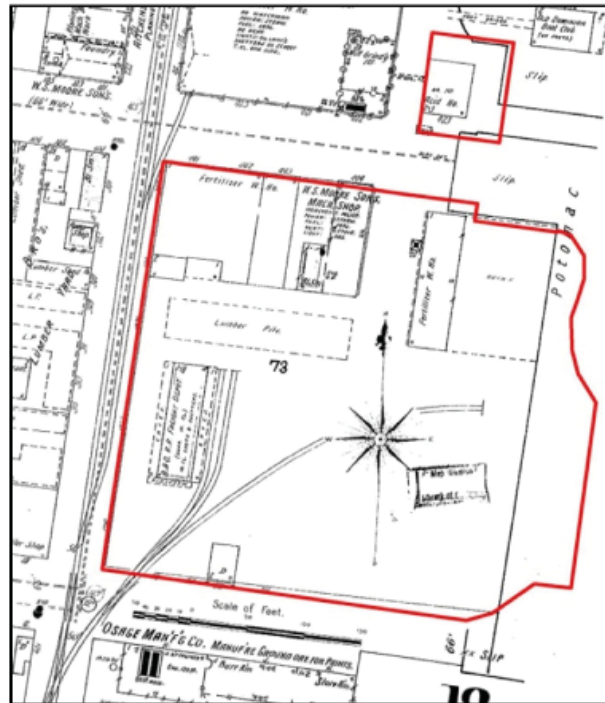
Looking north from Pioneer Mill, 1865

Robinson Terminal South Site: 1860s

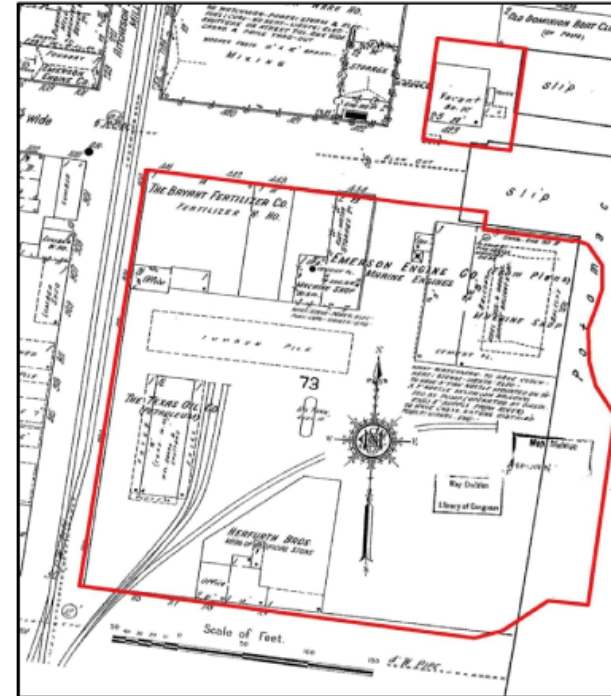


Soldier's Mess Hall (left) and Pioneer Mill (right), US Civil War Era (1861-1865)

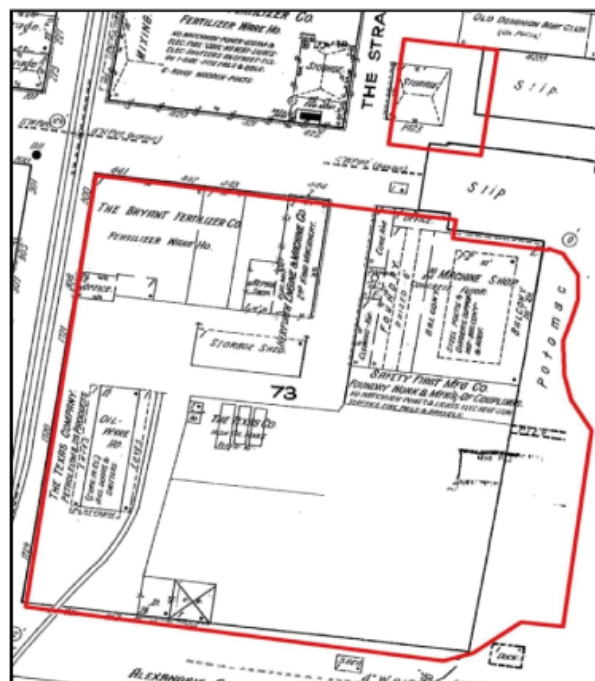
Robinson Terminal South Site: 1902-2014 Warehousing and Light Industry



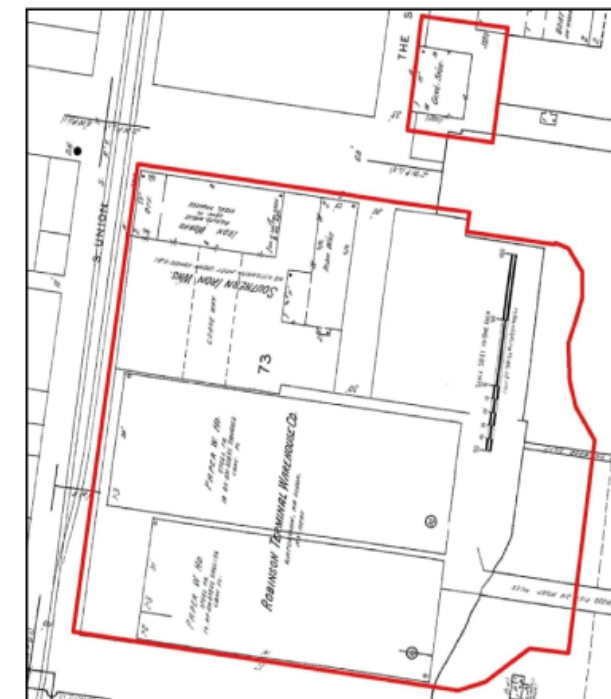
1902 Sanborn



1912 Sanborn



1921 Sanborn



1941 Sanborn



2 Duke Street, 2014

Robinson Terminal South Warehouses, 2014





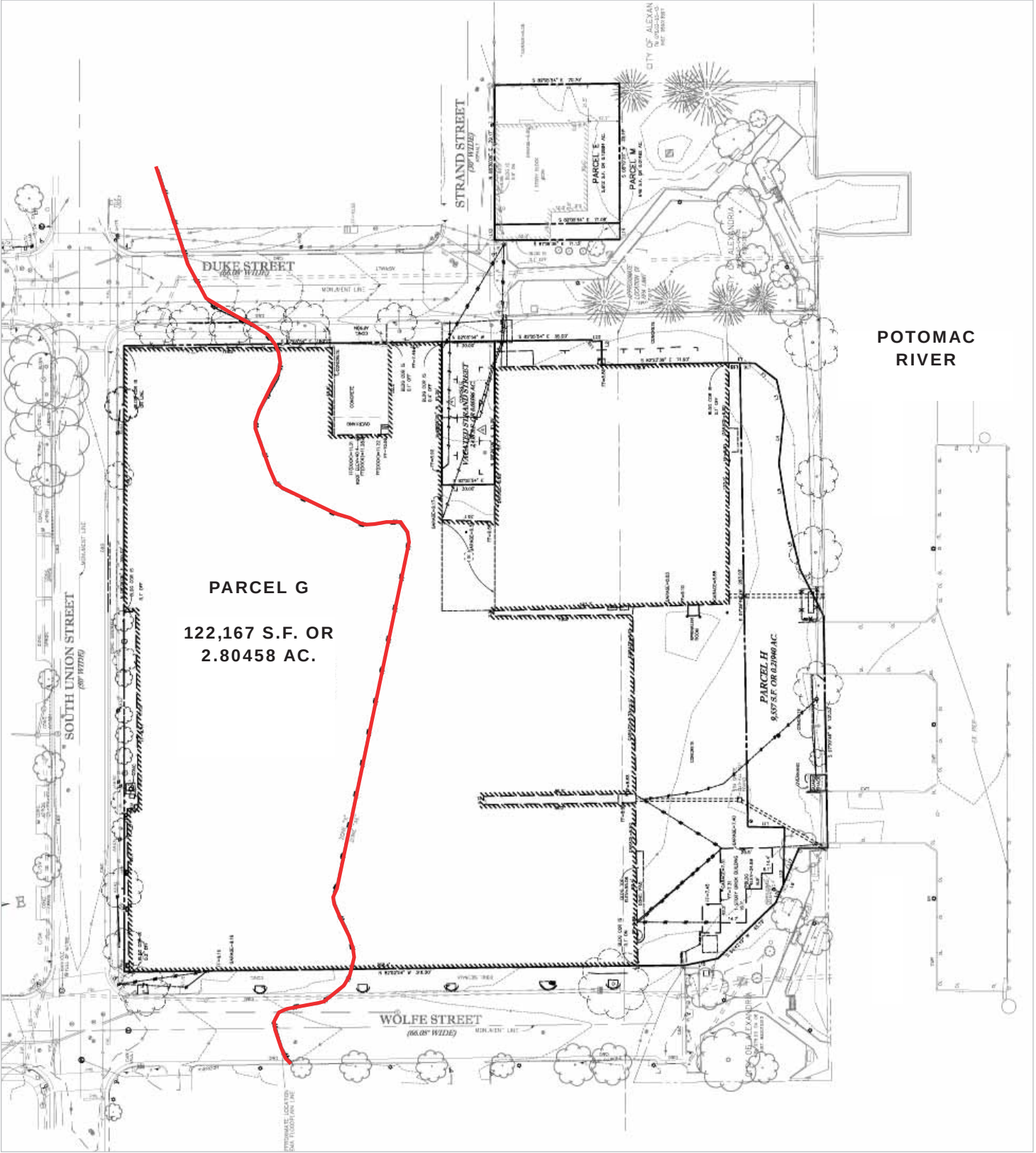
LAND AREA



	Waterfront Plan	Actual/Proposed
Site Area (acres)	3.85	3.08
Development (sqft)	380,529	280,000 ±
FAR	2.32	2.1 ±
Units	115	92

- * Parcels being acquired by EYA
- * Parcels already transferred to City
- * Riparian rights acquired by EYA

EXISTING SITE PLAN AND FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY



LEGEND

— FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY





S. UNION STREET - WEST ELEVATION



S. UNION STREET - LOOKING WEST



S. UNION STREET - LOOKING WEST (CONTINUED)

S. UNION STREET - EAST ELEVATION



S. UNION STREET - LOOKING EAST



S. UNION STREET - LOOKING EAST (CONTINUED)

KEY PLAN



NOTE: THESE IMAGES TO PROVIDE CONTEXT AND SHOW RELATIONSHIPS OF BUILDINGS AS WELL AS OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER ALONG STREETSCAPE RATHER THAN EXACT BUILDING HEIGHT.

WOLFE STREET - SOUTH ELEVATION



WOLFE STREET - LOOKING SOUTH



WOLFE STREET - LOOKING SOUTH (CONTINUED)

WOLFE STREET - NORTH ELEVATION



WOLFE STREET - LOOKING NORTH



WOLFE STREET - LOOKING NORTH (CONTINUED)

KEY PLAN



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NOTE: THESE IMAGES TO PROVIDE CONTEXT AND SHOW RELATIONSHIPS OF BUILDINGS AS WELL AS OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER ALONG STREETSCAPE RATHER THAN EXACT BUILDING HEIGHT.

DUKE STREET - NORTH ELEVATION



DUKE STREET - LOOKING NORTH

DUKE STREET - SOUTH ELEVATION



DUKE STREET - LOOKING SOUTH

KEY PLAN



NOTE: THESE IMAGES TO PROVIDE CONTEXT AND SHOW RELATIONSHIPS OF BUILDINGS AS WELL AS OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER ALONG STREETScape RATHER THAN EXACT BUILDING HEIGHT.

THE STRAND - WEST ELEVATION



THE STRAND - LOOKING WEST

THE STRAND - EAST ELEVATION



THE STRAND - LOOKING EAST

KEY PLAN



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NOTE: THESE IMAGES TO PROVIDE CONTEXT AND SHOW RELATIONSHIPS OF BUILDINGS AS WELL AS OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER ALONG STREETScape RATHER THAN EXACT BUILDING HEIGHT.

GROUND LEVEL PHOTOS



1. WOLFE STREET LOOKING EAST



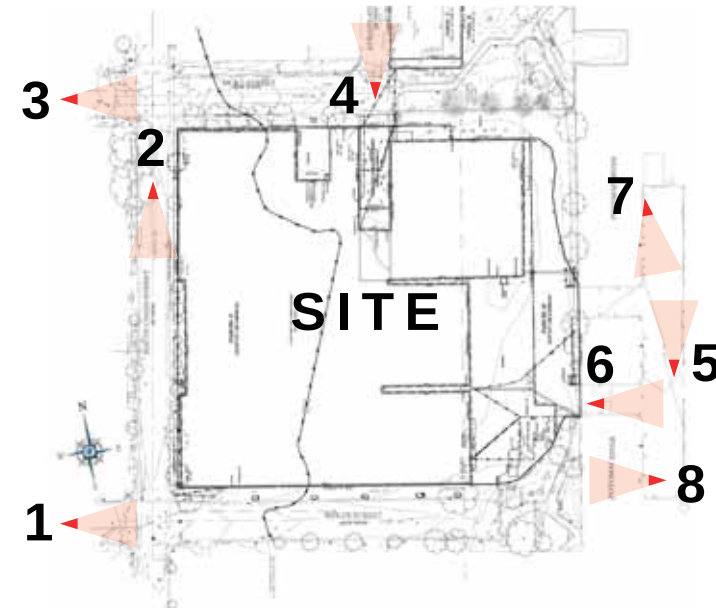
2. S. UNION STREET LOOKING SOUTH



3. DUKE STREET LOOKING EAST



4. THE STRAND LOOKING NORTH



5. VIEW FROM PIER LOOKING NORTH



6. VIEW FROM PIER LOOKING EAST



7. VIEW FROM PIER LOOKING SOUTH



8. VIEW FROM PIER LOOKING WEST AT WOLFE STREET

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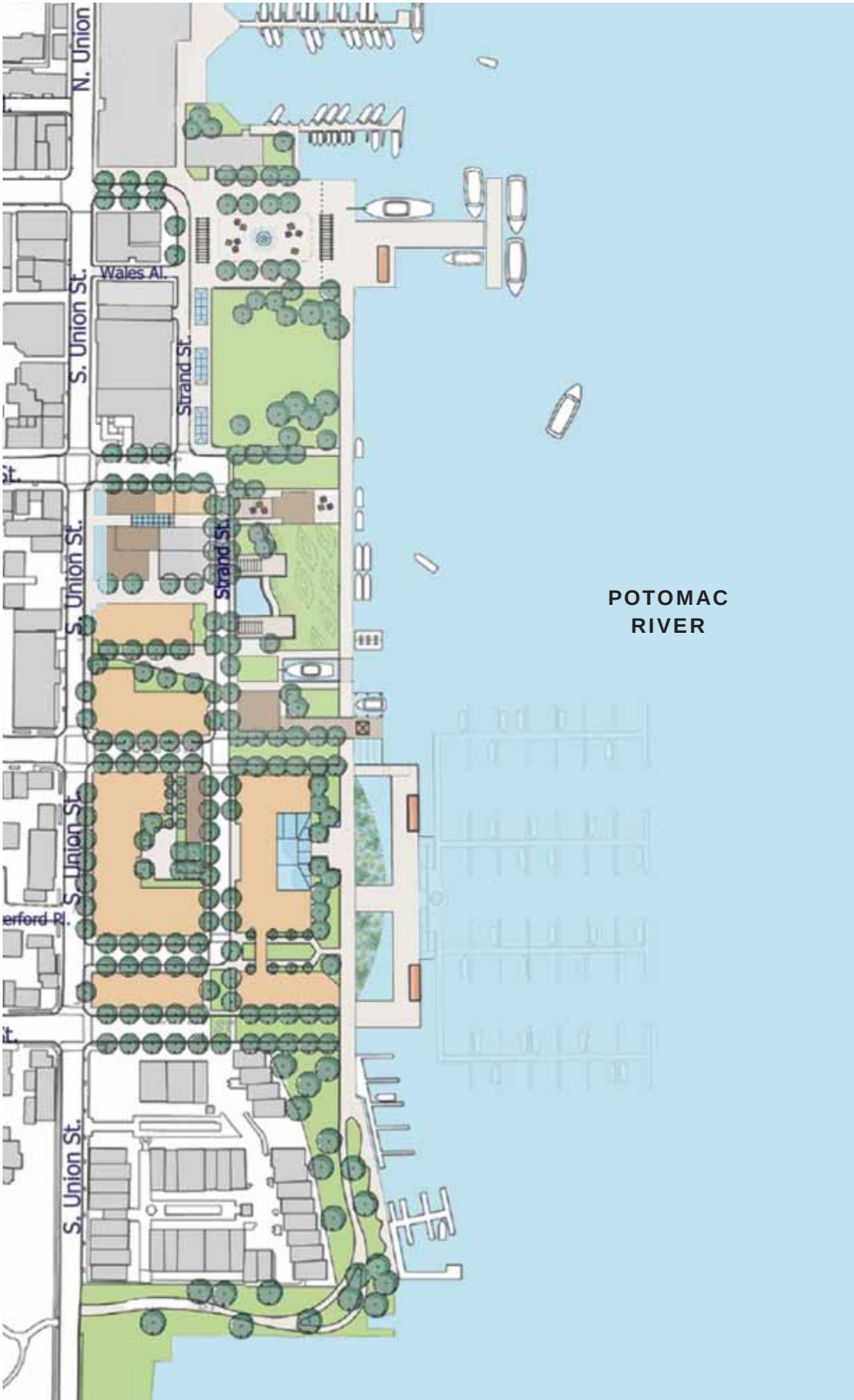
PUBLIC PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN PLAN

- Provide Active Public Uses along the Waterfront
- Raise Site Elevation / Floodplain
- Extend Strand South and West to Union Street
- Improve Pier
- Redevelop 2 Duke Street
- Cash Contribution to Fund the Waterfront Plan
- Modern Design Inspired by Historic Precedents

CONCEPT PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall Density
- Types of Uses and Locations of Uses
- 50' Height Limit
- North/South Location of the Strand
- Preservation of 2 Duke Street
- Locations of Promenade
- Raise the Site and Remap the Floodplain

WATERFRONT SMALL AREA PLAN



OLIN PLAN

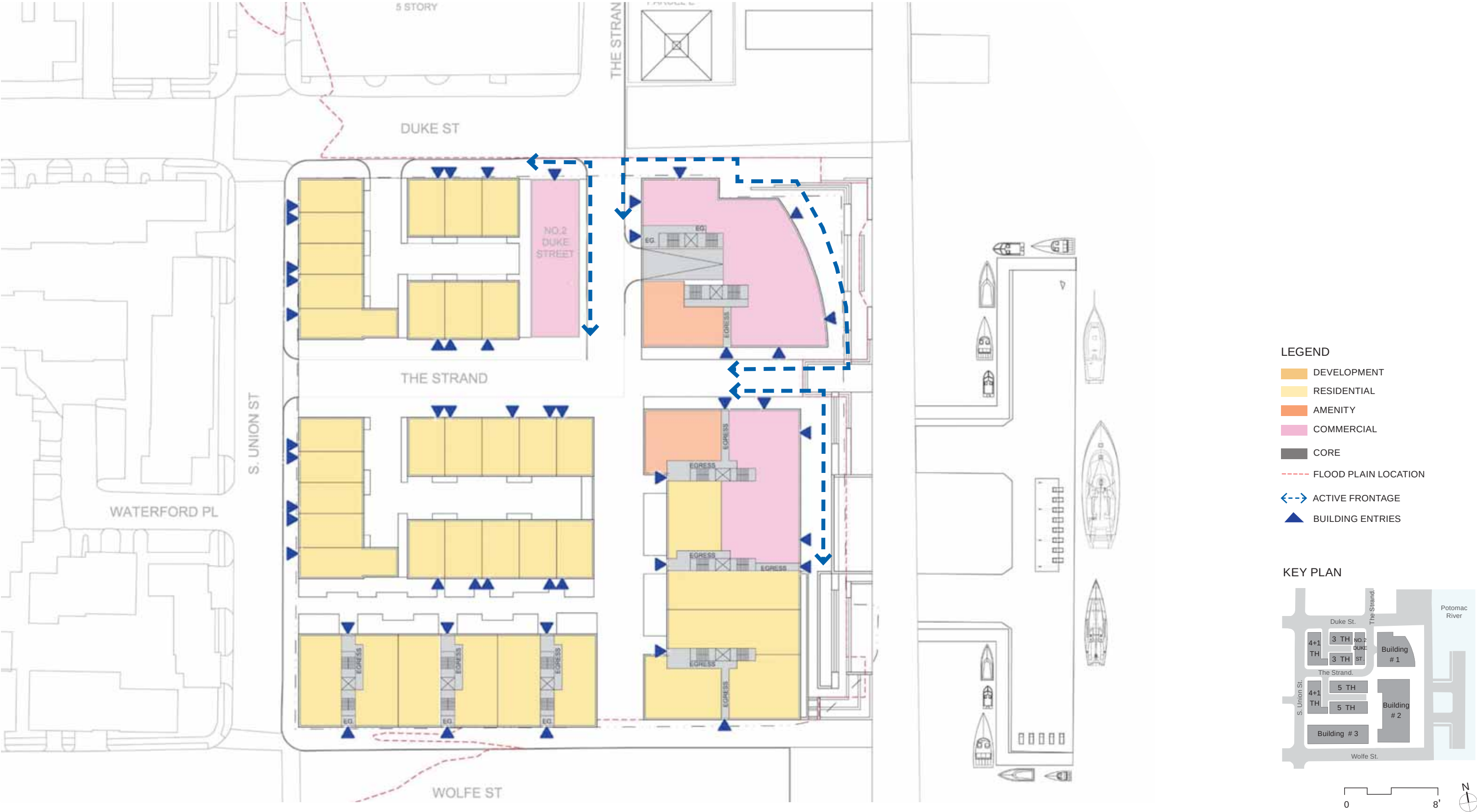


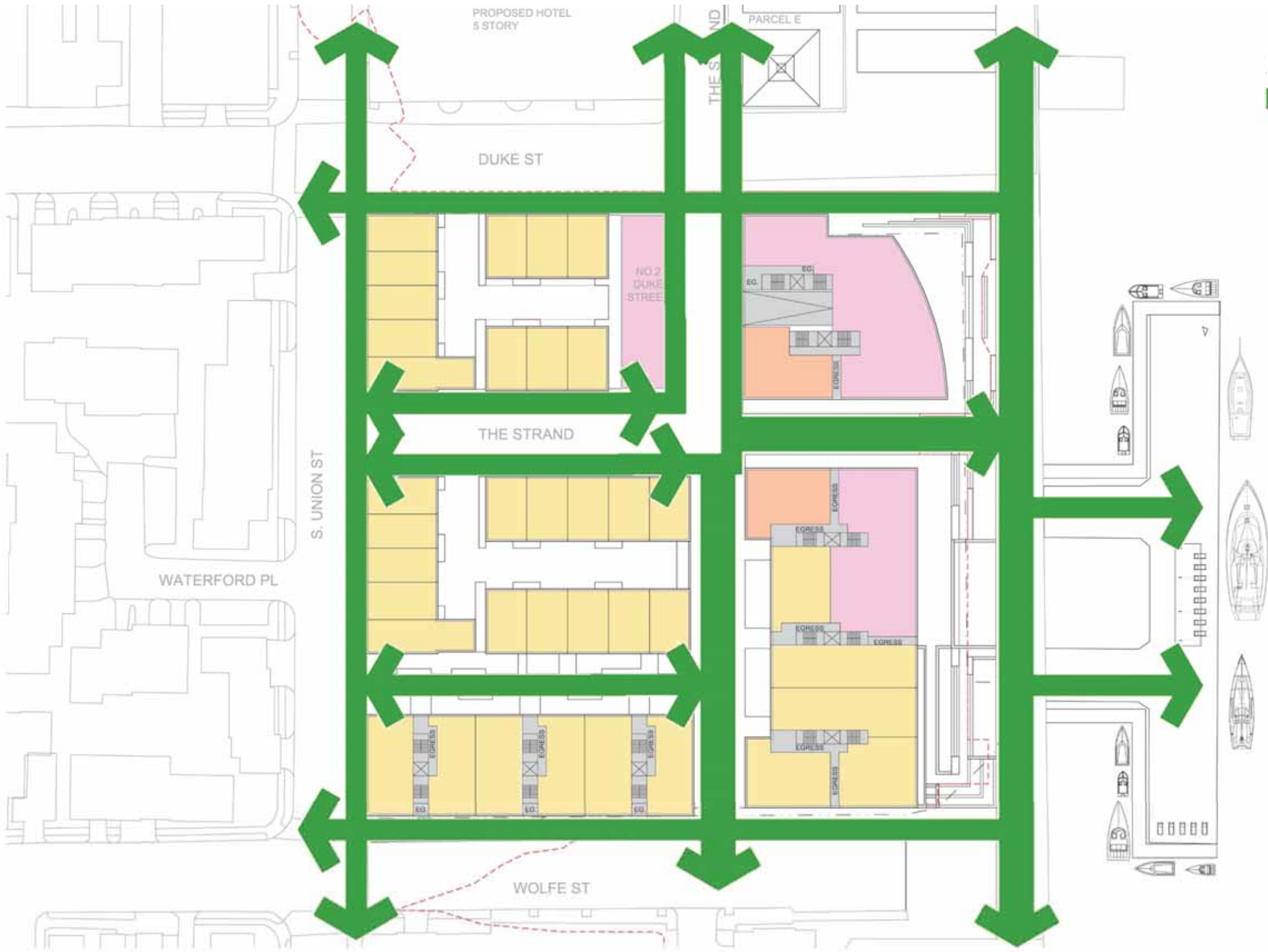
WATERFRONT SMALL AREA PLAN

EYA PROPOSED PLAN



CONCEPT PLAN GROUND USES AND BUILDING ENTRIES





LEGEND

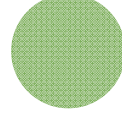
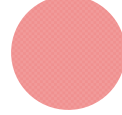
 Pedestrian Circulation

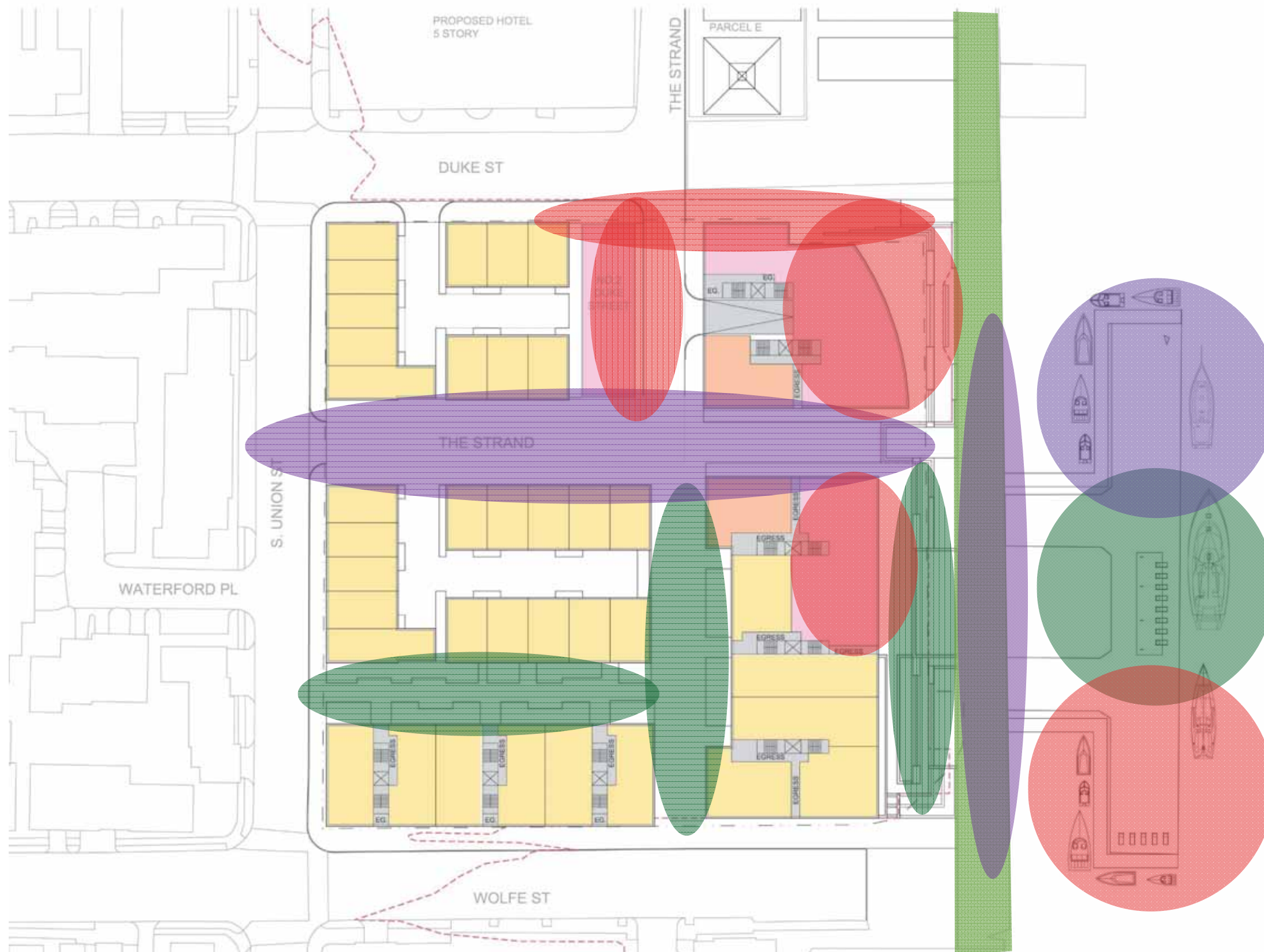
Connectivity

- Fluid Pedestrian Connection to town, through the Strand the Promenade and Pier
- Pedestrianized Streets as Programmable Open Space

DIVERSITY OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

LEGEND

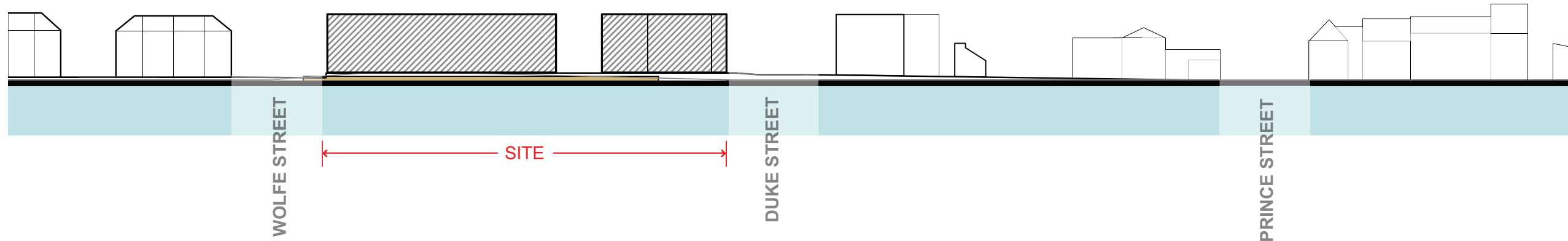
-  Promenade/Linear Open Space
-  Passive Open Space
-  Active Open/Commercial Space
-  Programmable Open Space



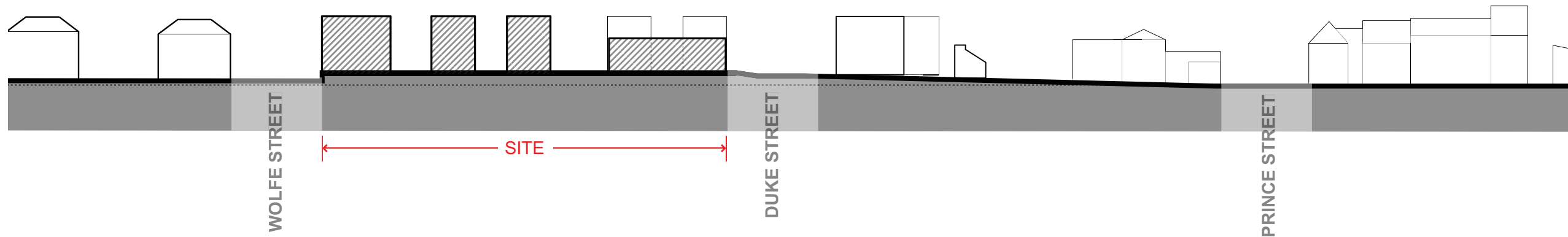


SITE SILHOUETTES

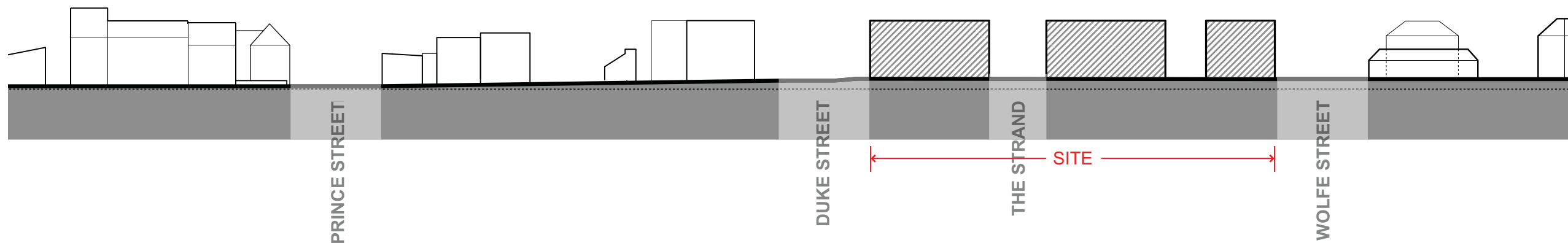
A. VIEW FROM WATER LOOKING WEST



B. VIEW FROM THE STRAND LOOKING WEST



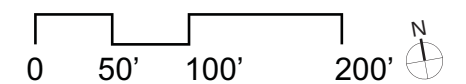
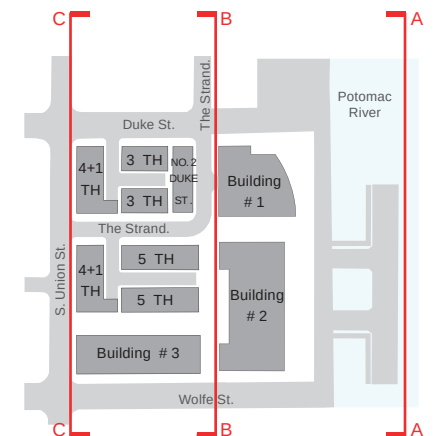
C. VIEW FROM SOUTH UNION STREET LOOKING EAST



LEGEND

- POTOMAC RIVER
- GROUND
- EXISTING CONTEXT
- PROPOSED

KEY PLAN

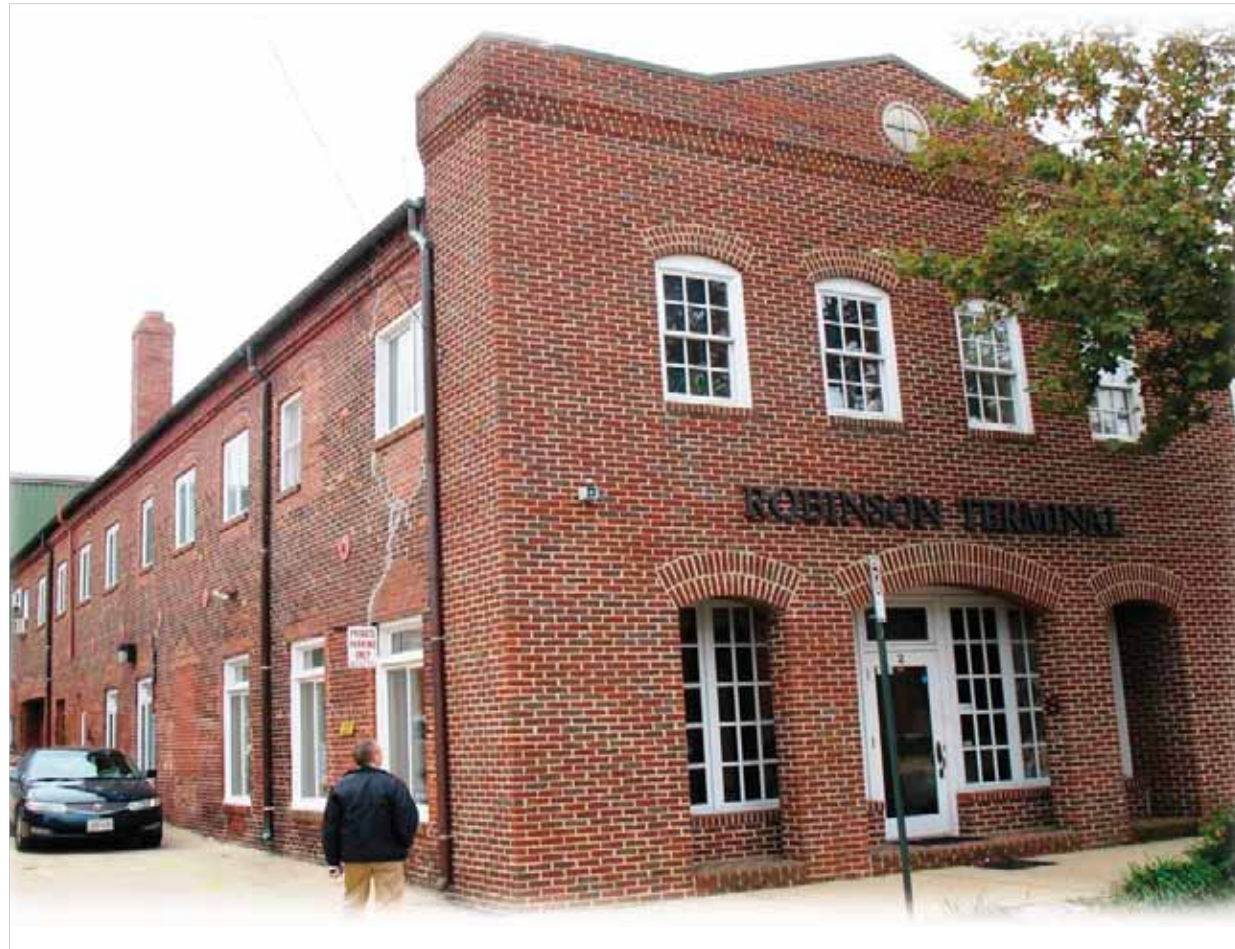


CONCEPT PLAN RIVERFRONT PROMENADE RENDERING

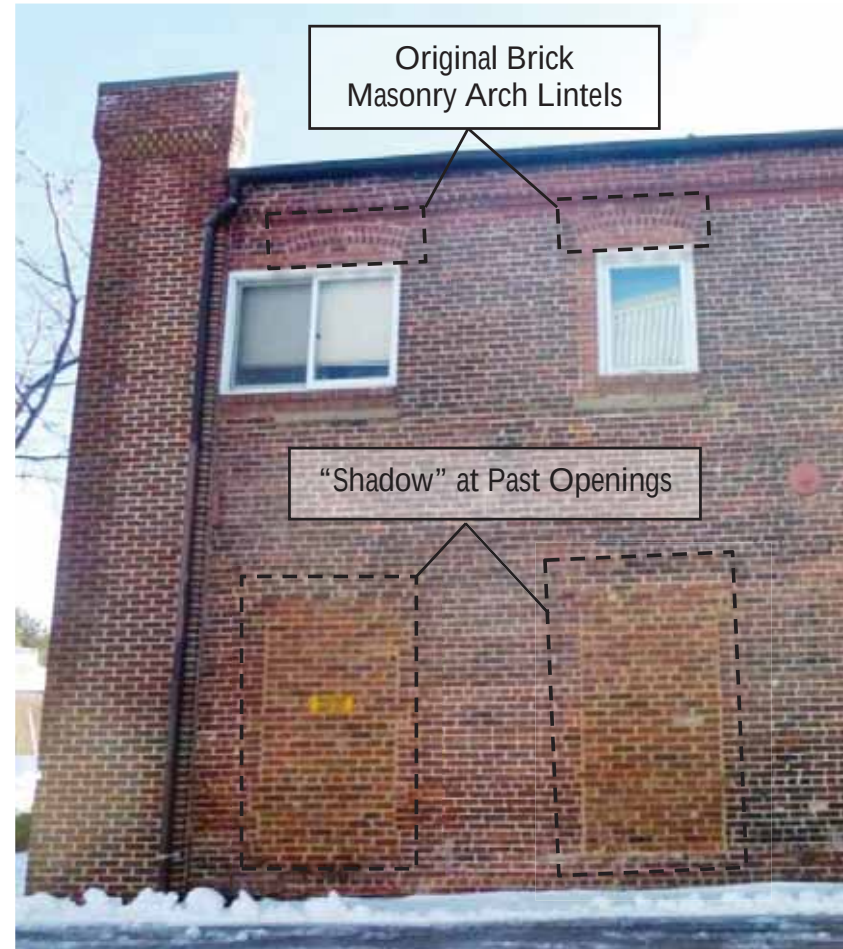


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NO.2 DUKE STREET PRESERVATION



1990's Street Facade



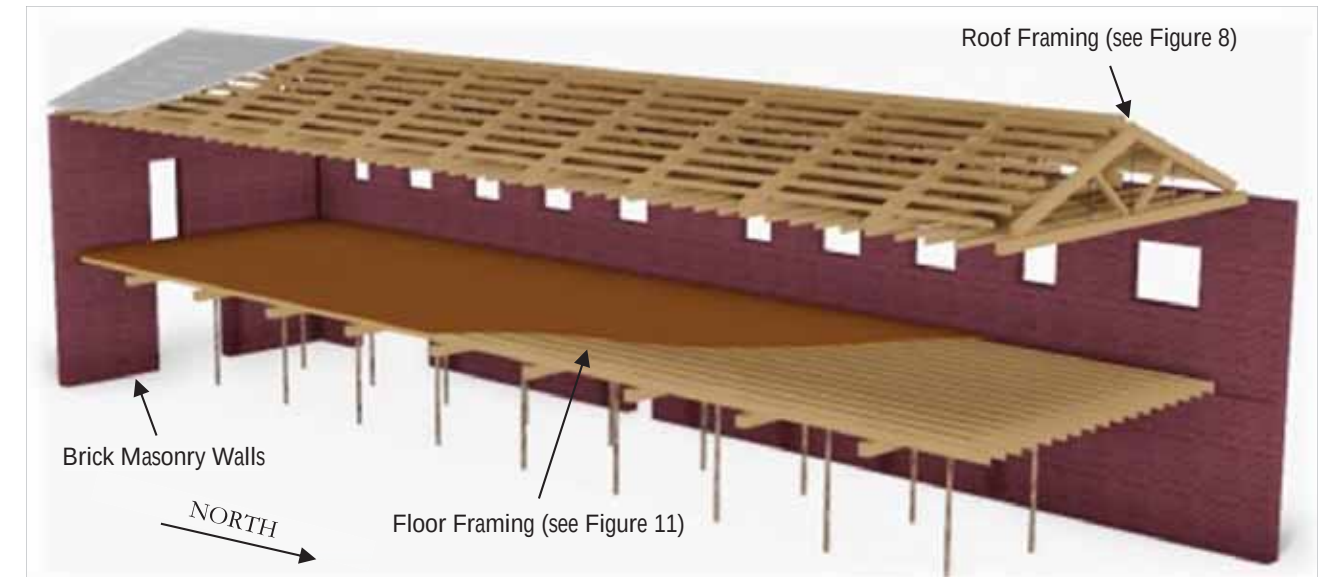
Alterations



Interior Floor Framing



Masonry Bearing Wall Condition



Interior Wood Framing

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PRECEDENT IMAGES - INDUSTRIAL/RESIDENTIAL LOFT BUILDINGS



MERCHANT ROW IN BALTIMORE
SMALL SCALE MIX OF TRADITIONAL VS INDUSTRIAL WINDOW PROPORTIONS



TORPEDO FACTORY IN ALEXANDRIA
LARGE SCALE / INSET INDUSTRIAL STYLE WINDOW BAYS



MERCHANT ROW IN BALTIMORE
SMALL SCALE / INSET INDUSTRIAL STYLE WINDOW BAYS



CANAL STREET MALT HOUSE IN BALTIMORE
LARGE SCALE / INSET INDUSTRIAL STYLE WINDOW BAYS



FOUNDRY LOFTS IN WASHINGTON DC
LARGE SCALE / INSET INDUSTRIAL STYLE WINDOW BAYS WITH GLASSY TOP FLOOR SETBACK

PRECEDENT IMAGES - INDUSTRIAL/RESIDENTIAL LOFT BUILDINGS



21 DAVIES STREET IN LONDON
GLASSY WINDOW BAYS OUTSET FROM INDUSTRIAL BRICK



GEORGETOWN INCINERATOR IN WASHINGTON DC
GLASSY WINDOW BAYS OUTSET FROM INDUSTRIAL BRICK



RENOVATED WAREHOUSE IN SAN FRANCISCO
GLASSY VOLUME ON TOP OF INDUSTRIAL BASE



THE UNION WHARF IN BALTIMORE
GLASSY WINDOW BAYS OUTSET FROM INDUSTRIAL BRICK

PRECEDENT IMAGES - ROW DWELLINGS



NAPIER AT WEST 3 IN LONDON
MODULARITY OF ELEMENTS AND PROPORTION OF GLASS TO BRICK



CLAREMONT STREET IN TORONTO
LAYERING OF MATERIALS



BLACKHEATH IN LONDON
MODULARITY OF ELEMENTS AND PROPORTION OF GLASS TO BRICK



JOHNSON STREET TOWNHOUSES IN PORTLAND
MODULARITY OF FACADE



BELLES TOWNHOMES AT PRESIDIO IN SAN FRANCISCO
COHESIVE COMPOSITION OF FACADE



RIVERSIDE TOWNHOUSES IN PORTLAND
INTERIOR FACING FACADE TREATMENT

PRECEDENT IMAGES - WATERFRONT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS



QUEENS QUAY IN TORONTO
GLASSY MODERN FACADE FACING WATER



RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX IN ROTTERDAM
MODULAR MODERN BALCONIES WITH SETBACK



BATTERY WHARF IN BOSTON
MODULAR TRADITIONAL BALCONIES AND PUNCHED OPENINGS WITH SETBACK



DOCKLANDS IN DUBLIN
GLASSY MODERN FACADE FACING WATER



RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX IN VANCOUVER
VIEW CORRIDOR TO WATER



AMBERLEY WATERFRONT IN LONDON
MODULAR TRADITIONAL BALCONIES AND PUNCHED OPENINGS WITH SETBACK

PRECEDENT IMAGES - PROMENADE



TRANSITION GARDENS



TRANSITION GARDENS & PROMENADE

PRECEDENT IMAGES - PROMENADE



PIER CONNECTIONS



ICONIC FEATURES & HISTORIC REFERENCES

PRECEDENT IMAGES - PROMENADE



DISTINCTIVE FURNITURE



DISTINCTIVE FURNITURE

Robinson Terminal South Property History, 1749- 1963

The Robinson Terminal South development site currently occupies the property between South Union Street on the west, Wolfe Street on the south, the Potomac River on the east, and Duke Street on the north. Historically, this area marked the southeast corner of early Alexandria, which was laid out in 1749 around a shallow cove located between West's Point on the north and Point Lumley on the south.

What is now the Robinson Terminal South property stands on part of Point Lumley as well as on land created by the filling in of the Potomac shoreline in subsequent years. Most of the site was extant by the end of the 18th century, but changes to the shoreline, including the construction of wharfs, piers, and bulkheads, have continued into the 21st century.

The property exemplifies the commerce and industry that has fueled Alexandria's economy since its founding. Although some 19th- century residences once existed here, what is now the Robinson Terminal South site has primarily contained industrial and commercial operations throughout its history.

Shipbuilding facilities, warehouses, and stores occupied the property in the 18th century. The 19th century saw buildings constructed on the property that manufactured flour and iron products, as well as storage facilities such as lumber yards, warehouses, and a railroad freight depot. A variety of small manufacturing plants and warehouses occupied the property in the 20th century.



Figure 1. Detail from the 1863 Bird's Eye View of Alexandria by Charles Magnus showing the commercial and industrial waterfront from Wolfe Street (left) to King Street (right) during the Civil War. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

Today, the Robinson Terminal South facilities include three warehouses constructed between circa 1940 and 1965; a brick maintenance building and smaller brick storage building constructed in the 1940s; and a two-story, brick, office building that was constructed in the 19th century and repurposed many times in subsequent years.

Before 1850, the address now known as 2 Duke Street was the site of the operations of the 18th-century merchant firm Hooe and Harrison and the 19th-century Smith Foundry. The foundry building appears on area maps in the 1850s and appears to have been converted to a soldiers' mess house during the Civil War (1861-1865). Although a building similar in size to the mess house appears in the same location on maps of the property that date from the 1870s-1890s, photographs reveal that the mess house was removed and another building constructed at 2 Duke Street sometime during the same period. More research is needed to establish when the construction occurred.

The following narrative briefly describes the property's development from 1749 through the 1960s, when the last building was constructed on the Robinson Terminal South property. For the sake of clarity, we refer to the site as Robinson Terminal South even though the Robinson Terminal Warehouse Corporation did not take ownership of the property until the late 1930s. In addition, we refer to the various buildings that are or were located at 2 Duke Street by that address.

To date, History Matters' research has been focused on primary sources, drawing on material available in the archival collections available at the Alexandria Library Special Collections Branch and the vertical files of Alexandria Archaeology. We have drawn most heavily from Alexandria maps from the 18th to the 20th centuries that depict the Robinson Terminal South property. Some photographs of the property that range in date from the period of the Civil War (1861-1865) to the present day are available to researchers though there are significant gaps in coverage, particularly during the late 19th and early 20th century. Future reports will include findings from additional primary and secondary sources as well as place the property within the context of the history of Alexandria and the U. S.

1749-1799

In 1749, Point Lumley (the southeastern corner of Alexandria) included Lots 69 and 77 on top of the Potomac River's bank, the east end of Duke Street, and public land that extended east from Lots 69 and 77 down to dry land under the bank. In 1763, the town expanded its boundaries by adding lots on the south, west, and north sides. At that time, Lot 85 was laid out between Lot 77 and the new Wolfe Street on the south.

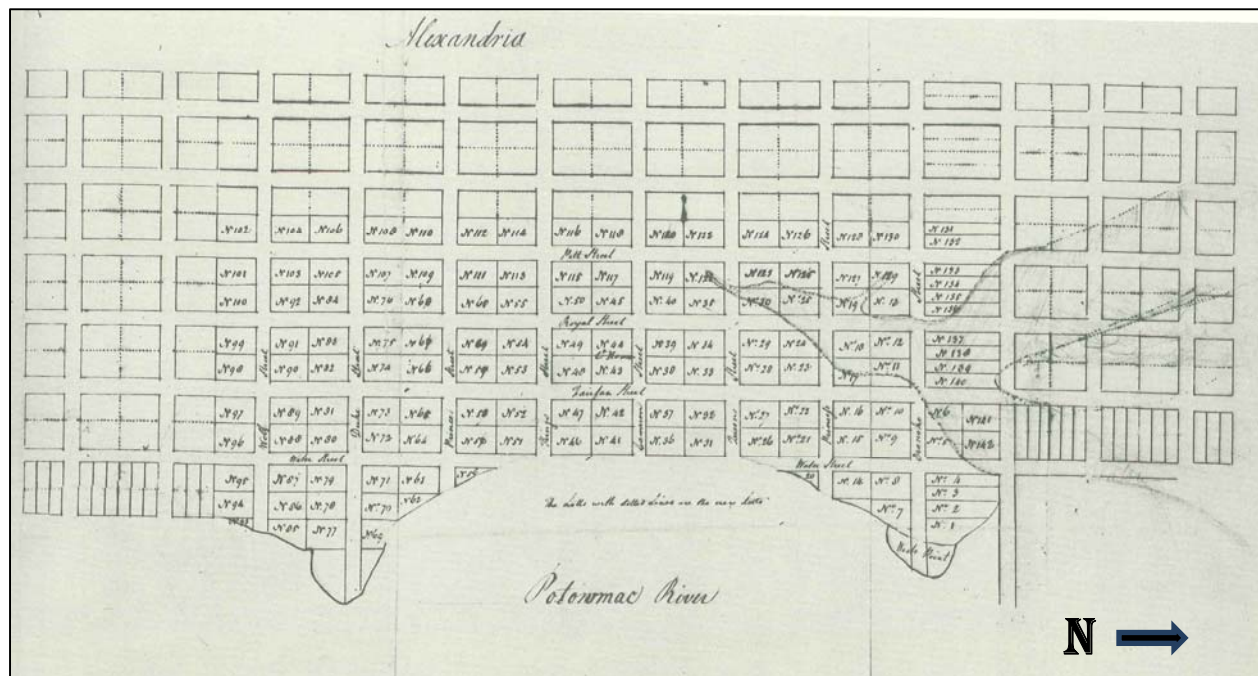


Figure 2. George West's 1763 map of Alexandria. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

Between 1782 and 1785, Union Street was extended through Lots 77 and 85. The Robinson Terminal South property now encompasses the portions of Lots 77 and 85 east of South Union Street together with the banked out land between those lots and the Potomac River.

In the 1700s, the buildings constructed on the property related to Alexandria's maritime aspirations. Between 1749 and 1754, the town trustees leased the public land at the foot of Point Lumley to Thomas Fleming for shipbuilding operations; Fleming constructed small sheds under the bank and a small wharf.

The trustees also authorized cutting Duke Street down through the bank to the river and eventually banking out the river shallows with dirt taken from leveling out land to the north and south of the street. The town trustees leased the area along the south side Duke Street to the merchant firm of Robert Townshend Hooe and Richard Harrison. Hooe and Harrison constructed a wharf at the Point, probably by creating crib walls made of logs and filled with earth. Between 1782 and 1783, Hooe built a three-story store on the wharf; the store's ground floor was stone while the upper stories were made of wood.

In 1786, merchant William Hartshorne leased property on the wharf from Hooe and Harrison, and constructed a store built of wood. It was located just east of Hooe's Store.

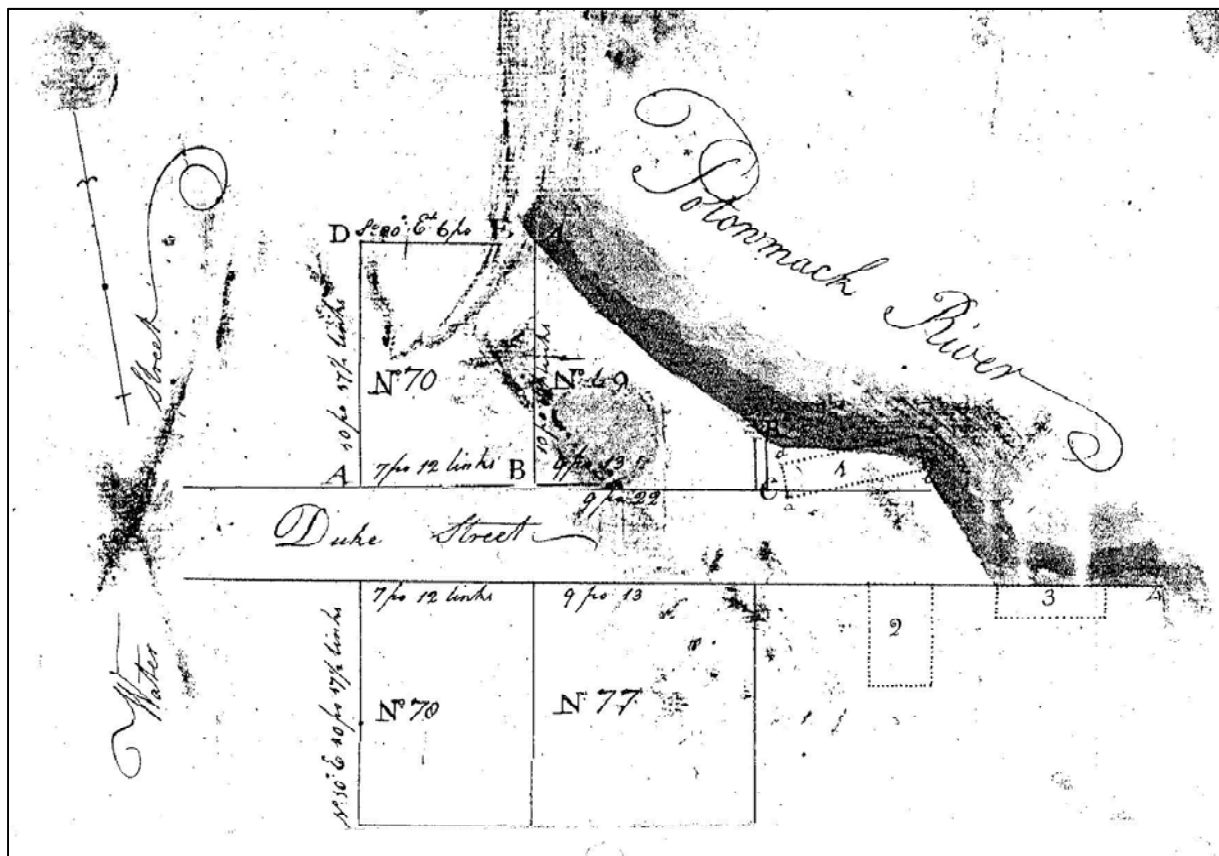


Figure 3. Plat of Point Lumley, 1788. Building #2 is Hooe's three-story store that was located on the Hooe and Harrison Wharf and close to the footprint of 2 Duke Street. Building #3 is the Hartshorne store.
(Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

1800-1865

In the first half of the 19th century, the Robinson Terminal property continued as a location for shipyards, warehouses, and stores. By the early 1800s, The Strand was laid out parallel to South Union Street and extended through the property. Small dwellings appeared on the property along Union and Wolfe Streets.

By 1851, railroad tracks ran through the Wilkes Street Tunnel and also down Union Street from Wolfe Street on the south to Oronoco Street on the north. Direct access to the railroad encouraged the development of the property; lots 77 and 85 were subdivided while the town continued to own the land between the Strand and the River. Smith's Foundry occupied a building on the southwest corner of Duke Street where 2 Duke Street now stands and on the former site of the Hooe store; Smith Foundry used the same wharf on the south side of Duke Street that had been built by Hooe.

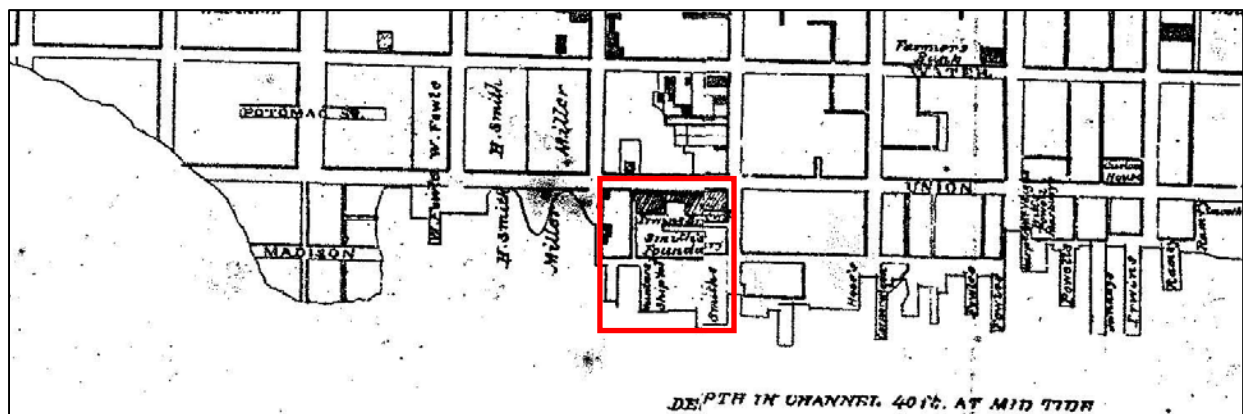


Figure 4. 1852-1853 Map of Alexandria with Robinson Property highlighted.
(Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

In 1853, William H. and George Fowle formed a team of investors to lease the public land on the south side of Duke Street and east of The Strand where the Hartshorne store had stood. In 1854, they built the four-and-one-half-story, brick, steam-driven Pioneer Mill, a flour mill that faced the river. Due to its size, Pioneer Mill became an instant landmark for the waterfront and the city.

On May 24, 1861, the day after Virginia seceded from the United States, the Union army moved into Alexandria. It took over the Pioneer Mill for use as a Union commissary and storehouse and occupied Smith's Foundry for use as a soldiers' mess house. During the Civil War, a one-story, frame kitchen addition stood on the south end of the mess house. An open yard enclosed by fencing was located on the west side of the mess house and kitchen. Numerous small buildings or sheds stood between the yard and South Union Street.

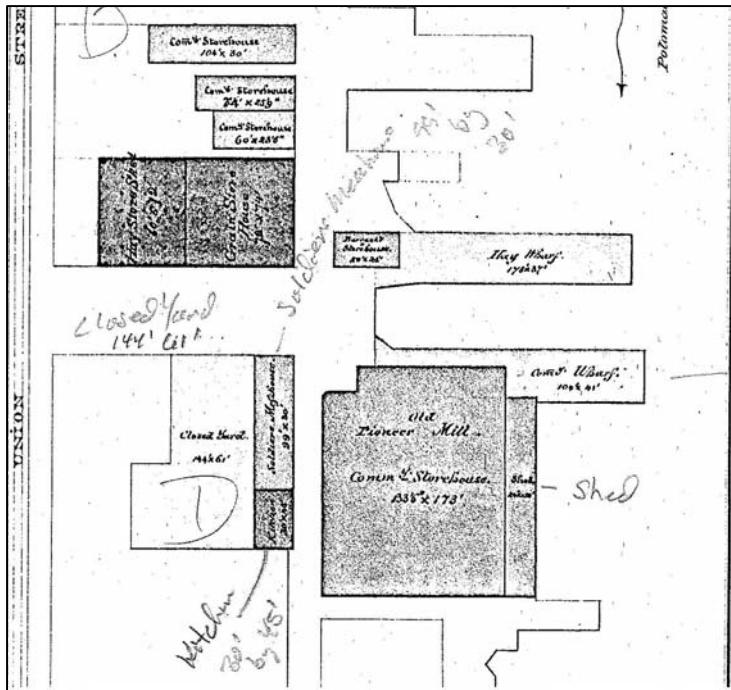


Figure 5. Detail, *Wharfs, Storehouses Etc...*, a map of Union Wharfs and Storehouses in Alexandria during the Civil War (1861-1865) showing the barrack and warehouse that stood at 226 The Strand (at the foot of "Hoes Wharf") and the Soldiers Mess house and kitchen that stood at 2 Duke Street. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)



Figure 6. Photograph of Pioneer Mill, 1861-1865. The west elevations of the two-story Soldiers Mess house with the one-story attached kitchen and shed are viewed looking northeast. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

1866-1900

In the second half of the 19th century, atlases and insurance maps provide evidence of the property's changing uses. Buildings occupied portions of the Duke, South Union, and Wolfe Street frontages while the center of the property remained open storage for lumber and coal. In G. M. Hopkin's 1877 Map of Alexandria, the Pioneer Mill Grain Warehouse continued to stand east of The Strand. A building marked "Russell" (possibly for John H. Russell who owned both the mill and the former mess house location from 1872 to 1875) stood west of The Strand at the 2 Duke Street location. James Green, owner of the furniture factory on the corner of Prince and Fairfax Streets, maintained a coal depot with its own wharf south of the mill; he used the remainder of the property south and west of Russell's building as a lumber yard.

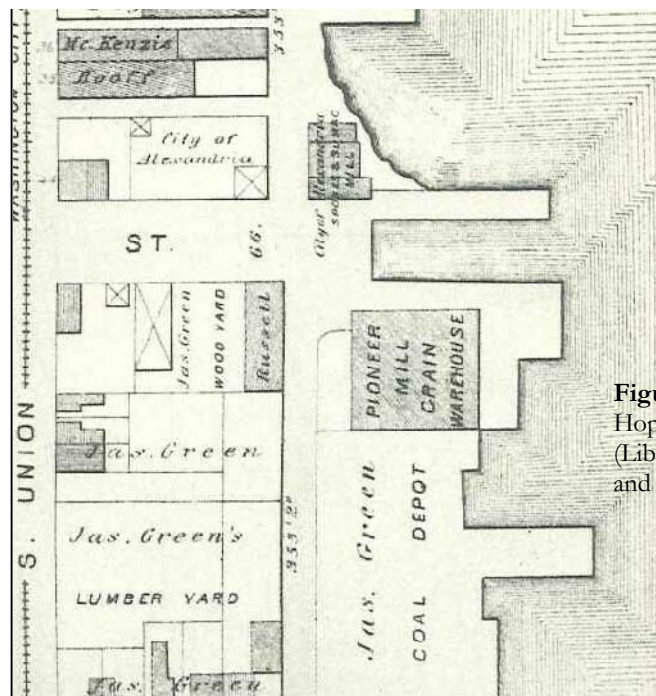


Figure 7. Detail, Griffith M. Hopkins *City Atlas of Alexandria*. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

During this period, Smith's Foundry and the Soldiers Mess building were probably demolished and a building of similar size was constructed in its place. The building that survives as 2 Duke Street has the same footprint as the foundry building, but does not **appear to be** the same height or have the same architectural details as the earlier building.

The 1880s represented a low point in 19th-century commercial and industrial activity on the property. Although surrounding blocks held industries such as the Moore iron foundry and the Atchenson planing mill, the Pioneer Mill building ceased milling and served instead as a grain warehouse when larger flour mills in the vicinity of Alexandria took over production. Russell's building seemingly was in poor condition with no identified use. Dwellings continued to stand along South Union and Wolfe Streets, but the interior of the Robinson Terminal property had no particular function. In 1891, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map marked the former Russell building as being vacant.

In the mid to late 1890s, the only dwelling left on the property was the building at 308 South Union Street; 715 Wolfe Street was in use as an office building and the other houses were demolished. The B&O Railroad built a freight house with a railroad siding in the southwest portion of the property. Lumber storage was

located between the freight house and the former Russell building, which was noted only as a warehouse. Pioneer Mills was vacant.

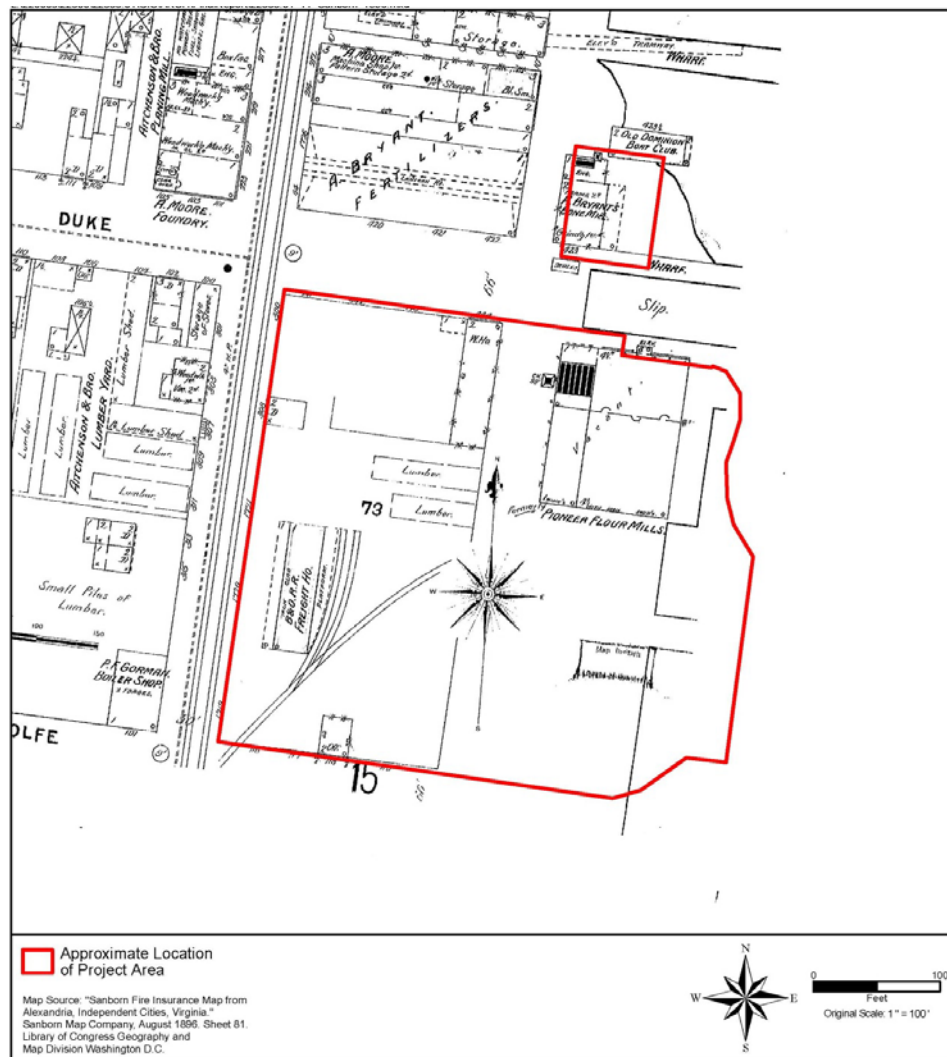


Figure 8. Detail, 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division; Courtesy of Thunderbird Archeology, a Division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.)

In October 1896, A. L. Moore obtained a building permit to repair the main building on the southwest corner of Duke Street and the Strand (2 Duke Street) and to add a one-story, brick blacksmith shop. We do not know if Moore completed his repairs and construction before the June 1897 fire that destroyed the Pioneer

Mill as well as all of the buildings then located along The Strand north to Prince Street. Charred timbers do exist in the existing Robinson Terminal office building (2 Duke Street).



Figure 9. Photograph, Pioneer Mill after the June 3, 1897 fire. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

1900 to 1960s

In 1899, Bryant Fertilizer Company purchased the Pioneer Mills parcel. Within three years, the company began using the western portion of the mill building as a warehouse (the rest was in ruins) and constructed another warehouse building on the northwest corner of the property which encompassed a dwelling at 308 South Union. Between 1899 and 1902, a rear addition was constructed on this former dwelling and now office building. The 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map also shows that W. S. Moore Sons operated a machine shop in the 2 Duke Street location. Lumber continued to be piled between that building and the B&O Railroad freight depot.

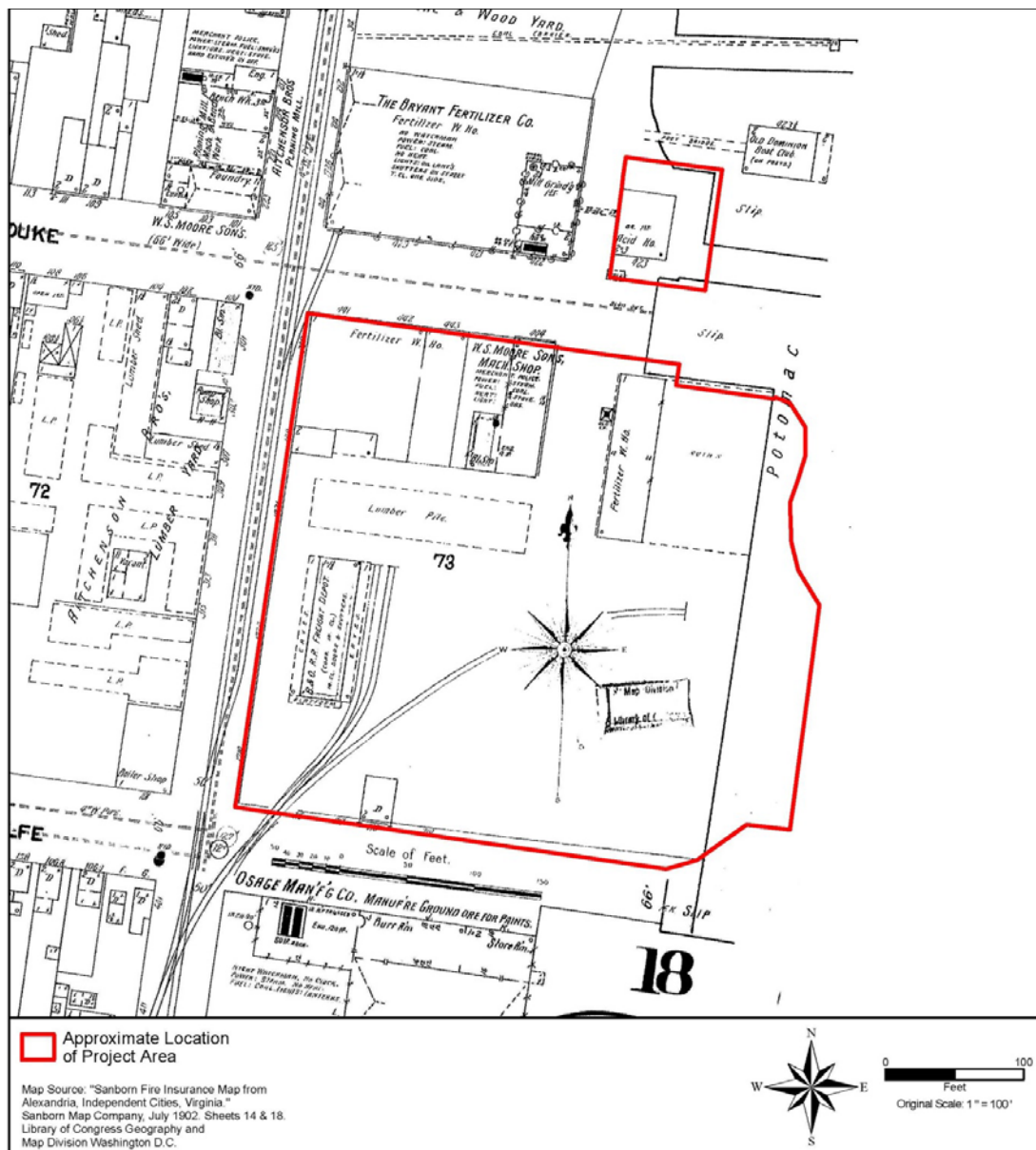


Figure 10. 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division; Courtesy of Thunderbird Archeology, a Division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.)

W. S. Moore Sons went bankrupt in 1907 and their machine shop was acquired by Emerson Engine Company. According to the 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Emerson operated a marine engine manufacturing shop in the 2 Duke Street building and in the location where Pioneer Mill once stood. The Texas Oil Company took over the B&O Railroad freight depot, and lumber continued to be stored between the depot and buildings on the north side of the property. Herfurth Brothers, an artificial stone manufacturer, took over the 715 Wolfe Street office building and added a sizable structure for manufacturing.

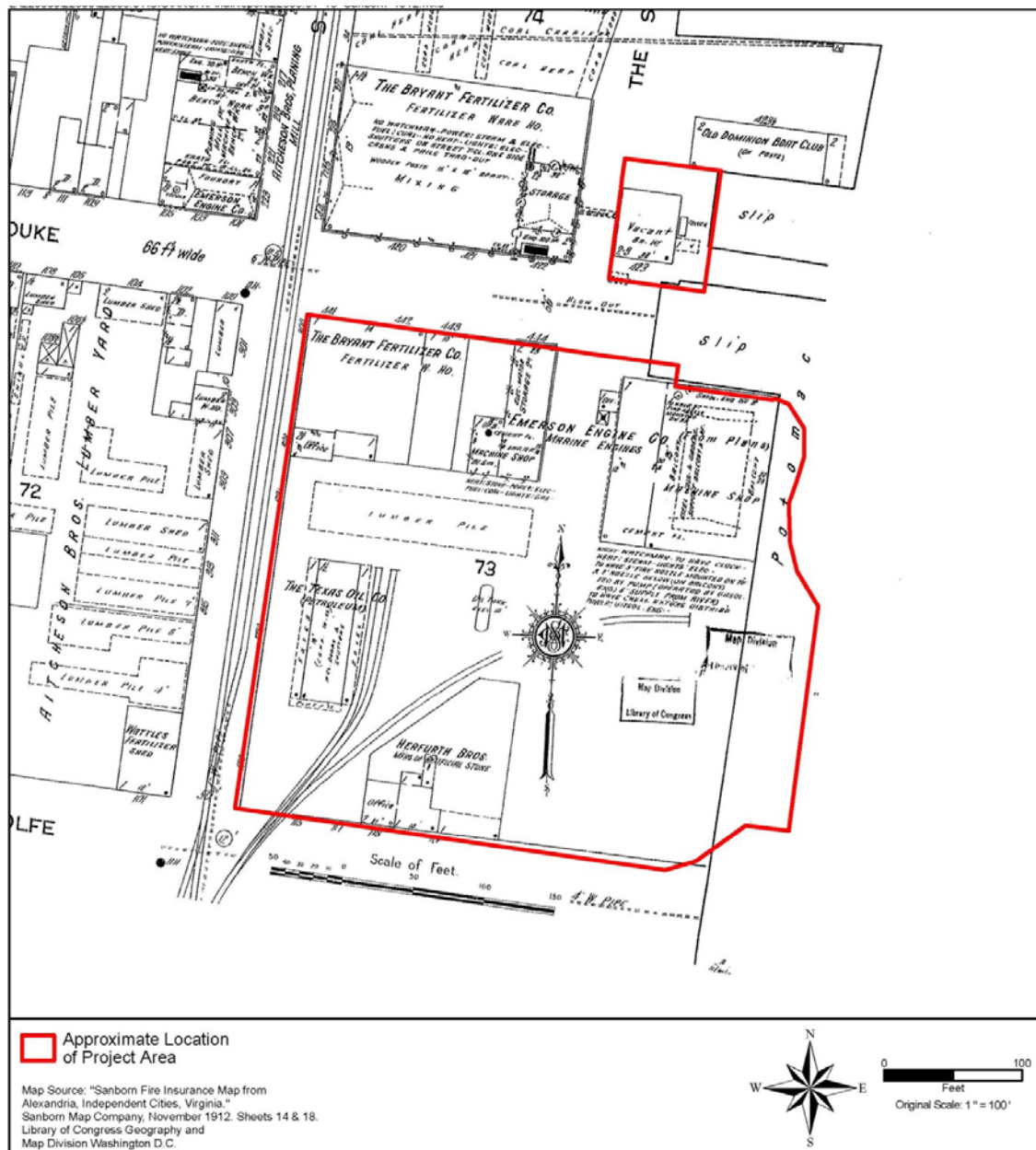


Figure 11. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division; Courtesy of Thunderbird Archeology, a Division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.)

In the 1920s, the property remained an industrial and storage area. Bryant Fertilizer maintained its warehouse at the corner of South Union and Wolfe Streets. The Texas Oil Company converted the railroad depot to an oil warehouse and constructed three oil tanks in the property's center. Herfurth Engine & Machine Company took over the operations at 2 Duke Street from Emerson Engine and added a storage shed close to the property's south side. Safety First Manufacturing Company acquired Emerson's foundry operations at the mill location.

The Great Depression of the 1930s greatly affected businesses in Alexandria. By 1937, Bryant Fertilizer Company's operations on the north side of Duke Street were in ruins and its warehouse on the Robinson property was no longer insured. Only Herfurth Engine with its storage shed maintained its operations on the property. The only remnant left of the mill building/Safety First Manufacturing Company was a brick wall along The Strand within the property. Nor does the Texas Oil storage facility—either the depot or the tanks—appear on the insurance map.



Figure 12. Photograph of 308 South Union Street, 1938. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

In the 1940s, the property's industrial uses expanded with the coming of World War II (1941-1945) and post-war prosperity. The Robinson Terminal Warehouse Company constructed two warehouses for storing paper across the southern half of the property (the warehouse along Wolfe Street did not extend up to the corner of South Union) and added a pier that extended from the east elevation of the two warehouses out into the Potomac River. Southern Iron Works took over the 2 Duke Street building and constructed a building between 2 Duke Street and the South Union Street corner. An aerial photograph of the property taken circa 1941 showed no standing structure at the mill location. In 1944, Robinson Terminal acquired the mill site and constructed a one-story, brick maintenance building there; the company also added a brick storage building on the southeast corner of its property, near the foot of Wolfe Street.

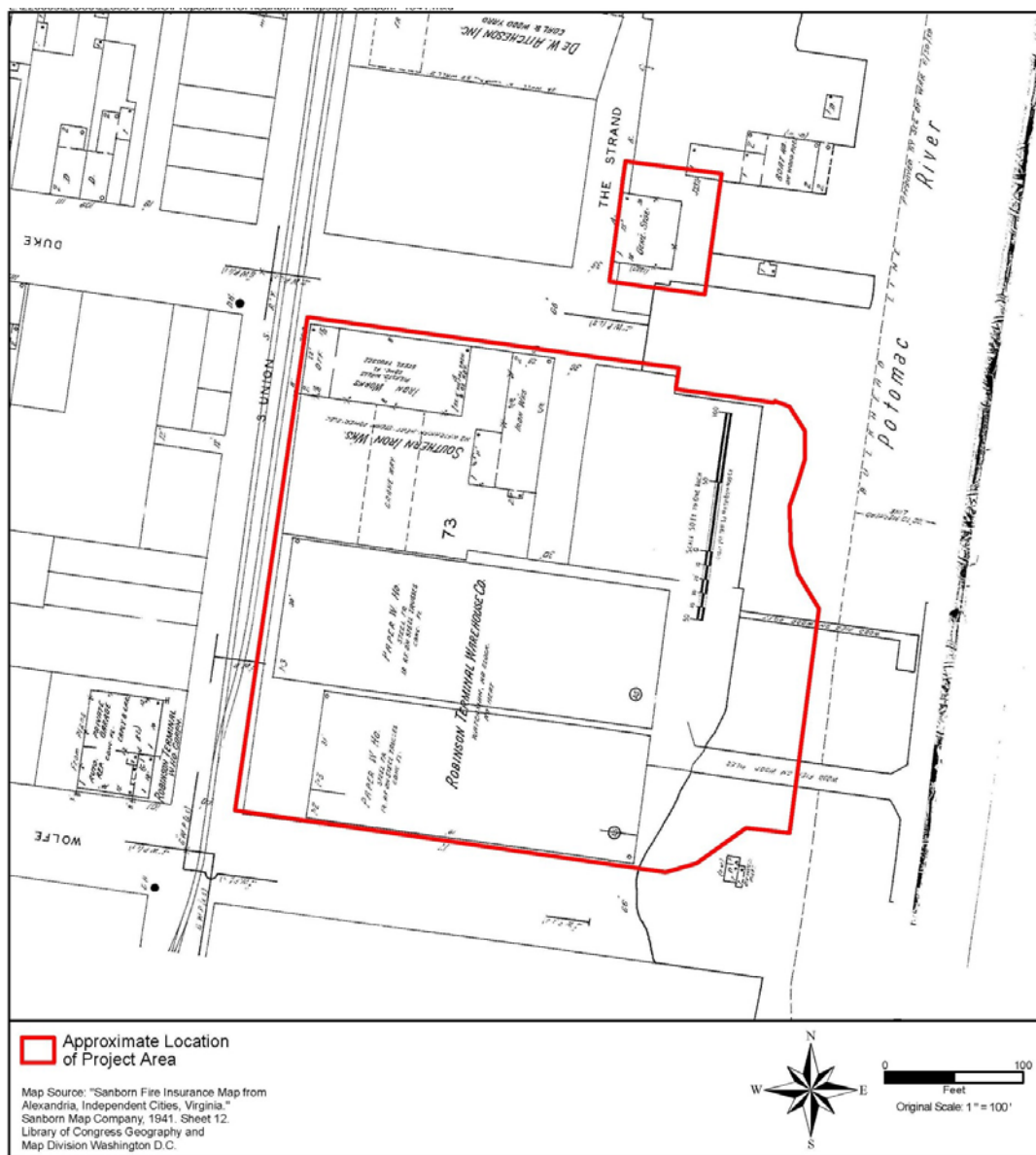


Figure 13. 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division; Courtesy of Thunderbird Archeology, a Division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.)

By 1959, Robinson Terminal owned the entire property and began converting and erecting new buildings to meet their operational needs. They repurposed the Duke and South Union Street corner warehouse to store paper and constructed a new warehouse between it and two other warehouses. The Wolfe Street warehouse was fully extended to the corner with South Union Street and the company began using 2 Duke Street as an office after removing its western addition. In 1963, Robinson Terminal made the last substantial change to the property by incorporating the old corner warehouse and the new warehouse under one roof.

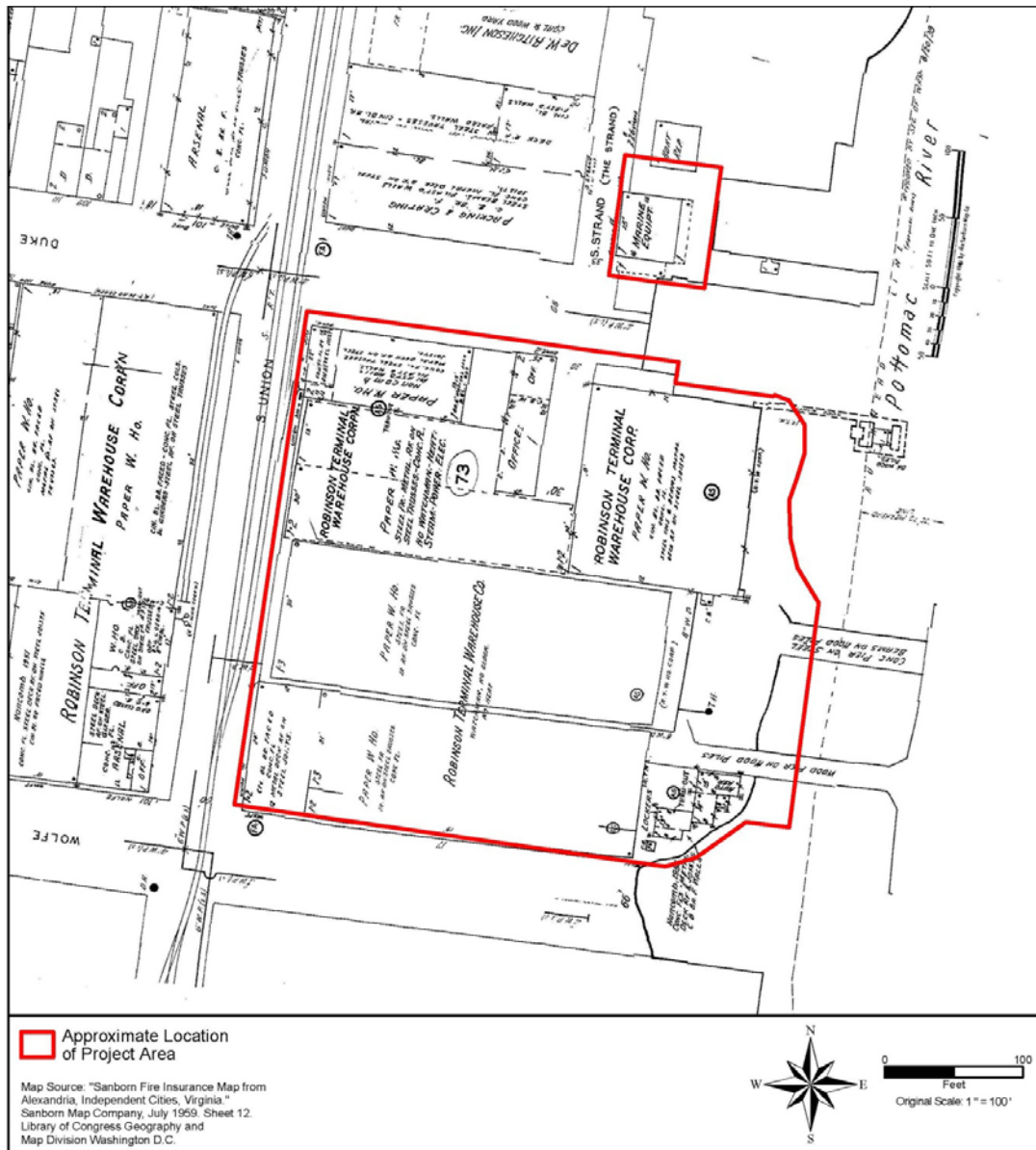


Figure 14. 1959 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division; Courtesy of Thunderbird Archeology, a Division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.)

Chronological Bibliography Maps, Photographs, and Building Permits *In Progress*

1749

Washington, George. *A Plan of Alexandria, Now Belhaven*. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

1763

West, George. Map of *Alexandria*. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

1775

Reps, John Williams. *Tidewater Towns: City Planning in Colonial Virginia and Maryland*. Figure 138: Map of Alexandria, Virginia: 1775.

Circa 1780

Copy of the Original Plat of the town of Alexandria, with the number of and the names of the purchasers. (Alexandria Archaeology, Vertical Files)

1788

Plat Map from *Richard Arrell vs. James Kirk, Mayor of Alexandria [Oct. 1789]*. From *Prince William County Land Causes*. Abstracted from a book labeled "Prince William County Land Causes, 1789-1793" by Donald L. Wilson. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

1798

Gilpin, George. *Plan of the Town of Alexandria in the District of Columbia*. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

1803

A Plan of Alexandria in the Territory of Columbia, State of Virginia. (Alexandria Archaeology, Vertical Files)

1804

Plat of the lands of John Gill, made prior to March 4, 1804. Alexandria Deed Book G p. 264. (Alexandria Archaeology, Vertical Files)

1845

Ewing, Maskell C. *Plan of the town of Alexandria, D.C. with the environs: exhibiting the outlet of the Alexandria Canal, the shipping channel, wharves, Hunting Cr. & c.* (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

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Robinson's Terminal, Duke Street. Photograph. Richards #10. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

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The Strand to the River. Property Record Card, Alexandria Virginia. Record from 1972-1981. (Alexandria Archaeology, Vertical Files)

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Duke St, foot of at river. Photograph. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections: Creegan Collection)

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Union Street South, 300 block, west side. Photographs. (Alexandria Library, Special Collections. Movall Collection)

BAR Concept Review

5/3/00

Since 1988, the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance has expressly required the "height, mass and scale of buildings or structures" to be a factor used by the Board of Architectural Review in passing on the appropriateness of proposed construction. The Board has since that time -- by unwritten policy -- reviewed projects requiring Planning Commission review of a new building or significant additions under what has been called "Conceptual Review". Applicants requesting conceptual review are docketed for public hearing at a regular session of the Board. In this review, the Board determines whether the "scale, mass and architectural character" of a proposal is appropriate within the historic district. The Board determines in this preliminary review whether the size and architectural style of the building is generally appropriate in relation to its surroundings. For projects on Washington Street or within the Potomac River Vicinity the Board also makes a formal finding of compliance with the additional standards listed in the Zoning Ordinance, to the extent that this is possible without final architectural details.

Detailed design elements: colors, signs, window details, etc. are deferred for restudy and final approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness if, and when, the project is approved by Planning Commission or City Council. The applicant thus avoids spending substantial additional money for design fees to develop architectural details and the Board does not spend time reviewing the details of a project which may not receive approval of, or which may be modified by, Planning Commission or City Council. The applicant is also able to determine early in the review process whether the BAR feels the building envelope is appropriate and can verify the project proforma prior to a large expenditure of professional fees.

Staff then forwards the Board's findings regarding the appropriateness of a proposed project's scale and mass in the staff report to Planning Commission and, in the case of a Development Special Use Permit, to City Council. However, no Certificate of Appropriateness is granted until after the project receives zoning approval by Planning Commission or Council, responds to any revisions required by these other bodies and the applicant returns to the Board for approval of the final design details. However, if a project requires major zoning modifications, staff routes projects to the Planning Commission first based on the presumption that if a project is not legally buildable, then the BAR should not be spending time on design review.

It has been recommended by the Washington Street Task Force that the Board cease the practice of Conceptual Review. While some Board members have been uncomfortable with appearing to approve a project without full knowledge of the architectural detailing, staff believes that there are some significant advantages to the community, the applicant and the Board in continuing Conceptual Review.

If a project is taken to Planning Commission and City Council for approval first, then detailed illustrative drawings of the building will have been presented to citizen associations, City staff, Planning Commission and City Council who will rely on these representations in their approval. For projects in the Potomac River Vicinity or on Washington Street, the Planning Commission

and City Council will necessarily become the bodies required to make a finding of compliance with the additional standards before the project may proceed. In addition, a project of any size requires approval of a Preliminary Site Plan, which involves numerous detailed engineering drawings of the building site. In effect, the entire building will have been designed in some detail and these drawings will form the basis for neighborhood and Council approvals. Design revision by the BAR may require re-approval by all of these groups. Further, the applicant will have invested tens of thousands of dollars in attorney, engineer and architects fees and will be very reluctant to make meaningful changes to the building design. Finally, there would be no benefit for the BAR to deny final approval of a project when the applicant can appeal to City Council -- who would already have approved the project.

Unfortunately, attorneys frequently represent before the Planning Commission and Council that projects which have received only concept review have been "approved" by the BAR. In addition, citizens may not be aware of the BAR public hearing or assume the BAR will deny a request and are then upset that the building envelope has been approved before they have had an opportunity to comment on the size of the project.

Therefore, the Washington Street Task Force has recommended abolishing conceptual review by the BAR and substituting a joint, informational work session of the Planning Commission and BAR for all new buildings within a block of Washington Street. While this proposal has some merit and would allow FAR and traffic impacts to be discussed at the same time that the interrelated subject of building mass and scale is being reviewed, it also has the potential to dilute any real discussions on design because of the practical amount of time this will consume and the difficulty of gathering two boards together for a presentation with public comment. Concept review for major projects today frequently extends over two or three BAR meetings. BAR members often request that certain elements be restudied or simply want to revisit the site and reflect on the applicant's presentation or public comments received. On the other hand, the number of potential development projects requiring this joint review is relatively small, perhaps twice per year.

Staff recommends that the Board continue the practice of conceptual review but incorporate it *as a* formal step in the BAR's Certificate of Appropriateness process for relevant projects throughout the historic districts. The Board would be required to make a formal finding of appropriateness of the scale, mass and architectural character of any new building prior to its review by Planning Commission and Council. The expanded Washington Street standards recommended by the Task Force will provide additional guidance from City Council regarding community expectations for this street. A written policy should also be established so that the BAR, applicants, Council and the public understand exactly what is (and is not) being approved in conceptual review and why. Staff believes that the BAR is the most qualified body to review and comment on design issues and should avoid being drawn into work sessions where traffic, density and use are the primary concerns.

CONCEPTUAL BAR APPROVAL POLICY

1. **BAR concept approval is required in the following cases:**
 - a. The proposal requires an SUP for additional density or height;
 - b. The proposal requires Planning Commission review for a new building;
 - c. Staff determines that the proposal requires preliminary review because the design would be a principal determining factor in the ultimate approval by other bodies.
 - d. The only exception to the above will be when the zoning approval needed by the Planning Commission or Council is so uncertain and so critical to the basic format of the proposal, that, in staff's opinion, changes to the application are likely and review by the BAR would have to be repeated.
2. **In a case before it for conceptual approval, the BAR shall make findings on the following issues:**
 - a. Appropriateness of scale, mass and general architectural character;
 - b. Additional standards where applicable (such as Washington Street or the Potomac River Vicinity) have been met.