

2
1-25-14
submitted by
Matthew Stensrud

January 24th, 2014: City of Alexandria Public Hearing

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

Update for 2013:

Presented by Matthew Stensrud, Vice Chair of Alexandria Commission for the Arts

- The Commission has seen 8 new members and will welcome 3 more in the beginning of 2014
- Appointed a new Poet Laureate, Tori Lane
- Promoted Words in Motion, a new poetry effort on DASH buses
- Created two new committees: Advocacy and Special Events
- Helping mold the Public Art Master Plan
- Provided over \$170,000 in grants to Alexandria arts organizations
- Enhanced the grants process for FY 2015

The Commission for the Arts encourages all members of the public to take the Public Art Survey and offer their thoughts on public art in Alexandria: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/PublicArt>

January 24th, 2014: City of Alexandria Public Hearing

Mr. Mayor, City Council members, and members of the public,

As many of you know, my name is Matthew Stensrud and I am the Vice Chair of Alexandria's Commission for the Arts. I am honored to be here today to share with you some exciting things the Commission has accomplished over the past year.

First of all, the Commission's membership has changed dramatically, allowing for a fresh perspective on the arts in Alexandria. Since I joined the Commission in the summer of 2012, the Commission has welcomed 8 new members and looks forward to working with 3 additional new members in the coming months as we promote and preserve the arts in Alexandria. Further, we appointed a new Poet Laureate last spring and created two new committees: one for Advocacy and another for Special Events. The goals of both new Committees help to create better communication, visibility, and engagement between Commissioners and the community. Additionally, the Commission promoted Words in Motion, a DASH Bus initiative that, with the help and hard work of the Office of the Arts, is having a successful first year placing poetry written by Alexandrians onto DASH buses.

We are also thrilled that the Public Art Master Plan is becoming a reality. Currently, the Public Art Survey is open to the public both in paper and online – Alexandrians of all stripes are encouraged to share their thoughts and vision for public art in Alexandria. If you have not yet taken the survey, please take a moment to do so. We also encourage you to speak to fellow Alexandrians about the importance of sharing their thoughts and filling out this brief survey as well – the more input from Alexandrians the better we can craft a plan specifically for Alexandria.

The Commission also wants to thank you for your continued support of arts organizations in Alexandria through our grant program. We were thrilled to provide over \$170,000 in financial assistance to twenty-one grant recipients during fiscal year 2014. This year, I am excited to announce an enhanced grants process. Our Grants Committee worked diligently last year and has streamlined the application, added the option for individual artists to apply for grants, requires workshops for new applicants, and allows Commission panels the opportunity to meet individually with each applicant to learn more about the organization's public benefit to the people of Alexandria. The Commission greatly appreciates your support of the Arts and we ask you to consider enhancing our funds for fiscal year 2015 to further grow our City's cultural footprint.

Finally, we encourage you to attend the many phenomenal arts events happening all around us in the great City of Alexandria. From galleries to theater, and dance to musical performances, Alexandria truly is an arts hub that we are all proud to call home.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Sydney-Chanele Dawkins, Chair

Matthew Stensrud, Vice Chair

Alexandria Commission for the Arts

January 25, 2014

2
submitted 1-25-14
by Jerry King
Speaker #3

Mayor Euille and City Council,

I am Jerry King, Chair of the Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
I am here in support of the city's Traffic Calming project on King Street.

I am speaking today, not just for members of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, but for all those in Alexandria who support this project. That includes those who filled this room, and stood in support of the project at the Traffic and Parking Board on November 25th, 40 of whom told their rationale for supporting this project. Some live or work in the impacted neighborhood and view the City's plan for bike lanes as a huge step forward for their safety as pedestrians; such as the commuter who walks from the Metro to her job at Woodbine whose safety is improved by bike lanes that help slow traffic and provide separation between pedestrians and motor vehicles, or the resident who walks to the Metro and views bike lanes as also providing a solution for getting cyclists off the sidewalk. Others live in the western part of the City and know the planned bike lanes will make their rides safer, or who will ride when Bike lanes are installed.

You won't hear from most of those folks today as we had planned. As you know, the city announced this week the decision to review the T&ES Director's decision to move forward with the King Street project. Although we are disappointed in this decision we understand and support the decision for additional hearings in this case.

Many of those who support the King Street Project had planned to speak today to share their stories and to thank you for your policy-setting, including the focus on multi-modal options in the Transportation Master Plan and the emphasis on pedestrian and cyclist safety in the Complete Streets policy. As a result of the review process decision, we notified as many people as possible that it was not necessary to comment at this meeting and take up your valuable time. With perhaps a few exceptions, we will save our comments and our thanks to you, for the March City Council hearing on this project.

I also want to convey my respect and thanks for the civic engagement and outreach conducted by the City staff on this project. The proposed Civic Engagement resolution, on the docket today, sets forth three objectives to be met "prior to the adoption of public policies which will significantly impact the quality of life of members of the community".

- (1) The nature of the proposed policy or action has been fully disclosed,
- (2) The public has had reasonable opportunity to be informed, consulted, involved, or to collaborate on the proposed action, and
- (3) The decision-making body has had sufficient opportunity to consider and reflect before acting.

In our view, Mr. Baier not only met, but exceeded the proposed objectives for civic engagement in what is essentially an engineering decision, more than a "public policy" decision. To expect City Staff to provide a greater amount of engagement in each engineering decision that impacts the public would significantly impede the ability of the T&ES Staff to address the myriad of other transportation projects that are waiting for staff time and attention.

Lastly I will leave you with this; this project is primarily a safety issue, including pedestrian safety. The pictures in my statement convey the view seen by west-bound pedestrians. The planned bike lanes will both slow traffic and provide separation between pedestrians and motor vehicles. Wouldn't we all be interested in providing the bike lanes to make it safer for people like the pedestrian commuters I mentioned?



Pedestrian Views of King Street looking West.

1-25-14

submitted by Andrea Hamre

Greetings Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, and Council Members,

My name is Andrea Hamre. I am an Alexandria resident and a PhD candidate in Urban Affairs & Planning at Virginia Tech. I want to provide some facts about bike lanes and cycling safety on behalf of myself and my adviser Professor Ralph Buehler. Dr. Buehler has 10 years of experience using travel data to research determinants of cycling in North America and Europe. He is the co-editor of *City Cycling* (2012, MIT Press). Our main concern is that the current discussion in Alexandria is based on misinformation about bike lanes and cyclist safety. We would like to provide a data- and research-based statement, and citations to peer-reviewed studies are included at the close of this statement.

First, research indicates there is a strong positive relationship between the provision of bike lanes, cycling levels, and cyclist safety. In essence, the more bike lanes and separate facilities a city has, the more cyclists there are, and the lower the fatality, injury, and crash rates per mile cycled. For example, between 1991 and 2010 the City of Portland (Oregon) built an entire bicycle network consisting of 291km of bike lanes and 119km of bike paths. The city increased cycling levels 6 fold and cyclist crash rates fell by 70%. If bike lanes were as dangerous as claimed by some Alexandria residents, we would have seen deteriorating cycling safety in Portland! However, research shows the opposite trend: cities with more bike lanes and paths have more and safer cycling than cities without these amenities. A key factor is 'safety in numbers'. The more people cycle, the more motorists will watch out for cyclists when making a turn, opening car doors, or passing. Research shows that separate bicycle facilities are crucial to get more people cycling. In particular, bike lanes and paths enable risk-averse individuals to consider cycling as a viable option—especially creating safe travel environments for children, women, and seniors. On-street cycling (without lanes and separate facilities) is mainly limited to younger males who display more risk taking attitudes. One of our studies found that bike lanes and off street bike paths have a similar positive effect in encouraging bike commuting—even when controlling for many other factors. If Alexandria wants to encourage more cycling and achieve safety in numbers, the city needs a network of bike lanes, bike paths, and traffic calmed neighborhood streets so that everyone can cycle without sharing a travel lane with fast moving or high speed traffic.

Second, many American cities are looking to European cities who have experience with building bike facilities and increasing cycling since the 1970s. Currently, cycling safety per km cycled in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany (where almost all cities have comprehensive networks of bike lanes and paths) is more than 5 times greater than in the U.S. If bike lanes were as dangerous as claimed by some Alexandria residents, we would have to see carnage in the streets of European cities. However, as the data show, the opposite is true. European cities with more bike lanes and paths have safer cycling.

Third, bike lanes seem to increase safety not only for bicyclists, but other travelers as well. For example, two recent studies based in California suggest bike lanes have broad support among drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists due in part to the perception that these facilities contribute to a more predictable travel environment for all travelers. Drivers in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas named bicycle lanes as a top requested traffic safety improvement along two major arterial roadways.

In summary, research suggests bike lanes contribute to more and safer cycling, and have broad support among drivers and pedestrians, as well as bicyclists. We would like to thank the City Council for the opportunity to provide a comment and invite you to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,
Andrea Hamre & Ralph Buehler, PhD
ahamre@gmail.com; Ralph.Buehler@gmail.com

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Gloria Sitton

2
1-25-14
- submitted by Tom
Walczykowski

From: Thomas Walczykowski <ThomasWalczykowski@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 11:41 AM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: Minutes for 1/25/14 Council Meeting

Hi Gloria,

I was one of the 36 people speaking at the meeting. Your initial minutes simply stated, "Tom Walczykowski, 405 Cloverway Drive, representing the Clover-College Park Civic Association, spoke in opposition to the King Street Bike Lanes."

Please replace with the following: "Tom Walczykowski, 405 Cloverway Drive, representing the Clover-College Park Civic Association, after providing background information, recommended the following: 1. Halt installation of Concept 2 on King Street. 2. Work with the community and develop a compromise solution. 3. Implement traffic calming features incrementally so the effectiveness of each feature can be evaluated.

Regards,

Tom Walczykowski
703-400-4952

Good Morning, MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMBERS

2
1-25-14
submitted by
Darlene Johnson

I am Darlene Johnson, live at 2210 King Street, AM A TAX PAYER, and I VOTE.

I AM NOT against bicyclists. I do, for safety reasons, oppose the addition of bike lanes on King Street. I support this original 2008 PLAN. (*Hold up*). I am in favor of slowing the traffic speeds on King Street to make it safer for bicyclists, pedestrians & residents, but recommend MORE EFFECTIVE WAYS THAN THAT PRESENTLY PROPOSED.

Things that “**work**” to slow traffic should be implemented.

1. Put in 2 sidewalk bulb-outs built with metal bridges (such as those on Cameron) on the north side of King Street.
 - Put one at the Rosemont intersection and Park Road and add a marked CROSSWALK at that location for pedestrians and bus riders who disembark at the bus stops.
 - Put the second bulb-out at the intersection of Walnut and Upland.
- Bulb-outs funnel the cars and protect parked cars from getting hit in the back end
2. Encourage parking along the north-side of the street; lengthen the hours cars are allowed to park without permits. People wishing to walk down to old town to shop or dine or use the Metro could use these spaces.
3. Use sharrows for the bicyclists who are able to go up and down King Street easily.
4. Clear the sidewalks of obstructing signs and posts on the north and south sides of the street to create a safer path for pedestrians and the bicyclists who choose not to ride on the street.
5. Designate an alternative bike path through the neighborhood from Janney's Lane (using less traveled streets - Putnam, Hilltop, Upland, Walnut and Commonwealth to the King Street Metro).
6. STOP MESSING WITH THE June 2008 Pedestrian & Bicycle Mobility Plan that made sense; direct the city manager and staff to use it! The 2008 plan WAS SUPPORTED, AND was the product of a committee comprised of city staff and 28 CITY RESIDENTS and calls for sharrows on this stretch of King Street.

LINES PAINTED ON THE STREET WILL NOT SLOW TRAFFIC NOR STOP vehicles FROM GOING OVER THE CURB OR INTO A BIKE LANE or into a biker- A BIKER IS NOT A BARRIER OR BUFFER... nor is he or she expendable. A parked car is.

Slow traffic with physical barriers - not bodies.

INSTEAD OF THE COLLEGE DEGREES OF CITY PLANNERS please use a degree of COMMON SENSE TO MAKE KING STREET SAFER...

City Council:

My family and I come before you today to once again ask that you right a wrong. Adding bike lanes and not fully implementing true traffic calming and safety measures is a grave mistake that will cost lives and city revenue.

2
submitted 1-25-14
by Abbie Eastman

We the King Street residents have tried to get our many points across and still haven't gotten answers. The Traffic and Parking board heard our pleas and came up with a reasonable next step. That recommendation was ignored by Rich Baier, a man who seems to ignore common sense and continues to hide behind flimsy, often incorrect data to help promote an idea thus far completely unproven in this area.

As I lie in bed at night I listen to the traffic fly up and down King St and I wonder why we are living in a community where the law is not enforced and I have to fear for my daughter's life every time she is in the front yard and every day when we walk across the street to get to her daycare. Is today the day she will be hit by a car? Why should we live in a city that ignores facts and moves forward with their own agenda, regardless of the consequences to its residents? Facts like:

- These bike lanes cover less than a mile leading cyclists to dangerous intersections at either side of the lanes.
- No studies have been done by the city to see if similar plans have actually increased safety/decreased traffic
- The roadway is only 29 feet in parts and the total plan assumes 30 feet
- The lanes will be too narrow for the constant flow of commercial vehicles and busses to pass each other without hitting each other or swerving into the bike lanes.
- There is rampant speeding along the contested section of King Street and there is no police enforcement.
- The Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan, specifically states that it does not recommend the removal of any on-street parking, but that there should be "sharrows".
- There are alternate routes that would be safer and easier for cyclists, namely one that only adds one tenth of a mile from Janneys to the King St Metro
- Adding bike lanes and taking away parking decreases our home values on King St
- The city has been citing evidence that bike lanes slow traffic, but much research has also been done that shows the opposite.
- there are over 20 hazards on the sidewalks in this area
- Crossing at Park where the additional parking is, is hazardous and been reported as "too dangerous" for a crosswalk.

I again implore you to stop the implementation of Baier's plan and to help us go back to the drawing board, this time with true experts and the help of the local community. We all want what's best for this brief stretch of road and this plan is absolutely not it.

I am happy to provide more specifics on any of my facts.

Thank you for your consideration,
Abbie Eastman
2209 King St

Mr. Mayor and Members of Council, my name is Gary Carr, and I appear before you, as I have for many years, with the simple goal of bringing safe, quality running tracks to our children. The focus of my advocacy is the restoration of the historic running track at George Washington Middle School. But a larger goal is increasing the number and availability of running venues whenever possible. With that stated, the Department of Recreation recently presented a Citywide Parks Improvement Plan, that was two years in the making. The George Washington Middle School Fields and the newly designated Lenny Harris Field (formerly Braddock Field) were not included in a multi-year study, that envisions spending 40 million dollars. Under the plan, the park system will remain without a running track. However, there is an area that encompasses three fields, that was the site of an historic stadium, with ample parking, whose improvement would impact over a thousand children on a daily basis- more than all the other proposed projects combined. It could use a study too.

I would like to spent my last moments discussing the recent Council decision to allow for lighting at the proposed tennis courts at TC Williams High School. The issues of park improvement and lights are closely related. I support your conclusion for lights at the tennis courts as a practical matter, but the need is much greater. Lights significantly increases the use of athletic facilities. The Mayor broached the "third-rail" of this City when he suggested the topic of lighting should be revisited in a community forum. I wholeheartedly support this proposal. Let's bring it to the table, then bring the issue to the people, in a referendum is possible. A construction footnote prevented lighting at our only high school's athletic field. Lighting has also been foiled at Francis Hammond Middle School. We are left with the anomaly of the fields with tracks having no lights, and the fields with lights having no tracks. (By the way we could add safety lighting to the running tracks for starters)

The school's neighbors who were participants in the "no lights" deal, that effected every child in the city, are crying foul and a breech of trust. In some ways, the breech of trust occurred with our students when the restriction were enacted in the first place. One significant discussion you can advance as a council is to address this issue. Let the chip fall where they may, but if all the citizen's of this City are allowed to express the preference, lights will soon be coming to the Titian's.

The families most directly effected from any lighting change should not be forgotten. A few remarks were made about silent tennis balls and berms mitigating the effect of lights and sound. There are technological solutions that can have a tremendous impact, things such as sound-proof windows and doors, wall insulation, blackout blinds and shades. Nothing is perfect, but this would represent a good faith effort on the part of the citizenry. The cost could justifiably be included in any project. We can as a community resolve any issue before us. This is a city whose facilities needs illumination and whose children need running tracks. If you build them, and if you light them, they will run.

They will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Statement to the Alexandria City School Board by Gary Carr January 23, 2014

Madame Chair, Mr. Superintendent, Members of the School Board, my name is Gary Carr. I appear before you in what is at least the fourteenth year of advocacy for running and running tracks. Now I rise specifically for the restoration of the historic running track at George Washington Middle School. I have been pursuing this effort for over a decade, or put another way, all of this century. How long have I been at this? Well when I started I had hair, and lots of it. Look at me now.

In that time through a multitude of justifications and explanations, I have not been contradicted on the basic crux of my argument- that running and walking is good for children, that running tracks provide the best and safest place for this activity, and running tracks benefit the entire community. Additionally, they are used year-round and are cost-effective to build and maintain. I have continued with a multitude of good reasons, *ad nauseam*, until you are weary of hearing about it, and frankly I am tired of talking about it. Still, we are immobilized into inaction by competing priorities and budgetary constraints.

I am an unlikely champion of this cause. It was never my intention to dwell on this matter for so long, but if I broach any other subject, my main point is lost. And so I have remained decidedly "on topic". I am proud to be identified with this issue- running tracks- and if, or should I say *when* the running track is built- it will have a tremendous impact on this community. I am required by what I espouse and seek to teach my children, which is, if you believe in something, never let it go.

So, what is needed going forward? I'm glad that you asked. What is needed more than anything is a plan- a vision- a dream; for the tremendous possibilities of the George Washington Middle School Site. Not only as an athletic and community resource, but also as a producer of revenue. Whether it's just bringing up to modern competition standards, or creating what I believe can be one of the greatest multitrack running facilities in the country, we need a plan. That's what I'm asking for here today, is a plan.

When the best ideas are put on paper, it will soar like wings on eagles. And when we build it, they will run and not grow weary, and they will walk and not be faint.

Condition #85

Statement to the Alexandria City School Board December 19, 2013 by Gary J. Carr

Every parent in Alexandria should get acquainted with the terms of Condition #85. Condition Eighty-five was included in 2004 as a clause to the construction of the new T.C. Williams High School. Called a SUP, or a Special Use Permit, it states that "No permanent stadium lighting shall be installed at the School stadium or any other athletic fields, including the proposed new practice field." This prohibition has had a tremendous impact on the health and learning experience of all children attending Alexandria's only high school. The policy, which actually dates back over forty years, with the construction of the original T.C. Williams High School, could be rightfully considered vestige of City's segregated past. Alexandria's former high school, now the George Washington Middle School had a field, with a running track, seating for thousands, *and lights*. It was also for whites only.

Times have changed, but one remnant of those tumultuous years in the early seventies, recalled in *Remember the Titans*, was a high school constructed in the geographic middle of the city, but was also in the middle of a residential area, and in the middle of controversy. This is the root of the current dilemma. The needs of the immediate neighbors, versus the needs of the children and the entire community. The needs of both should be considered and respected.

This issue was referenced by the City Council during the discussion on construction of 6 new tennis courts with lighting at the high school. Everyone was in concurrence on the need for the new courts. However, the request for lighting brought out the long simmering sub-text of lighting, not only of the tennis courts, but at the athletic fields of every secondary school in the City. Let us not forget the recent effort at Hammond Middle School to light the new field and track. It was approved by the School Board, Planning Commission and City Council, only to be thwarted by threatened legal action by the Community Association that would have delayed the desperately needed project. The City Council approved the tennis courts with lights by a unanimous vote. But they took great pains to avoid the elephant in the room, lighting not only at T.C., but at all of our secondary schools athletic fields.

The Mayor, to his credit, began the Public Hearing pledging to lead "the effort to having a separate discussion, a full blown out discussion, relative to the future lighting of the stadium at a later date." The discussion should include the fields at Hammond and George Washington Middle School. The Board should actively support its commencement at the earliest as possible date. The time has come to have a open and frank discussion on the need for lighting at our sports facilities. The needs of the neighbors should be respected, but the needs of the children cannot be neglected. Condition #85

need to be repealed, not only for the tennis courts, but for all the fields at our secondary schools. This should all be done with the full input of all members of the community, and even be placed on the ballot to assure the program represents and consensus of the taxpayers.

Every effort should be made to address the concerns of the communities that surround the school. Traffic violations, trash and vagrant behavior should not be tolerated. At the same time the schools neighbors must be realistic. The schools are not going anywhere. There will be inconveniences that were not present in the past. But these our our children and the future of this community. They must be nurtured both mentally and physically to be successful. They need these facilities to practice and refine their skills.

Technology has allowed for the lighted facilities to be much less intrusive than in the past. This includes highly directional lighting technology that have minimal impact over ambient lighting. The activities will cease activities at 10pm by timers to keep the peace. Also, there are fencing barriers, security cameras. and other technological enhancements, such as landscape screening, berms, soundproof windows, insulated walls, and black-out coverings. Thet methods significant reduce the infringement of increased usage. But let's be realistic, these changes in usage will have an significant impact on the quality of life as it has been previously known the those abutting the schools. Noise, vehicles and lights are the side-effects of a vigorous athletic program. This inconvenience is not for some abstract objective, it is for the youth of this community.

How do we pay for these improvement in a time a fiscal austerity. One suggestion would be a cigarette tax that both raise funds and discourage unhealthy activity. Other funding sources could be considered that don't negatively impact the educational mission of the schools. The point is that this should be a community focused effort. It only make sense to install electrical prerequisites, such as conduits and wiring, during the initial construction. It is also more cost effective to look at the overall needs of our secondary school and address them comprehensively.

Let me be clear- at every secondary school deserve all-weather athletic fields, these fields deserve running tracks, the running tracks deserve lights *and* lighted tennis courts as part of overall athletic complexes. Don't just fix the problem for some athletes and leave others at a competitive disadvantage. This the correct strategy that serves all members of this community. The beginning of this debate should be a priority for the School Board and City Council, because the school and Parks and Recreation programs are inextricably linked.

...And it goes unsaid, of course, that if you build this, in many ways, we will run.

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING -- KING STREET PROPOSAL -- 1/25/14

Louise Welch, 2207 King Street, Alexandria Resident

One of the great hallmarks of the American system of justice is the right to appeal an adverse decision. I thank the City Council for granting the right to appeal. I want to discuss two reasons you should overturn the decision to install dedicated bike lanes on King Street.

First, it seems irrational to implement a plan that's still being written, is based on faulty thinking, and conflicts with components of the City's existing plans.

At the Nov 25th Hearing, the Traffic and Parking Board stated up front in their handout that if "this issue is not ready to be resolved, the Board may want to consider deferring this issue until the Bicycle Master Plan is developed."

A wise decision to defer, but it raises the question of what is being developed? The City's existing plans suggest sharrows for King Street, advise that King Street has a low potential for bike lane useage, suggest an alternate bicycle route of .14 mile longer, do not recommend the removal of any on-street parking, and state that on-street parking serves as a buffer between moving vehicles and pedestrians while simultaneously slowing vehicular traffic. These are plans we could live with!

On the other hand Concept 2 is a plan without a beginning or an end. It includes a bicycle island of 3 blocks where 30% of King Street, a narrow State Highway, is dedicated for bicycle lanes. The end, from Cedar to Metro, is unknown. The other end, from Janney's to T.C. Williams High School, is unknown. Mr. Baier states in a Jan 14th e-mail that "the City is not considering bike lanes west of Janney's Lane." Concept 2 makes no sense.

The second reason to reject this plan is safety. It seems counterproductive

for the City to sacrifice safety for residents in an effort to provide it for bicyclists.

The Local Policy Workbook of the National Complete Streets Coalition states there is a "need for a balanced approach to transportation design... **given the unique characteristics of the surrounding community.**" It further states "an effective Complete Streets policy must be **sensitive to the type of neighborhood...**" The policy does not require dedicated bike lanes.

Ignoring existing constraints of our neighborhood and implementing this plan would force pick ups and deliveries, paratransit (disabled) access, and backing into driveways while protruding into travel lanes, plus parking on distant streets and moving materials across heavy King Street traffic, in addition to adding congestion, confusing traffic patterns, dangerous turns across traffic, and 13,000 vehicles a day, including tractor trailers and buses inches apart, on narrowed traffic lanes.

Implementation would be especially irresponsible, considering there are safer alternatives for bicyclists and no alternative for safe, contiguous access to homes.

Thank you.

MEMORANDUM

2
1-25-14
submitted by
Francis Buckley

To: Alexandria City Council
From: F.H. Buckley
Re: Proposal to install dedicated bicycle lanes on 2200-2500 King Street (the "Street")
Date: Dec. 25, 2014

The actions of the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services (the "Director") are illegal and should be the subject of an inquiry by City Council.

The Illegality of the Director's Decision

The decision of the Director on Dec. 20, 2013 to direct his employees to install dedicated bicycle lanes and remove on-street parking on the street was made without authority and is illegal.

The Director first asked the Traffic and Parking Board (the "TPB") to inquire into the question of the bicycle lane, as he was required to do by City Ordinance sections 5-8-2 and 5-8-3.

Sec. 5-8-2 Meeting; consideration of matters concerning traffic, parking and taxicabs. The traffic and parking board shall meet at least once each month and all matters concerning traffic, parking and taxicabs, **shall be presented to the board for its consideration prior to action by the director of transportation and environmental services or presentation to the city council.** (Code 1963, Sec. 22-21) **(bold face added)**

Sec. 5-8-3 Duty and authority generally. It shall be the duty of the traffic and parking board to, within the limits of the funds at its disposal, investigate, study and analyze traffic and parking problems within the city,

receive complaints having to do with traffic and parking matters, devise plans, methods and means to control and relieve parking and traffic congestion, have jurisdiction over taxicabs and buses and their owners and operators as specified in title 9, chapter 12 of this code, control parades within the city, prepare reports on traffic, parking and taxicabs, and render advice and make recommendation to the city manager, the city planning commission and, through the city manager, to the city council and other officers and agencies of the city government. (Code 1963, Sec. 22-22; Ord. No. 3345, 11/22/88, Sec. 1)

These sections make it clear that the Director lacks the power to bypass the TPB.

The TCB held its hearing on November 25, 2013 and postponed a decision on bicycle lanes. Section 5-8-162 then provides what is to happen when the Director rejects the recommendation of the TPB, as he did here in his December 20 letter.

In the event the board's recommendation does not fully support the director's proposed action, the director may appeal the matter to city council. *In the event the board's recommendation supports, in whole or in part, the proposed action, any person who owns or leases property immediately adjacent to the public street or portion thereof affected by the proposed action and who would be aggrieved by the proposed action if it were implemented by the director in accordance with the board's recommendation may appeal the matter to city council. An appeal under this subsection shall be filed with the clerk of city council within 15 days of the board's recommendation. Within 10 days of the filing of an appeal, the board shall forward in writing its recommendation, along with its reasons in support thereof, to the clerk who shall then docket the appeal for the next regularly scheduled public hearing before council. The clerk shall also provide notice of such hearing by causing an advertisement stating the time, date and place of the hearing before council, the name and location of the public street involved and the nature of the hearing to be prepared and published at least seven (7) working days before the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation published in the city.*

Following the public hearing, council shall approve, reject to modify, in whole or in part, the director's proposed action. (bold face added)

The Director was required to appeal the decision to City Council, if he wished to proceed with the matter. He did not, and any unilateral act on his part is without authority and illegal.

In his Dec. 20, 2013 letter, the Director denied that he needed to appeal the TPB decision to City Council, "as the design of this project pertains to the safety of roadway users." This assumes, however, that the Director is solely charged with safety decisions and that the TCB has no authority on such issues. This is false. Ordinance section 5-8-160 specifically charges the TPB to address safety concerns: "The purpose of this article is ... to facilitate the **safe** and expeditious movement of vehicular traffic" (**bold face added**). In furtherance of that end, the TPB is charged with enforcing safety standards under Ordinance section 5-8-161, which deals with the width of streets and sidewalks.

Moreover, having first asked the TCB to decide the matter, the Director is estopped from ignoring its device.

The purpose of these provisions is abundantly clear. They are designed to ensure that an out-of-control Director does not abuse his authority and ignore the advice of the TPB which is asked to study the matter and seek the council of residents. The provisions are designed to promote ordered and democratic government, and it would be a scandal were they ignored.

The Director lacks the authority to proceed under Ordinance 10-2-8

Ordinance 10-2-8 provides a different method for effecting a change to a "control device."

Sec. 10-2-8 Change of controls established by director of transportation and environmental services. Any person desiring to remove or change any control device established by the director of transportation and environmental services shall first apply to the traffic and parking board. After a hearing is had before the board, the board shall forward its recommendation to the city council and such person may apply to the city council for a further hearing. The city council shall

have the power to retain, remove or change any control; provided, that the council shall first examine the recommendation from the traffic and parking board, receive a report on the matter from the director of transportation and environmental services and hold a hearing in relation thereto. (Code 1963, Sec. 22-35)

This section cannot be read to render Ordinance section 5-8-3 a dead letter. Section 5-8-3 is the more general section, and section 10-2-8 the more narrow one. Moreover, section 10-2-8 refers only to the Director's power to effect changes of "controls." The term "controls" is defined in the previous section:

Sec. 10-2-7 Traffic controls requiring action by city council. *The following shall be established by the director of transportation and environmental services only when authorized by action of the city council:*

- (1) one-way streets;*
- (2) parking meter zones;*
- (3) traffic lights;*
- (4) **prohibition of parking on more than one-half of any city block, including both street sides;***
- (5) transit routes, and*
- (6) truck routes.*

(Code 1963, Sec. 22-34; Ord. No. 4200, 5/12/01, Sec. 1) (bold face added)

The Director proposes unilaterally to remove parking on more than one-half of a city block, and this is plainly made illegal by section 10-2-7(4). Once again, the provision is designed to curb the power of an overreaching Director.

Further, the Director is estopped from relying on section 10-2-8, having properly begun the process by relying on section 5-8-3.

The Responsibility of Council to Defend the Integrity of City Government

City Council has the responsibility to inquire into misbehavior of subordinate city employees, including the Director. Section 4.04 of the city charter specifically contemplates the possibility of such an inquiry.

Except for purposes of inquiry, the council and its members [including the Mayor] shall deal with the administrative services solely through the city manager, and neither the council nor any member thereof shall give orders either publicly or privately to any subordinate to the city manager. (bold face added)

The same inquiry power is granted Council under section 3.04(d) of the Charter:

The Council shall have the power to Inquire into the conduct of any office, department or agency of the city and make investigation as to municipal affairs.

In addition, Council has the power to investigate the Director under section 3.17 of the Charter:

The council shall have power to investigate any or all of the departments, boards, commissions, offices and agencies of the city government and any officer or employee of the city.

At the November 25, 2013 TPB hearing, residents of King Street pointed out the factual errors which were repeated in the Director's Dec. 20, 2013 letter. The Director has ignored this evidence, and his failure to respond to it can be seen as a recklessness as to the truth which ascends to the level of fraud. This strongly argues for an inquiry, to protect residents and the integrity of the city.

1-25-14

submitted by Edward
Tweedy

Dear Mayor Euille:

Hello my name is Edward F. Tweedy. The photo I present to you is none other than former Trooper Jacqueline Vernon. She was the first woman Virginia State Trooper killed in the line of duty on August 16, 1988. She was struck and killed by a Metro Bus as she was standing on the drivers' side of a violator's vehicle on I-395 North at the Glebe Road Interchange. She was 32 years of age. Honorable Mr. Mayor, I'm asking of you and the other City Council Members to discuss and hopefully all agree to have a resolution written and introduced at the upcoming General Assembly to have an overhead bridge and sign named in her honor. She served her country and she died doing the job she so dearly loved. Please show and honor the first woman in Virginia State Police history killed in the Line of Duty.

Respectfully submitted

E. F. Tweedy

Edward F. Tweedy

2
1-25-14
submitted by
Shirley Downs

To: Alexandria City Council
From: Shirley Downs
1007 North Vail Street
Alexandria, VA 22304
Phone: 703-845-7958
Email: shirleydowns@verizon.net
Date: January 25, 2014

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I want to thank you for my appointment to the Arts Commission. As you know I have frequently come before the City Council on various matters of community and public interest. Today I would like to share with you what a positive experience I have had on the Arts Commission. Members of the Arts Commission, and the Public Arts Committee, which is one of our subcommittees, are knowledgeable, experienced, and enthusiastic supporters of the Arts in all their diverse forms. I am a member of the Advocacy Committee and we are working to provide the public with information on our work both relating to the award of Grants to arts organizations and individual artists and to encourage local individuals and community groups to provide us with information about their reactions, interests, suggestions and priorities with regard to Public Art by responding to the Public Arts Survey.

We hope through this process to secure input from all kinds of residents across the whole City. As you know both the Waterfront Commission and the Beauregard Design Advisory Committee are working in Old Town and the West End on the steps to be taken to implement these major area plans. As a resident, I hope Public Art elements will be an important part of both of these plans, and other plans and developments to come. Art enhances our lives and makes the places we live, work and visit more alive, vibrant and welcoming.

I want to endorse the idea, put forward by our Advocacy Committee Chair, Matthew Stensrud, to encourage you to take the opportunity to learn more about the current Public Art Master Plan and a survey that is currently available to the public. It can be found at: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/PublicArt>. Advocacy Committee members plan on visiting local neighborhood associations over the next month to promote this survey, and would greatly benefit from any personal advocacy you could do to ensure the survey's success.

We are excited to share with you the revamped Arts Grants process for FY2015. Alexandrians now have the option of applying for individual grants, and we hope local artists will be encouraged to create new and unique projects focused on benefiting the public. The online application has been streamlined and all new applicants are required to take a workshop or webinar. We are also continuing the successful use of grant panels, as this gives the Commission the opportunity to provide ideas for audience growth, management strength, and financial stability. The Commission appreciates your continued support for these important grants.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views. We wish you a great new year and look forward to reporting to you again in the future. We also hope that you will have time to attend and enjoy some of the arts programs funded by Alexandria.

1-25-14

*submitted by Vernon
Grandgeorge*

Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members:

Saturday's public speaking session was lengthy and I am certain made for a very long day for you. I'd like to thank you again for the opportunity to speak and for your interest in my concerns regarding parking impact from the King Street Metro Improvement Project. There are many facets to the project and I understand that it is far into the approved planning process. Although I object to much of the plan, I also realize that my opportunity to speak to its entirety in a timely effective manner has passed. This may be due to lack of proper notice from the building owner or to my own negligence in staying informed of projects in the city on my own. That said, I think it is helpful to specify and clarify my request at this point. **I ask that the 22 metered parking spaces on the west side of Diagonal Road remain metered parking spaces.** The plan removes 75% of parking spaces that exist today. Many of these are in the metro lot itself and the plan requires these be removed to effect its goal of safety. However the 22 spaces on the west side of Diagonal are not integral to the plan's goals and their removal will be detrimental to business. There is still time to make this adjustment.

In my meetings with Rich Baier, he asked that I allow the project to be built as planned and then the use of the spaces for taxis & zip cars would be reviewed to see if returning metered spaces was warranted. Allow me to digress for a moment. At one point in the past few years, an area across from Theismann's became (unexpected to me) reserved for Trolley parking. The reserved signs went up. No other parking was permitted there. Yet, never... never, did a trolley park there. At the request of customer complaints regarding their inability to park there when it went unused, I addressed the situation with the city. I did this over and over, through different officials, and it took two and a half years to have that unused space returned to metered parking. As a result of this experience, I am hesitant to trust that the parking would be reviewed in a timely manner after it is lost. Seeking some assurance, I requested in writing on December 18, 2013, a written plan for this "review". Who would conduct it; at what time intervals; and according to what parameters? When I was unable to get a response to this request, I sent my letter of January 18, 2014 to you.

Again, to be specific and clear, **I ask that the 22 metered spots on the west side of Diagonal Road remain metered spots.** There is no demonstrated need for more taxi stands or zip cars there. There is a demonstrated need for all of the 88 spaces that are currently there, 66 of which will be removed by the plan as it stands.

Thank you again.

Vernon Grandgeorge
Theismann's Restaurant & Bar

**A statement by Bert Ely to the Alexandria City Council
regarding the recent bankruptcy filing of the
supplier for Alexandria's bikeshare program**

January 25, 2014

2
1-25-14
submitted by
Bert Ely

Mr. Mayor and members of Council, I am Bert Ely and a 32-year resident of Old Town. In case you are not aware, the Canadian company at the heart of Alexandria's bikeshare program, Public Bike Share Company, or Bixi, filed for bankruptcy on Monday.

Bixi supplies the bikes, docking stations, and the all-important computer software used by Alta Bicycle Share, Inc., the operator of Capital Bikeshare, which is the area organization under which Alexandria's bikeshare program operates. Attached is a news story about Bixi's bankruptcy filing and a statement by Alta posted on the Capital Bikeshare website.

All concerned have put on a brave face about Bixi's bankruptcy but the fact is that Bixi may not survive, which raises the question: What happens to Alexandria's bikeshare program if Bixi is liquidated. It is important to understand that Bixi is not a typical business. Rather it is a non-profit organization controlled and financed by the City of Montreal, Canada. After Bixi's debt had ballooned to \$50 million, the City of Montreal said enough is enough, and pulled the plug on Bixi, leading to its bankruptcy filing.

Most telling about Bixi's highly uncertain future is a statement by Montreal's mayor, Denis Coderre, that Bixi's "grim financial picture" forced his hand as Bixi was unable to meet its financial obligations. Of particular concern to Alexandria should be that mayor's declaration that he wants Bixi "out of the international bike-sharing business."

If Bixi ceases operations, or at least its international activities, which appears quite likely, then Alta will have to find another company to take Bixi's place in the complex structure of the bikeshare business. Bugs in the software Bixi developed, which is essential to the operation of the bikeshare system, represent another complication Alta will have to address.

My prediction is that Capital Bikeshare, and therefore Alexandria's bikeshare program, will experience disruptions, and perhaps even a suspension of operations, should Alta not be able to find an alternate supplier should Bixi be shut down, which is quite likely. If Alta finds a replacement for Bixi, and that is a huge if, my prediction is that Alta's costs will soar, increasing the amount Capital Bikeshare will have to recover from its customers or the amount of taxpayer subsidy it will need.

As Council enters its next budgeting cycle, it should consider setting aside some contingency funds keep Alexandria's bikeshare program running, for no doubt Capital Bikeshare will be seeking a taxpayer bailout if it cannot pass all of its higher costs on to Bikeshare bike renters. Until the Bixi mess is clarified, I strongly recommend that Alexandria not commit to installing any more bikeshare stations.

Thank you for your time today. I welcome your questions, although I doubt that I have many answers.

Jan 21, 2014

Capital Bikeshare supplier files for bankruptcy protection

Andrew Harrer / Bloomberg

The Canadian company that supplied bikes and built the foundation of Capital Bikeshare filed for bankruptcy protection Monday, according to several news reports.

Bixi is \$50 million in debt and the city of Montreal has refused to offer up a bailout to the city-controlled non-profit. Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre told the Montreal Gazette Bixi was unable to meet its obligations and its "grim financial portrait" forced his hand. Coderre also said he wants Bixi "out of the international bike-sharing business."

How this will play out for Capital Bikeshare, which continues to grow in the region, is uncertain. We reached out to Reggie Sanders of the District Department of Transportation for more information Tuesday morning. We will update this story as soon as we hear something.

Capital Bikeshare's website lists Bixi as its bikeshare equipment manufacturer. So do other major cities, including New York City, Chicago and Minneapolis.

The Washington Post reported in early December the long-promised expansion of the bike-sharing program — to 54 more stations — was delayed because delivery of equipment had slowed.

Capital Bikeshare is a popular attraction in the D.C. area.

As we reported in September, just shy of its third birthday in August, Capital Bikeshare had found its 5 millionth rider. There are more than 200 Capital Bikeshare stations in the D.C. region.

Alta Bicycle Share Official Statement Regarding PBSC Bankruptcy Protection Filing

Published January 21, 2014

Please see the official statement below from Capital Bikeshare's operator, Alta Bicycle Share, regarding Public Bike System Company's (PBSC) filing for bankruptcy protection. All jurisdictions participating in Capital Bikeshare are in constant contact with Alta Bicycle Share and we have been reassured that current operations will not be impacted by the PBSC filing. Members can expect to receive the same high level of service Alta has provided Capital Bikeshare members since 2010.

Alta Bicycle Share, Inc. (ABS), the leading operator of bike share systems in the country, has learned that one of its main equipment and technology suppliers, Public Bike System Company (PBSC), has filed for bankruptcy protection. Our systems across the country—in Washington DC, Boston, New York City, Chicago, the Bay Area, Columbus, OH, and Chattanooga, TN—are up and running and ABS will ensure that they continue to operate without interruption. Having served more than 15 million trips to date, we're focused on continuing to provide a convenient, fast, fun, and affordable means of transit.

Given our plans to expand current systems and launch new systems this year, we're in constant communication with both PBSC as well as its suppliers to ensure we can do so successfully. Beyond that, we're unable to discuss the specifics of the filing.

2
1-25-14

Dear Mayor and City Council Members: I read the city's bike lane plan. The bike lane plan suggests that narrowing the driving lanes on King Street between Janneys Lane and Russell Road to the exact width of two buses passing mirror touching mirror is perfectly safe because "that will never happen." Actually, it does happen...a lot. I drove that section of King last night (January 10, 2014) at 6:30 pm, in the dark and rain. My little Honda was squeezed by a bus. My adult kid is worried that her wide 1999 SUV won't be able to pass a bus if the lanes are narrowed and we can't afford a new car with her in college right now. Narrow lanes in the dark and rain are going to be a disaster. The first accident will result in a lawsuit against the city and then we'll all have to pay for it. The Uniform Virginia Traffic Code has requirements about the width of traffic lanes and the city has pushed this to the absolute minimum in order to accomodate an average 12 cyclists a day. A better idea would be to simply enforce sidewalk codes - clean them up, move signs, require residents to trim their shrubbery, keep trash cans in driveways, etc. and make the sidewalks safer. It would also be less costly. You all know me and I have volunteered in one way or another on ALL of your campaigns. You know my energy and commitment to Democratic values. I won't help you get elected again if you put this stupid, dangerous, ill thought plan in place. I am rallying my neighbors, Democrats and Republicans alike, against bike lanes on King Street. The people who live in the area don't want it, and we vote.

Gail Gordon Donegan