

Jackie Henderson

15
9-12-15

From: mstensrud@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2015 3:21 PM
To: City Council; City Council Aides; Jackie Henderson; Call Click Connect; Gloria Sitton
Subject: Call.Click.Connect. #80987: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of City Co

Dear *Call.Click.Connect.* User

A request was just created using *Call.Click.Connect.* The request ID is 80987.

Request Details:

- Name: Matthew Stensrud
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 5137038012
- Email: mstensrud@gmail.com
- Service Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council
- Request Description: Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of City Council,

Please find attached my letter encouraging you to affirm the decision of the BAR for Old and Historic Alexandria in regards to 226 The Strand (BAR CASE #2015-0152).

Thank you for your time,

Matthew Stensrud
Chair, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

- Attachment: [226StrandLetter.pdf](#)
- Expected Response Date: Friday, September 18

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at the *Call.Click.Connect.* staff interface.

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.HELP.

This is an automated email notification of a *Call.Click.Connect.* request. Please do not reply to this email.

September 11th, 2015

FROM: Matthew Stensrud
Chair, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

TO: Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of City Council,

At Saturday's public hearing, you will be hearing an appeal by citizens of a decision of the Board of Architectural Review, Old and Historic Alexandria District (BAR CASE # 2015-0152) approving a permit to demolish the site located at 226 Strand. I encourage you to affirm the Board's decision.

Earlier this year, you unanimously approved the DSUP project to move forward with the Robinson Terminal South project. Robinson Terminal South is a welcome addition to the Waterfront and includes various efforts to enhance arts in Alexandria. These efforts include activating public spaces, integrating artist designed manhole covers, the inclusion of public art on-site or an in-lieu contribution, and the creation of an "amenity" meeting room space for local community and non-profit organizations. The Executive Committee of the Commission for the Arts sent you a letter in support of these plans back in April and I stand by that support today.

Unfortunately, this appeal is slowing the already long process of revamping Alexandria's Waterfront. As outlined in the staff report, the building located at 226 Strand does not have the attributes to accurately or successfully convey the heritage of the Waterfront. While I support the inclusion of historical elements, I agree wholeheartedly with the Waterfront Art and History Implementation Report's view that the building would not enhance the Waterfront, but instead is counter its goals.

I look forward to the public discussion tomorrow and sincerely hope you move forward with this project.

Sincerely,

Matthew Stensrud
Chair, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

Jackie Henderson

From: hjrosenbaum@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 2:50 PM
To: City Council; City Council Aides; Jackie Henderson; Call Click Connect; Gloria Sitton
Subject: Call.Click.Connect. #80695: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council On Saturday you will hear an appeal to t

Dear *Call.Click.Connect.* User

A request was just created using *Call.Click.Connect.* The request ID is 80695.

Request Details:

- Name: Jon Rosenbaum
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-836-7877
- Email: hjrosenbaum@comcast.net
- Service Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council
- Request Description: On Saturday you will hear an appeal to the BAR's decision to allow the demolition of 226 The Strand, a crumbling building with little historical significance.

My wife and I are bequeathing over \$1 million to support the Waterfront Plan. As they say "talk is cheap" so we are trying to contribute to the renaissance of the waterfront with money rather than speeches.

The appellants consist of the same people who have fought the Waterfront Plan every step of the way. Nothing is too small in their efforts to delay. The city decided in the Plan that this building should be demolished. You should stick to your decision.

- Expected Response Date: Tuesday, September 15

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the *Call.Click.Connect.* staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.HELP.

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Jackie Henderson

From: Lynn Hampton <lynn.hampton@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 1:15 PM
To: Jackie Henderson
Subject: For the City Council Meeting of September 12, 2015

To Mayor Euille and the Members of the Alexandria City Council

I apologize that I cannot attend the September 12 meeting of the Alexandria City Council to speak to the agenda item concerning the razing of the concrete block building on the Strand.

Sadly, the Waterfront Plan development has created two camps of Alexandrian that have significantly different views. On one hand are people that support the city's Waterfront Small Area Plan which was approved by citizens appointed to the Planning Committee, the Board of Architectural Review and our elected officials twice. On the other is a group of Old Town citizens opposed to the plan and who have continually fought and lost. Related groups have taken their case all the way to the Virginia Supreme Court and lost. It is all of the citizens of Alexandria that are suffering from the delay and forced to pay for the defense through our tax revenue. We do not need a war of Old Town residents against the rest of the city. Because of this groups extreme and loud opposition to the Waterfront plan many people in the city get the impression that Old Town residents want Old Town to be a gated community.

There are many residents of Old Town and Alexandria who are in favor of the Waterfront Plan seeing it as a great enhancement to the waterfront, again eliminating unsightly warehouses and the related rat control boxes. Many Alexandrians want to protect our existing historical buildings. And like in many historical cities, many Alexandrians are in favor of complimentary development, not fake colonial. These voices need to be heard. The city is cleared and in the position to implement the Waterfront plan. But the opponents to the plan continue to be obstructionist. The cost to the City and to the development continues. As an example on September 12 there is a case to prevent the destruction of an unsightly, small, empty, concrete brick building on the Strand, a building with no historical value from being razed. When Alexandrian go to see the building in question, they have the first-hand experience of how silly the opposition can be. I hope the City Council will deal with this case swiftly and approve the removal of the building.

Lynn Hampton
215 Park Rd
Alexandria, VA 22301
703-683-3285

Jackie Henderson

From: Lauren Stack <laurenkentstack@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 9:13 PM
To: Jackie Henderson
Subject: Letter to Council for Saturday's Meeting
Attachments: Stack Letter to Council 9-8-15.pdf

Hi Ms. Henderson,

Could you please give this letter to the Mayor, Vice Mayor and Council members? Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Thanks so much,

Lauren Stack
laurenkentstack@gmail.com

Lauren Stack
210 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
laurenkentstack@gmail.com

September 8, 2015

Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, Councilmembers Chapman, Lovain, Pepper, Smedburg and Wilson,

For many of us here in Old Town, following the implementation of the Waterfront Plan has become part of our everyday life. As you well know, over the past several years, there have been over a hundred meetings including city council hearings, BAR work sessions, and ad-hoc committee meetings, and our citizens have been actively involved throughout the planning process.

The Waterfront Plan was approved twice, first by a majority and then by a super majority of our City Council in March 2013. As a result of that approval developers have moved through the process of having their plans approved by BAR and the Council as required. However, we have now reached a point where the City's reputation as a reliable partner is in jeopardy.

Here's the problem: The Waterfront Plan calls for a new civic building for Point Lumley Park on the site now occupied by the Alexandria Marine building at 226 The Strand. The Robinson Terminal South developer agreed to donate the land for the civic building and the City of Alexandria made demolition of 226 The Strand a requirement in the Robinson Terminal South DSUP. The developer didn't ask to demolish the building: you, the City Council, mandated that it do so.

There has been a recent appeal of the demolition at 226 The Strand. The appellants have claimed that the building is historic however none of the archeologists, historians, or city staff who have examined the building believes that it should be preserved. The appellants have also claimed that the city does not have the ability to safely store the 'historic' bricks that the BAR required to be preserved as a requirement of the demolition approval. That doesn't seem to be a credible argument for stopping the project.

Given that demolition of this building is part of the Waterfront Plan as approved by City Council and BAR, I don't believe that this appeal is really about the City's ability to store bricks. The appeal seems to be a part of a strategy to postpone the project and drain the developer of resources in the hope that he will eventually pull out of the project. The same tactic was used to delay the start of the new hotel now under construction at the foot of Duke Street. I think that it is important to recognize this appeal for what it is: an attempt to delay and, therefore, stop Robinson Terminal South from moving forward. Remember, the project, like the Waterfront Plan and the Hotel, has been approved by our elected officials (you, our City Council) and it is time to move forward. If developers cannot rely on the approvals of our elected officials, then why would any reputable developer choose to spend time and money developing plans with the City at all?

I am not able to speak at the hearing on Saturday, so I am writing to ask you to vote against this appeal so Robinson Terminal South can move forward and we can all enjoy the Alexandria Waterfront at its full potential!

Sincerely,

Lauren K. Stack

#15
Joan Dreyer

Comments to the City Council regarding item 14-4424, [BAR CASE # 2015-0152] the fate of 226 The Strand located in Old Town Alexandria as submitted by an Alexandria taxpayer, Joan Paszek-Dreyer :

After the BAR and the Board approved the demolition of 226 The Strand, an Appeal was filed on June 30th 2015 by Preservation Activists claiming that The 226 The Strand "structure is the last existing example of the manufacturing and marine services that existed on the waterfront when the city was an Active seaport". The signers of the Appeal believe that 226 The Strand has 'historic value' but don't present any evidence supporting that belief. In addition, it is not clear what would be the intended future of the building should the demolition be revoked.

What is this building? Although a structure still exists on the site originally in use when the city was an active seaport, it is no longer a 19th century building. In the detailed report provided by qualified experts, Thunderbird Archeology and the BAR staff's findings it is recognized that 226 The Strand dates to the 1890s but it has been continuously patched and modified throughout the 20th century. The condition of some bricks indicates they may have been salvaged from a building predating the 1897 fire. However almost every element of the building has been subject to reconstruction, roof, walls, doors, windows, and even the building height. Furthermore, there is evidence of long-term structural instability still present today given the severe buckling and cracking in the brick walls. Given the drastic architectural changes over the last century, minimal evidence of the 19th century remains in the building.

What could be done with the building and land?

- Let it remain as is until it collapses
- Rebuild 226 The Strand. The building as a place of historical interest would require major modifications given the minimal evidence of the original 19th century structure. In addition the current location doesn't quite depict historical reality given the 1980s infill of the docks that isolate the site from the water so vital to the businesses that occupied that space. Essentially we would have a standalone building surrounded by an area that has evolved into a contemporary urban environment, albeit somewhat dilapidated. And who would pay for this? Beaufort, NC created highly educational exhibits depicting their early waterfront years without the need of an actual decaying building.
- Raze and build an environment indicative of a premier waterfront community which will be put to good use and enjoyed by many. Also document and preserve those truly historical architectural elements by reuse and display in a context comprehensible to many.

What are we retaining:

1. A deteriorating building with minimal elements from the original structure, essentially old brick under 20th century materials. The Architecture is not indicative of any particular period, just an assemblage of reconstruction over time.
2. An example of how a building has been dissected to meet the needs of its changing occupants, not very educational even if made habitable.
3. Uninhabitable building and an eyesore to its surroundings. Potential for condemnation?

What are we losing:

1. Opportunity to beautify Alexandria
2. Transform neglected areas into a waterfront showcase
3. Source of revenue

What are we gaining:

1. Eliminating a fire hazard, an unused building that looks ready to fall down
2. Creation of functional spaces and attractive structures in Alexandria for many to enjoy
3. Salvaging and documenting historic artifacts and reusing in a constructive manner

As a long-term resident of the City of Alexandria, I support the decision of the BAR and the Board to allow the demolition of 226 The Strand, with the stipulation that historical artifacts are documented, and preserved through reuse. Beautification of the Alexandria waterfront is long overdue. Not to mention the opportunity for the configuration of spaces that accommodate the needs of Senior Citizens.

**STATEMENT OF CHARLES TROZZO
BEFORE
THE ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL
RELATING TO
ITEM 15 OF THE DOCKET FOR THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2015**

I live at 209 Duke Street in Alexandria; for more than 12 years I Chaired the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission

Position

I strongly urge the Council to overturn the June 17, 2015 decision of the Board of Architectural Review for the Old and Historic Alexandria District to grant a permit to the applicant, EYA, to demolish the structure at 226 The Strand. The staff conditioned that permit by requiring the applicant to document the present condition of the structure by professional photography and drawings and by identifying and saving, for storage, “all 19th –century building materials that are deemed salvageable.”

Procedural Reasons For My Position

Staff directed the BAR members that they could only consider whether the property proposed for demolition satisfied any of the criteria under section 10-105(B) without inquiring into what application would be made of the site after demolition. This contrasts with the regular procedure of the BAR wherein staff distributes to the Board members proposals for demolition in-whole or in-part along with the applicants’ plans for subsequent construction on the property. The Board’s vote on the demolition of 226 The Strand split 3-2 for demolition, with the two dissenting votes expressing concern about “what comes after the demolition?” [Case in point is the OHAD BAR consideration of the demolition of the motel in the 800 block of North Washington Street in the same docket that it considered its replacement with a much larger motel of modern design.]

Staff also included in the 226 Strand permit conditions for recording the extant property by photography and drawings and the direction to identify and save 19th century building materials. I think the staff is in error imposing the latter direction. Why should 20th century material be excluded? After all, some of that could be as much as 100 years old and historically significant. Also, since staff does not know what might be the future application of those materials, how can it judge what materials should be salvaged? The two examples used in the staff report for this hearing are not a propos to the present situation.

I believe that either one and both of the procedural matters are sufficient to overturn the BAR's decision to grant a demolition permit, with appropriate direction for remanding.

Procedural Reasons For My Position

Staff recommended that the Board find that the structure at 226 The Strand did not satisfy any of the six criteria that would warrant denial of the demolition permit. I continue to believe very strongly that the building/site meets criterion (5) and possibly (6).

All of the staff's discussion justifying demolition is in terms of "the structure" or "the building." Admittedly, the building at 226 The Strand does not exhibit "architecture of merit." However, all of that is merely skin deep, the architecture of a building is not the sole criterion of its historic interest and value. Other, probably equally important, features can qualify a site of historic merit warranting salvage in some way. (Case in point: President Gerald Ford's residence when he lived in Alexandria is an historic resource)

226 The Strand has the ghosts of a wide range of industries that were carried out on the Alexandria Waterfront in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The property history that the applicant for demolition submitted to the OHAD BAR admirably documents a great deal of that industrial activity and history, along with the related industrialists. For example, shortly after the Civil War, it was the site of a wagon spoke and wheel manufacturer, as well as a processor of sumac, which in those days had medicinal and gastronomic applications. Later the site had a bone mill, probably making bone meal to be a component in the fertilizer made in a plant nearby. That was later replaced by a process producing acid, which also would probably be a fertilizer component. In the 1920's the property was the site of an operation selling boats and supplies as engines for boats, automobile, and airplanes. The site was later acquired by the Southern Iron Works for general storage.

This is the important part of the historical character of the waterfront that would be swept into the dustbin with the demolition of this site. We should be finding ways to preserve and proudly exhibit this industrial heart of the waterfront.

Summing Up Why Demolition Should Be Denied

While the procedural faults should be sufficient for denying demolition of 226 The Strand, the overarching reason for my opposition to the demolition, or even dismantling, of the building at this time is the loss of focus on the historic values represented by 226 The Strand. Alexandria claims to be proud of its heritage and the effort that it makes to maintain the authentic signs of that heritage. I don't

think any other structure on the waterfront represents the range and diversity of the industries that operated there historically. However, there is currently greater emphasis on allusions to that history – wavy glass representing the the river water, posts attached to the sides of proposed structures to reference masts of the boats that visited the port, benches with seats looking like the ribs of wooden boats, and colored bricks representing a railroad rails. These are all phony, having no authenticity. Where’s the beef? Demolition of 226 The Strand is premature now. There needs to be an effort to have a charrette to lead the way to determining (1)what kind of structure would be appropriate to (2) house characteristic artifacts and exhibits highlighting the range of historic waterfront industries, (3) and incorporating properly chosen salvaged materials resulting from a careful dismantling of the current structure. (This assumes that dismantling will be necessary in any event to make it “flood proof.”)