

Statement to Council on a TIF for Landmark

Mr. Mayor, Members of Council, my name is Jack Sullivan.

As some of you may remember I was a member of the Landmark Redevelopment Planning Group. We approved doubling the FAR on the property and produced a plan strongly commercial and with a hotel. It was approved by the Planning Commission and the Council.

After the Hughes bought the property it scrapped what Alexandria had done and came in with a new plan, one heavily loaded toward residential use, with some retail. Little commercial, no hotel.

It was not an objectionable plan and Council went along. Now, it appears that Hughes is asking for the City to kick in more than \$20 million for the redevelopment, through tax remittance or other method. That was never in the original plan.

This contribution would be on top of the \$28 million in tax revenues you gave up to get the NSF here and the \$23 million for the TSA. My concern not what has been done but the risks to the City in getting financially involved in this case — risks considerably beyond attracting government agencies.

The Hughes folks are only, as you know, one-third of the property. Decision there problematically must be made by all three owners, one of them — Sears — itself in some corporate disarray.

Retail stores — the basis of Landmark — are dwindling fast as more and more people shop on line.

With the recent improvements made to Springfield Mall and Tyson's corners, Landmark would be late to whatever retail party remains.

Hughes says it is trying to attract upscale restaurants. But its resident are renters. Is this an attractive customer base for a Maxim's or a Lutece?

Moreover, because of its largely residential nature the City — at a cost — will have to provide services beyond those required by NSF and TSA — including safety and education. Even renters have children.

Moreover, Hughes is a private entity, subject to the pressures of the market — which we know changes rapidly. Note that after months of planning, Home Properties pulled the plug on redeveloping Seminary Apartments and there is word that Hekemian may abandon the Foster-Fairbanks site.

The risk is great at Landmark and you members of Council for must dig deep on this one yourselves. If I were you I would seek out disinterested bankers and others who really understand the situation. Not just total reliance on staff.

Mrs. Pepper will remember that the developer of Cameron Station wanted some \$20 million for his infrastructure. Vola Lawson, Mayor Patsy Ticer and Council said NO. What was built was in no way diminished. Make that an object lesson.

Are there questions?

**A statement by Bert Ely to City Council on behalf of
Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront regarding who should
pay to protect residents and property owners from
damages arising from waterfront property development**

November 14, 2015

Mr. Mayor and members of Council I am Bert Ely, a co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront (FAW). I am speaking today on behalf of FAW with regard to waterfront development issues and most importantly who should pay for protecting waterfront area residents from damages arising from forthcoming developments.

Waterfront development projects, and specifically the development of the Robinson Terminal South (RTS), Robinson Terminal North (RTN), and Carr projects, threaten to impose substantial costs on nearby residents and other property owners, as you are hearing today from others.

Those costs include damage to health and property from moving contaminated soil away from the properties being developed, damages to nearby buildings and contents arising from pile-driving, damages to streets and underground utilities from construction vehicles pounding away over Old Town streets, air pollution, and other negative effects of these construction projects on residents, workers, and visitors. Whatever these costs may be, they should be borne entirely by the owners of the properties being developed, for these owners are enjoying enormous profits resulting solely from the waterfront plan and zoning benefits bestowed by this City Council.

A review of the City's real estate tax assessment records provides a good indication of the profits the City, and more specifically this City Council, has bequeathed to the owners of these properties.

As you know, under Virginia law, property tax assessments are supposed to approximate the market value of the assessed properties. Attached to my statement is the history of the assessed values of the RTS, RTN, and Carr properties. As you will readily see, the aggregate assessed value of these properties grew almost \$41 million from 2003 to 2015 – a more than tripling in just 12 years!

These profits are what the English philosopher John Stuart Mill called “the unearned increment” – an increase in the value of land or any property without expenditure of any kind on the part of the owner, except in this case political contributions and the legal fees incurred lobbying Council for the more favorable zoning!

Please, pay no attention to the tears and whining of the developers of these properties, for whatever costs they may incur in protecting citizens and nearby property owners from the damage caused by their development activities will consume only a small portion of the increased value you, Alexandria's City Council, has gifted to these property owners.

Although DSUPs have been granted for these properties, it is not too late for City Council to impose restrictions on the development of these properties to protect the public safety and private property! The cost of those protections will be a small fraction of the enormous profits that these property owners are on track to earn, especially Graham Holdings, formerly The Washington Post Company.

Thank you for your time today – I welcome your questions.

Property assessment history (land only)

2 Duke Street (Robinson Terminal South)

1/2003	\$10,131,400
1/2007	\$14,788,300
1/2012	\$16,267,130
1/2013	\$30,000,000
1/2015	\$33,125,000

Value appreciation, 2003 to 2015 – \$22,993,600 or 227%.

500 and 501 North Union (Robinson Terminal North)

1/2003	\$6,223,700
1/2007	\$12,780,400
1/2013	\$14,058,440
1/2015	\$19,845,500

Value appreciation, 2003 to 2015 – \$13,621,800 or 219%.

220 South Union (Carr site)

1/2003	\$2,215,200
1/2007	\$4,048,560
1/2012	\$3,897,717
1/2013	\$6,375,000
1/2015	\$6,375,000

Value appreciation, 2003 to 2015 – \$4,159,800, or 188%.

Value appreciation – all three properties – \$40,775,200, or 220%.

November 12, 2015

Mayor Euille
Vice Mayor Silberberg
Councilman Chapman
Councilman Lovain
Councilwoman "Del" Pepper
Councilman Smedberg
Councilman Wilson

Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg and Members of the City Council:

The Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations, Inc. (AFCA) is writing to express its deep disappointment with the conduct of Deputy City Attorney Christopher Spera during the City Council Public Hearing on September 12, 2015. In responding to a question posed by the Mayor, Mr. Spera uttered a series of inappropriate and disparaging comments toward citizens exercising their right to testify at a public hearing. With the exception of Councilman Smedberg, Mr. Spera's conduct went unchallenged. Moreover, Mr. Spera merely attributed his behavior to frustration with the length of the meeting. Apparently the "Guidelines for Honest Civic Discourse for Those Participating in Meetings in the Council Chamber," adopted by the City Council in 2004, are not applied to City Staff.

The City Attorney is appointed by and accountable to the City Council. AFCA respectfully requests Mr. Spera be held accountable for his callous behavior, including at least an apology demonstrating an understanding of why his comments were inappropriate and contrary to the values of civic discourse. Additionally, we ask that, as a corrective action, that the City Council as a whole reaffirm the "Guidelines for Honest Civic Discourse for Those Participating in Meetings in the Council Chamber" with the proviso that they apply equally to Citizens, Councilmembers and City Staff.

The Citizens who work on behalf of their neighborhoods' interest cherish a productive, open and cordial relationship with the City government. The challenges we must meet over the coming years can only be effectively met together. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Ali Ahmad
Co-Chair



Roy R. Byrd
Co-Chair

Copy to:

City Manager
City Attorney

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11-14-15

DC Pay to Play Politics has no place in the administration of good government in Alexandria, Virginia

The primary role of government is to serve and protect the citizens who elect it uphold those responsibilities, not to protect the profits of private developers

Every member of this council voted to allow the demolition of the concrete cap on the Robinsons Terminal North site while admitting that they were unaware of the details and risks to humans and animals.

EVERY MEMBER OF THIS COUNCIL WILL THEN BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATING THE PUBLIC TRUST, COMPROMISING THEIR FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY TO THAT TRUST AND ENDANGERING THE LIVES OF VOTERS, TAXPAYERS, RESIDENTS, TOURISTS AND WORKERS ON, NEAR AND PASSING THROUGH THAT SITE.

The Facts that Council purports either not to know or to have deemed inconsequential:

**** Known Contaminants listed in the RTN Phase II Environmental Site Assessment In the Buildings today, in the underground storage tanks buried there, and in the soil and groundwater beneath the site**

**** Byproducts from the production of and waste produced by Petroleum, Chemical and Coal Gasification process, including**

**Benzene
Antimony
Arsenic
Cadmium
Chromium
Copper
Lead
Mercury
Selenium
Silver
Thallium
Zinc
Volatile Organic Compounds
Naphthalene
1,2,4-Trimethylbenzene (TMB)
1,3,5-Trimethylbenzene (TMB)**

We demand a Full Environmental Impact Assessment not just for the site but for the surrounding neighborhoods, along the road and Potomac River haul routes and for the destination where this toxic material will be dumped.

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11-14-15-

BOLLING BROOK TOWERS
4520 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22302

October 14, 2015

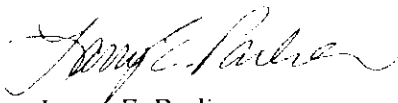
Members of the City Council
City of Alexandria
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Members of the City Council:

I am Larry Parlier, President of Bolling Brook Condominium located on King Street adjacent the site of proposed project, Gateway at King and Beauregard. I have been a co-owner at Bolling Brook Towers for the past 38 years, a retired graphic artist who appreciates excellence in design, a good example of which is the planned Gateway at King and Beauregard. The architectural renderings are really impressive, illustrating views from a variety of vantage points, giving a comprehensive layout of what the developement will look like when completed. I give it 5 stars for outstanding conceptual design! It will be a valued asset to the community, stressing the convenience of location for retail shopping, grocery store, hotel, recreational facility, and affordable rental apartments.

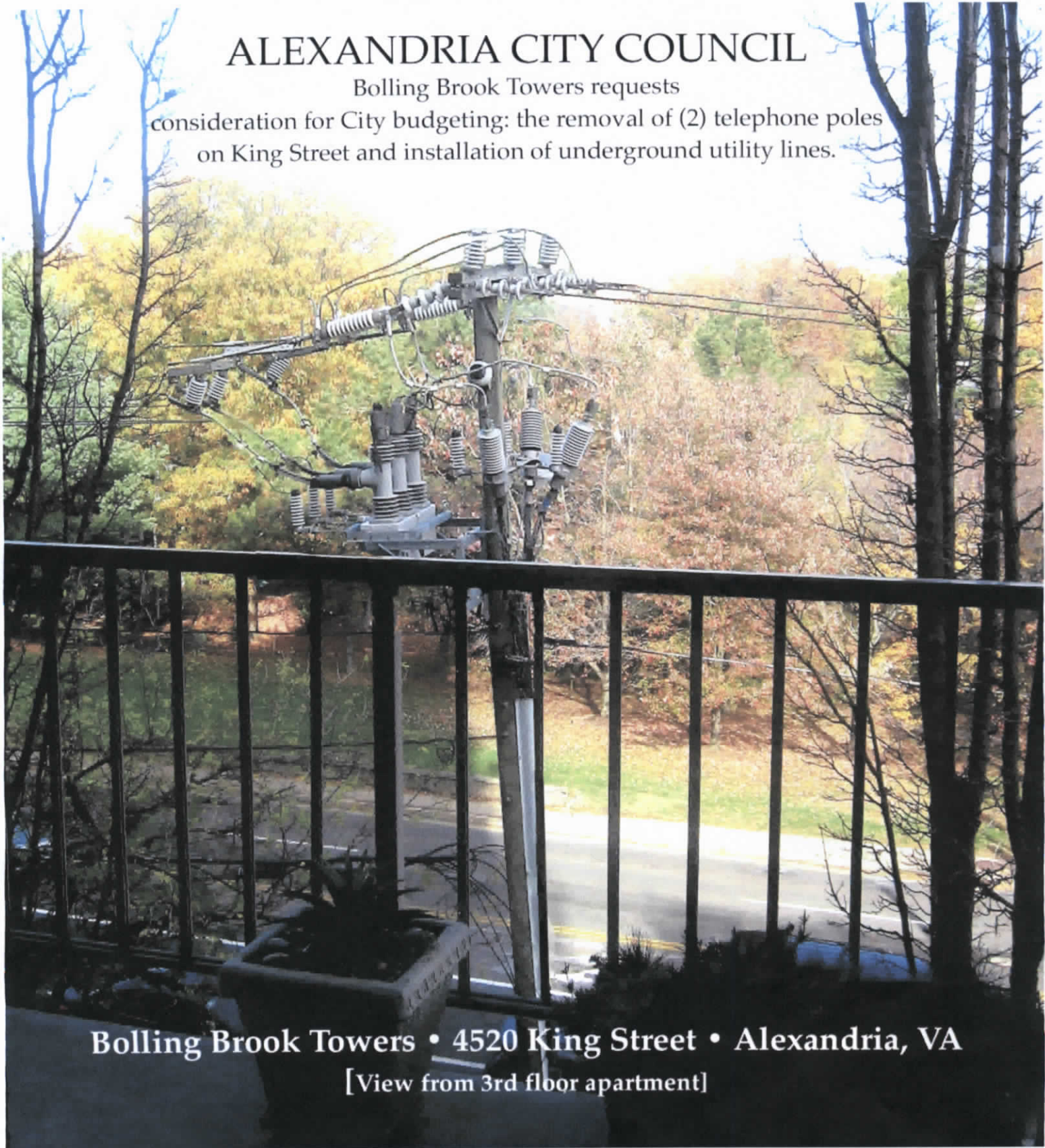
Abramson Properties, the developer, plans on removing the old telephone poles (on Beauregard and King Street) that border the corner plot of land of the construction site; and install underground utility lines. This will give a clean appearance to the contemporary architecture. There are (4) telephone poles on King Street from the intersection of the construction site to the end boundary of the site; but there are (2) more telephone poles further down the block on King Street to the intersection of South 28th Street (directly in front of Bolling Brook Towers). The developer is not obligated to remove the two poles and continue with undergrounding the lines. In an appeal to maintain continuity of the urban renewal project (by avoiding the incongruent appearance of 2/3rds of the block having underground cable and the other 1/3rd does not); I on behalf of the Bolling Brook Towers community request consideration for City budgeting for removal of these (2) telephone poles on King Street and the installation of underground utility lines from the two poles, to proceed to a third pole where above ground connection would resume.

Thank You!


Larry E. Parlier

ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL

Bolling Brook Towers requests
consideration for City budgeting: the removal of (2) telephone poles
on King Street and installation of underground utility lines.



Bolling Brook Towers • 4520 King Street • Alexandria, VA

[View from 3rd floor apartment]

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11-14-15**Ann Shack**

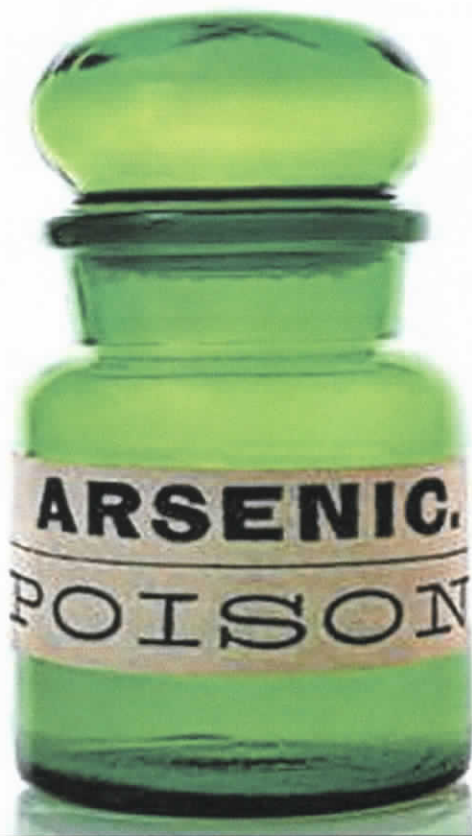
From: "Mark Mueller" <markamueller@hotmail.com>
To: "Linda Couture" <lindalcouture@aol.com>; "Bert Ely" <bert@ely-co.com>; <rplatt26@comcast.net>;
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<bsaperstone@gmail.com>; <george-collins70@hotmail.com>; <scott.collins@collcomp.com>;
"Yvonne Weight" <yvonneweightcallahan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 12:45 PM
Subject: RE: NPR, 60 Minutes, et al
lets insist that they state what the contaminant in the soil is.....

ARSENIC!!!

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arsenic>



11/14/2015





<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arsenic>