



***DOCKET ITEM #7***  
***City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2017-0001***  
***517 Prince Street***

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Application	General Data	
<b>Request:</b> Review whether the purchase of 517 Prince Street by the City of Alexandria is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 11-1505 of the Zoning Ordinance and Section 9.06 of the City Charter.	<b>Planning Commission Hearing:</b>	March 7, 2017
	<b>Zone:</b>	RM/Townhouse zone
	<b>Small Area Plan(s):</b>	Old Town; King Street Retail Strategy
<b>Address:</b> 517 Prince Street		

**Staff Reviewers:**

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Joanna Anderson, Deputy City Attorney,	<a href="mailto:joanna.anderson@alexandriava.gov">joanna.anderson@alexandriava.gov</a>

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the request, finding that the proposal is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 11-1505 of the Zoning Ordinance and Section 9.06 of the City Charter.



**Section 9.06 #2017-0001  
517 Prince Street**



## **I. DISCUSSION**

The City is proposing to acquire the property located at 517 Prince Street. Section 9.06 of the City's Charter and Section 11-1505 of the Zoning Ordinance require that the Planning Commission review any potential acquisition of public property to determine whether the acquisition would comply with the City's Master Plan.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The City is considering purchase of the property located at 517 Prince Street, also known as "Murray's Livery" and the "Murray-Dick-Fawcett House." Constructed in 1775, it is believed to be the least-altered and oldest extant frame building in the city. The dwelling, outbuildings, and interiors are virtually unaltered since their early construction, providing a unique opportunity to better understand the life of an ordinary working family and laborers (or possibly slaves) in early Alexandria. The property also contains one of the largest open spaces and garden areas in Old Town, situated on the corner of Prince and South Saint Asaph streets.

The city would purchase the property using grant funding from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund (VCLF) and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. No additional City funds are required for the acquisition. As part of the property transfer, the current owner will reserve a lease back for him to live in the residence for the remainder of his lifetime. For the duration of the lease, the property will function essentially as a residence. In addition, the city will be able to open the generous open space and garden area to the public and will host up to 12 events per year in the building at the property. The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) will manage the programming and stewardship of the historic house. At the conclusion of the lease, the property will function as a public historic park and the City will continue to host events and programming but with full discretion as to the number of events held per year.

The subject property is located within the Old Town Small Area Plan (SAP) chapter of the Master Plan. The land use map in the SAP shows the property as townhouse use. The property is currently zoned RM/Residential, which is consistent with its current use and proposed use as a residence and public park. In addition, the SAP recommends encouraging the "tourist potential of the historic and architectural aspects of Old Town, protecting buildings and areas of historic and architectural value, and; the preservation of open space within residential areas, including side and rear yards". Preservation and interpretation of this architecturally and historically significant building as well as the addition of public open space provided by the existing yard would contribute to the goals set forth in the plan.

### **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve this request, finding that the acquisition is consistent with the City's Master Plan pursuant to section 11-1505 of the Zoning Ordinance and Section 9.06 of the City Charter of Alexandria, Virginia for the reasons stated herein.

STAFF: Jeff Farner, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning  
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