



Alexandria Archaeological Commission
America's First Archaeological Commission

ATTACHMENT 5



November 15, 2018

Craig Fifer
Director
Office of Communications and Public Affairs
City of Alexandria

Dear Craig,

In response to the October 16 request for recommendations for naming the interim park at the foot of King Street, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC) met both in naming a committee and as a full commission to consider suggestions. The AAC naming committee meeting was publicly posted in its own right, and we encouraged resident input.

As you may be aware, the AAC wrote the Alexandria Waterfront History Plan included as an appendix to the Waterfront Plan SAP, and as part of the City's current Strategic Plan. The Plan is available here: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Waterfront/AACWaterfrontHistoryPlan.pdf> This plan recommended "Heritage Names and Images for businesses, interior design, and menus, open spaces, wharves, and alleys." (p.18). The section of that plan covering this site (p.57) also offers additional information regarding associated historical context. *AAC still advocates names with a historic connection to the site, either reflecting its historic use as a focal point of our maritime heritage, or reflecting historic names associated with its wharves and other uses.* We suggest you to make the Plan, and the specific section, available to the naming committee.

The AAC supports combining Waterfront Park and the interim park. We think maintaining separate names will only confuse visitors, especially as the spaces are essentially one anyway.

AAC would like to offer specific suggestions for naming as well, in order of priority. AAC chose three names, with some additional qualifications. These are:

1. Seaport Park – reflecting the city's general heritage as an important port and gateway both to America and to the world. As the anchor park space on the waterfront, we believe this offers the fullest opportunity for wide historic interpretation and city promotion.
2. Fitzgerald Square – a name historically associated with parts of the space and the wharves, however AAC strongly urges that if this name is chosen the City provides a full interpretation of Colonel Fitzgerald, not only his service to the nation, Washington, and the City of Alexandria, but also his use of enslaved people as part of his business enterprises. This may provide a needed opportunity to more fully interpret the complexity of his contributions, and also spark informed discussion of role of slavery in the City's and nation's heritage.
3. Ship's Landing – much like recommendation 1, this name reflects the activity and commercial past of the site. Rather than a passive commemoration of the seaport, it speaks to activity and the coming and going of vessels along with the bustle of the waterfront.

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AAC would like to thank the Council Naming Committee for the opportunity to weigh on the name for this important focal element of our renewed waterfront, and we stand ready to offer any additional help or information they may require.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth C. McCall
Chair, AAC