



September 27, 2021

City Council
City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Alexandria City Council Members:

On behalf of the board of the 400+ members of Visit Alexandria, I would like to express our wholehearted endorsement of the economic recovery measures under consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to comment here.

We support the proposed measures including:

- Closure of the 100 Block of King
- Curbside pickup, parklets
- Administrative approval of outdoor dining and retail display
- Designation of the City as a tourism zone

We support these measures because:

- Recent survey research (n=2776) indicates widespread support among residents, visitors and business owners for all of the above measures
- Alexandria's economic recovery has been more robust than neighboring jurisdictions including Arlington and the District of Columbia
- Our recovery is still far from complete, and sustaining recovery is critical for Alexandria's economy, workforce, tax base and residential quality of life

For all of these reasons we encourage you to extend and support the package of economic recovery measures that have been successful to date. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kate Ellis, Board Chair, Visit Alexandria

Cc: Mark Jinks, City Manager
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning
Stephanie Landrum, President & CEO, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership
Joe Haggerty, President & CEO, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce



Alexandria, Virginia

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

*220 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2521
(703) 746-4554*



September 30, 2021

Planning Commission
City of Alexandria

RE: Permanent Closure of 100 Block of King Street

Dear Chairman Macek and Commission Members:

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) has studied carefully the historic preservation and neighborhood implications of permanent closure of the 100 block of King Street – the King Street Place Project. We call to your attention critical issues and city planning documents that should be part of your deliberations and due diligence. Apparently, little or no consideration has been given to the impact of the closure on our treasured cobblestone Captain's Row and its residents – just one block south of the proposed street closure.

There is ample direction in city planning documents for considering the impacts on Captain's Row. The "King Street Retail Strategy" states in its planning recommendations (page 8-3), "The impacts on transportation, circulation, parking, light and noise that may adversely affect neighboring residential communities must be considered as part of the planning process."

The "Old Town Small Area Plan" includes among its Goals and Objectives (page 48), "Protect buildings and areas of historic and architectural value."

The "Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan" includes several relevant goals: "Protect identified historic resources, archaeological resources, and cultural resources, including buildings and sites" (page 16); "Ensure that future development in the Waterfront respect[s] the existing residential neighborhoods" (page 20); and "Protect existing residential neighborhoods from excessive noise and traffic" (page 20).

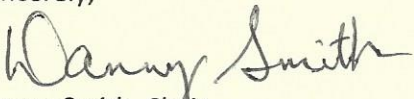
Captain's Row, the 100 Block of Prince Street, is arguably one of the iconic symbols of Alexandria. It is one of only two remaining cobblestone streets in the city. Its homes reflect the early importance of the waterfront with historic exteriors and stories to match. For decades it has been the site of photographs, marriage proposals, and a quiet vista to residents and tourists.

Since the closure of the 100 Block of King Street and the revitalization of businesses and restaurants on that block, residents and observers have noted that Captain's Row has increasingly suffered street/cobblestone damage from the traffic diverted from King Street, trash accumulation, and increased truck traffic violations.

Captain's Row is a prominent historic resource of the City – as much so as any individual structure such as the Lyceum, a discovered ship on the waterfront, or a pre-civil war slave market. HARC is committed to our mission of preserving historic resources. We respectfully ask that the Planning Commission carefully evaluate the impacts of closing the 100 block of King Street on Captain's Row and specify reasonable mitigation actions as conditions of approval. A reasonable mitigation condition we suggest is limiting traffic and parking on Captain's Row to residents only.

The members of HARC sincerely appreciate your valuable service to our storied city and encourage your thoughtful attention to mitigating unnecessary deterioration of Captain's Row.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Danny Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Danny" and the last name "Smith" clearly distinguishable.

Danny Smith, Chair
Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

cc: Mayor Justin Wilson
City Council Members

Fwd: [EXTERNAL]October 5th Commission meeting**Karl Moritz** <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>

Sat 10/2/2021 7:51 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>**Cc:** Anh Vu <Anh.Vu@alexandriava.gov>; Patrick Silva <Patrick.Silva@alexandriava.gov>; Ann Horowitz <ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov>

*Karl Moritz
Planning Director
City of Alexandria, Virginia*

Begin forwarded message:

From: David Olinger <dsolinger100@gmail.com>
Date: October 1, 2021 at 6:12:26 PM EDT
To: Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]October 5th Commission meeting

You don't often get email from dsolinger100@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Karl,

Below is a note that I had sent to the Mayor and the City Council. I intended to send it to you and to the Commission as well, but the system won't let me. So instead I'm sending it to you with the request that you share it with the Commissioners. I did receive a reasonably positive response from the mayor.

Best regards, Dave

Dear Chairman Macek and Members of the Planning Commission,

At your meeting on October 5th you are to consider the permanent closing of the 100 block of King Street. Since the reaction to the temporary closing of the block has been widely accepted and acclaimed by the merchants and by the community, it appears likely that permanent closure will be approved.

I am writing to ask that while you move forward to approve the King Street closing, you also consider the affect and the needs of the surrounding blocks. I am most concerned with the 100 block of Prince Street.

The 100 block of Prince Street, known as Captain's Row, is an iconic block. Homes that in some cases are more than 200 years old line this historic cobblestone street. Photographs of Captain's Row appear regularly in travel magazines, including the City's own publications. The street has been featured in movies and as a background for bridal parties and advertisements, as well as for the thousands of tourists annually who take "selfies" and other photos here.

There are several issues that are affecting the block. First, with the closing of King, traffic on Prince has increased exponentially. The result is congestion, more wear and tear on the road bed, dislodged cobblestones, bumps and depressions and an overall diminishing of the street's character. The charm of the street itself is in the authenticity of its cobblestones. They aren't artificially placed at regular intervals or embedded in concrete. The condition of the street has deteriorated to the point where a major renovation is required and steps are needed to preserve it for the future.

A second issue is, as a consequence of the massive amount of new construction along the waterfront (and particularly the many restaurants), parking, always a problem in Old Town, has become near impossible. Homes built in the 18th and 19th centuries rarely provided space for off-street parking and often today's residents must search to find a parking spot 5, 6 or more blocks away. The combination of increased congestion and inability to find parking represent major disruptions and quality of life issues for block residents. Parking is an important issue affecting other blocks adjacent to the waterfront and, perhaps, the City needs to look for a comprehensive solution.

In light of the circumstances and in the name of historic preservation, the City needs to undertake a major restoration of this unique street. At the same time, I would urge that consideration be given to closing the street to non-local traffic and to limiting parking to residents only on the 100 block of Prince and on other streets at the waterfront.

Sincerely,

David Olinger

100 Prince Street

cc: Mark Jinks
Karl Moritz

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source.**

[EXTERNAL]Captain's Row; 100 Block of Prince Street

Francis Schauer <mikeschauer@hotmail.com>

Fri 10/1/2021 6:21 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>**Cc:** mgodonnell <mgodonnell@aol.com>; Brandon Hensley <bhensleyrivah@gmail.com>; danny_smith_rpe@msn.com <danny_smith_rpe@msn.com> 1 attachments (596 KB)

Planning Commission Letter_King St Closure.pdf;

You don't often get email from mikeschauer@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi –

My wife, Mary O'Donnell, and I would like to lend our support to the attached letter to the Commission from the Historic Alexandria Resources Committee.

As residents of Captain's Row (121 Prince Street), we are particularly concerned about the conditions of the cobblestones in our block. They have really taken a beating with the increase in traffic going down (and, in some cases, up) the street since the closure of the 100 block of King Street. In prior discussions with someone from T&ES, who was supervising some repair work to the cobblestones last Spring/Early Summer, it seems there is only so much they can do to repair/replace the cobblestones and still somewhat keep the character of the street close to what it was originally. Apparently, to return it to its original state would require a complete reconstruction of the street, and the hiring of an outside contractor specializing in historic preservation. Although that would be nice, I am not sure the City is willing to take that on at this time. Absent that, we need to prevent the street from deteriorating further. Closing the block to all but residents of Captain's Row would go a long way towards that goal.

Thank you.

Francis M. (Mike) Schauer, Jr.
Mary O'DonnellSent from [Mail](#) for Windows

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Alexandria, Virginia

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

*220 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2521
(703) 746-4554*



September 30, 2021

Planning Commission
City of Alexandria

RE: Permanent Closure of 100 Block of King Street

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There is ample direction in city planning documents for considering the impacts on Captain's Row. The "King Street Retail Strategy" states in its planning recommendations (page 8-3), "The impacts on transportation, circulation, parking, light and noise that may adversely affect neighboring residential communities must be considered as part of the planning process."

The "Old Town Small Area Plan" includes among its Goals and Objectives (page 48), "Protect buildings and areas of historic and architectural value."

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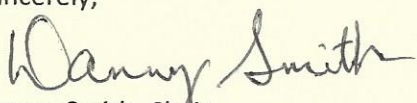
Captain's Row, the 100 Block of Prince Street, is arguably one of the iconic symbols of Alexandria. It is one of only two remaining cobblestone streets in the city. Its homes reflect the early importance of the waterfront with historic exteriors and stories to match. For decades it has been the site of photographs, marriage proposals, and a quiet vista to residents and tourists.

Since the closure of the 100 Block of King Street and the revitalization of businesses and restaurants on that block, residents and observers have noted that Captain's Row has increasingly suffered street/cobblestone damage from the traffic diverted from King Street, trash accumulation, and increased truck traffic violations.

Captain's Row is a prominent historic resource of the City – as much so as any individual structure such as the Lyceum, a discovered ship on the waterfront, or a pre-civil war slave market. HARC is committed to our mission of preserving historic resources. We respectfully ask that the Planning Commission carefully evaluate the impacts of closing the 100 block of King Street on Captain's Row and specify reasonable mitigation actions as conditions of approval. A reasonable mitigation condition we suggest is limiting traffic and parking on Captain's Row to residents only.

The members of HARC sincerely appreciate your valuable service to our storied city and encourage your thoughtful attention to mitigating unnecessary deterioration of Captain's Row.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Danny Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Danny" and last name "Smith" clearly distinguishable.

Danny Smith, Chair
Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

cc: Mayor Justin Wilson
City Council Members

October 5, 2021 Planning Commission

Docket # 7 & 8

Case # 2021-00004

Closing of 100 Block of King Street to vehicular traffic

Hello, I'm Ivy Whitlatch, an almost 40 year resident of Old Town. The first place I lived was 214 S. Lee, my sister at 119 Prince. I became enchanted with Old Town because of Captain's Row. There was a sense of a village, a sense of history, a sense of recognizing those that came before and how to be stewards for what they left.

Over these decades I have, as you can imagine, seen tremendous change in Old Town. But that sense of preserving the past has been a driving force for me – so much so that in my retirement I now serve on two of the city's commissions that advocate for historic preservation, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission as Chair and the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission. But, I am not speaking this evening as a member of a city commission, but rather as resident who believes there cannot be vital economic recovery in Alexandria if there is not recognition and respect for the city heritage. As the adjacent block to 100 King, arguably, that is what Captain's Row visually and historically represents, which, could also be called the city's brand identity.

I am not an expert on the economic value of preserving our past, how it can fortify and encourage business and development, there are scores of professionals I am sure in this room who can speak to that. I am, however, somewhat of an expert on brand identity. My professional career spanned nearly 30 years in strategic planning and market research for such companies as MCI and AOL – at their time leaders in their respective industries. What do these two companies have in common today? They are no longer in existence because of many contributing factors, but one that was central to both – they stepped away from their core brand identity when faced with competitive, technology, development challenges. I was there and witnessed the aftermaths.

How is this related to Captain's Row? And the permanent closure of 100 Block of King Street? I would pose that without taking into consideration what the permanent closure of 100 King Street will do to Captain's Row – the symbol of Alexandria's historic brand identity, and doing all necessary to preserve that block – it's ambiance, it's historical integrity, it's value to the city's brand – is not a complete analysis of the decision before you.

I'm sure this evening residents of Captain's Row will give you their thoughts on how to preserve the block ranging from truck enforcement, repair, traffic, limiting parking. It is only thru their vigilance and stewardship that Captain's Row has remained the historic icon it is. Not taking these into consideration may forever separate the historic past from the promise of the future.

Now, for the proverbial, in closing – from a personal perspective. I opened with how I became enchanted with Old Town 40 years ago mostly due to Captain's Row. That has led me today to do all, in my limited abilities, to help the city maintain the vision I saw as a young lady. I would like to see the city

thru its planning hold to a standard that will be inspiring to the next generation of residents and citizen preservation activists.



REX MANAGEMENT

LIFESTYLE & RESTAURANT GROUP

September 27, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Justin Wilson, Mayor
Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Vice Mayor
Canek Aguirre, Council Member
John Chapman, Council Member
Amy Jackson, Council Member
Del Pepper, Council Member
Mo Seifeldein, Council Member
Nathan Macek, Chair, Planning and Zoning
Melissa McMahon, Vice Chair, Planning and Zoning
David Brown, Commissioner, Planning and Zoning
Melinda Lyle, Commissioner, Planning and Zoning
Stephen Koenig, Commissioner, Planning and Zoning
Vivian Ramirez, Commissioner, Planning and Zoning
John Goebel, Commissioner, Planning and Zoning
City of Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Mr. Mayor, Members of the City Council and the City of Alexandria Planning Commission:

We the undersigned as restaurant and business owners in the 100 block of King Street are writing you in hopes that you heed our advice as to the proposed closure of the 100 block of King Street to vehicular traffic.

As you know the pandemic with its social distancing and other myriad restrictions as to occupancy have greatly impacted our revenues. The current temporary arrangement for outside seating utilizing the sidewalks and parking spaces needs to be continued and expanded. Over the Summer and into the Fall, we have been able to slowly rebuild our business as our clientele become more comfortable returning to restaurants.

However, we believe we must have a professional outdoor program for all of us to compete with other areas of the DMV such as The Wharf, Navy Yard, Mosaic District and National Harbor. We must be allowed to build and operate more permanent outdoor service areas that provide protection from inclement weather.



REX MANAGEMENT

LIFESTYLE & RESTAURANT GROUP

We understand that the business landscape has changed. We are competing against other areas to draw patrons. We all realize that Old Town must be a desired destination where people are able to walk down the street and choose their dining destination among the various establishments. We need the flexibility to invest in “permanent” outdoor spaces that are both inviting and attractive.

Regretfully we believe different COVID variants will breakout periodically and we feel we must be proactive to not only protect our customers but our employees and businesses. Allowing us to close King Street and build protected patios serves not only the business community but it continues to provide the City with sales and food tax revenues.

We do, however, have a comment about the suggestion that a five foot sidewalk be maintained between the building and the outside seating.

We all strongly believe that this is unnecessary. People enjoy the promenade effect of walking in the middle of the street with their dogs on a leash or pushing a baby carriage. It is a festive mood reminiscent of many European cities and towns.

Putting pedestrians between the buildings and crossing paths with wait and service staffs as they attempt to attend to the tables will potentially create some bumps, bruises and spilled dinners. The current plan is working fine and none of us have heard any complaints that pedestrians want to walk next to the buildings rather than in the street. All this proposed five foot path does is take away valuable outdoor seating and create a “crossing hazard” for pedestrians and wait staff.

Thank you for recognizing that our businesses are essential to the health and viability of Old Town and the City of Alexandria. We help make Alexandria a desirable destination for residents as well as visitors.

Very truly yours,

Noe T. Landini
Managing Director & CEO

[EXTERNAL]Closure of 100 Block of King St. City Charter 9.06Case #2021-00004

Sally Hatch <forkridge@hotmail.com>

Tue 10/5/2021 11:56 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

[You don't often get email from forkridge@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Dear Mr. Moritz,

As owners of the building at 119 King St. (The Wharf Restaurant....which I helped in open in 1972) we would like to comment on the closing of the 100 Block of King St. for a pedestrian way and entrance to the river. We feel the City has made a concentrated effort to develop the waterfront of the Potomac (with its past history of shipping and commerce) as a very visible and useful space for Alexandrians and for tourists. We really appreciate the flexibility and support the City has provided during these tough times. Judging by the amount of people we have seen in the parks, along the waterfront path and the pedestrian only 100 block, we feel that it has been a great success and great help for the businesses on lower King Street.

We think that the continued pedestrian use of the 100 Block of King Street does fit in with the Alexandria Master Plan and hope that this continues.

Sincerely,

Sara Hatch & Gary Swartz

forkridge@hotmail.com forkridge@gmail.com

2465 Forest Grove Rd. Vilas, NC 28692

Home 828 297-1492 Cell 828 773-7912

Sent from my iPad

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October 1, 2021

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Old Town Business Association, we encourage you to embrace the closure of the 100 block of King Street to vehicular traffic. We also want to encourage you to allow for the continuation of outdoor dining in on-street parking spaces and sidewalks, and retail sales on sidewalks and on-street parking spaces.

We hope that the City staff will continue working with us, the Old Town Business Association, as we refine the plans for buskers, sidewalks, barricades, enforcement, and outdoor amenities such as curbside pick-up and heaters and tents. It is essential that the staff work with us to create an environment that is business friendly and customer friendly. Over the past 18 months we have had a good working relationship with City staff and we want to continue to move forward as we address these issues and find solutions that will work for the public, the City, and the business community.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Hall

Managing Director

Old Town Business Association

[EXTERNAL]100 Block Merchant Statements and signed letter

Cyrus Coleman <cyrus@ripehospitality.com>

Tue 10/5/2021 2:23 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Noe T Landini <noe@noelandini.com>; Charlotte Hall (DPI Contact) <charlotte.hall@oldtownbusiness.org>; Niamh O'Donovan <niamh@danieloconnells.com>; Wali Zadran <Zadran@comcast.net>; Chad Sparrow <chad@mason-social.com>

 2 attachments (210 KB)

100 Block Closure Signed Letter to City from Merchants.pdf; 100 Block Closure Statement of Merchants 10.5.21.pdf;

You don't often get email from cyrus@ripehospitality.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom this may concern,

The attached documents are being provided as a matter of public record, from several business owners on the 100 Block of King street, to address the permanent closure of the block being heard at this hearing on October 5th 2021. I would also like the opportunity to speak at the hearing via zoom to deliver this statement verbally as well. I am currently registered for the meeting via zoom but please advise on any further steps needed to speak?

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Best Regards,
Cyrus Coleman
Owner
The Wharf
119 King St.
cell: 571.296.1037

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September 27, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Justin Wilson, Mayor
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As you know the pandemic with its social distancing and other myriad restrictions as to occupancy have greatly impacted our revenues. The current temporary arrangement for outside seating utilizing the sidewalks and parking spaces needs to be continued and expanded. Over the Summer and into the Fall, we have been able to slowly rebuild our business as our clientele become more comfortable returning to restaurants.

However, we believe we must have a professional outdoor program for all of us to compete with other areas of the DMV such as The Wharf, Navy Yard, Mosaic District and National Harbor. We must be allowed to build and operate more permanent outdoor service areas that provide protection from inclement weather.

We understand that the business landscape has changed. We are competing against other areas to draw patrons. We all realize that Old Town must be a desired destination where people are able to walk down the street and choose their dining destination among the various establishments. We need the flexibility to invest in “permanent” outdoor spaces that are both inviting and attractive.

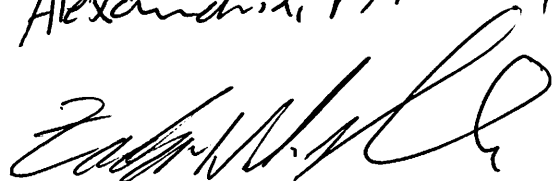
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Thank you for recognizing that our businesses are essential to the health and viability of Old Town and the City of Alexandria. We help make Alexandria a desirable destination for residents as well as visitors.

Il Porto Ristorante
Nah. Zahan
121 King street
Alexandria, VA 22314


* RIAUN O'Donovan
O'Connells
112 King St.
Alexandria, VA, 22314.

Very truly yours,


Chad F. Sparrow
Managing Partner
Common Plate Hospitality
Urbano 116


NDE LANDINI
MANAGING DIRECTOR ; CEO
LANDINI BROTHERS ; FISHMARKET ; POP'S
115 KING ST.

Cyrus Coleman



Owner
The Wharf
119 King St.

Subject: Permanent closure of the 100 Block and the 5ft opening on the side walk per the staff recommendations.

Objective: To strike the 5ft opening on the side walk from the staff recommendations to be presented on October 5th public hearing and voted on by the council.

Statement of Merchants

At this time, everyone can agree on the precise point to the benefits of the permanent closure of the 100 block of King Street. However, several restaurant owners have expressed concern with the 5ft opening on the side walk that the city staff has added to its Staff Recommendations. We all strongly believe this is unnecessary as people enjoy the promenade effect of walking in the middle of the street. The current plan is working fine with 90% approval rating from city data as is. In addition, we feel that the closure of the 100 block is a unique feature for the city and should be treated as such, separate from the cities overall outdoor dining programs or other requirements.

That said, the merchants of the 100 block need to work directly with the city to develop the details of the plan before it is being presented to the public and the city council as these decisions affect our businesses, city revenue, the safety of our staff and the public, and the overall vibe of the heaviest populated area of Old Town Alexandria.

Safety and Functionality Issues with the 5ft sidewalk opening

It is our understanding the fire department is requesting to have the 5ft access for the reason of protecting against a possible fire on the 100 block. Several restaurant owners feel this precaution opens the door for other and more frequent safety concerns between pedestrians, bicyclist, motorized scooters, and restaurant staff, which a few examples are listed below:

- Injury due to staff crossing with food and beverage through heavy pedestrian traffic
 - Burns
 - Cuts from broken glass or dishes
 - Collision causing injuries

Additional Restaurant Owners concerns

- Reduces outdoor dining at a time when we need it the most leaving some restaurants with as much outdoor dining as the previous outdoor program
- Reduces ease of normal business operations when serving outdoor seating area

Alternative Recommendations

In a show of good faith for future discussions, and as a part of the 100 block merchants working together with city staff, we are providing some alternative recommendations below.

- Develop a unique fire evacuation plan for the 100 block merchants
- Businesses extending out to the 22ft walking path would be required to have ADA ramp