

DRCA Membership Meeting Minutes
Virtual via Zoom
December 13, 2023



7:00 pm: Board Introduction and Welcome by President Katie Waynick

Contact the DRCA Executive Board: execboard@DelRayCitizen.net
[Del Ray Citizens Association](#)

- Introduction to DRCA membership
- 30 minutes of DRCA business tonight and then jumping into Arena discussion with the Mayor
- Questions can be put into the link form or in the chat
- Katie Waynick, DRCA President
- Elena Hutchison , DRCA CIO
- James Miceli , DRCA Vice President
- Lisa Quandt, DRCA Secretary
 - Del Ray House and Garden Tour
- Elizabeth Reyna, Membership Chair
 - Welcome new members
 - New members cannot vote tonight
- Tim Laderach, Immediate Past President - joined by Annie Ebbers, Past President
- Rachel Lazarus, Activities director
 - Del Ray Christmas Decorating Context
 - DRCA Chili Cook Off
 - GardenFest
- Jim Wallace, Treasurer
 - In order to facilitate the larger Zoom attendance for this meeting (nearly 500 people) we had to increase capacity of the Zoom account which incurred a small fee
- The proposed Standing Rules in the Bylaws Amendment and Discussion has been moved to a meeting in 2024 because of the time necessary to devote to the discussion of the proposed arena

7:05 pm: Crime/Traffic report from Captain Dennis Andreas

Contact Captain Andreas: dennis.andreas@alexandriava.gov 703.746.6872
[Alexandria Police Department](#)

- Citywide is crime is higher than last year
 - Larceny
 - Stolen autos
- Del Ray specific from the time of the last DRCA meeting
 - 1 [homicide on 2700 block of Dewitt Ave](#)
 - Grand jury met this week, murder charge will be prosecuted by Commonwealth attorney
 - 11/21/23 incident on Oxford involving series of crimes
 - Burglary
 - Robbery from person
 - Arrest made
 - Arrested person had previous unlawful entry on East Del Ray Ave a few days before
 - Credit card theft cases from South Union Street

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- Traffic
 - New 4 way stop sign is coming to Commonwealth / Windsor in response to Citizen requests and traffic study
 - Police will be enforcing with education and warnings at first
- Questions:
 - No Questions

7:08 pm: Sheriff's office report from Sheriff Sean Casey

Contact Sheriff Casey: sean.casey@alexandriava.gov
[Alexandria Sheriff's Office](#)

- The Sheriff's office manages the jail, secures the courthouse, serves warrants and civil process in the City of Alexandria, helps the police department when called upon.
- Operation Elf: Ask the community to donate to the office so we can purchase gifts for children of incarcerated individuals. Last year over 80 families participated. This year almost 150 children are signed up:
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/sheriff/sheriffs-office-welcomes-donations-for-operation-elf>
- Questions:
 - No Questions

7:12pm: Land Use Committee Update from Kristine Hesse, co-chair

Contact the LUC Committee: drca-land-use@delraycitizen.net

Del Ray Service Station Special Use Permit #2023-00097 and VOTE

- 1601 Mount Vernon Avenue
- Extend their SUP to 2045
- Corner of East Monroe and Mt. Vernon
- Open since 1941 and currently operating under approval from 2010
- Request: Continue the use, no other changes anticipated
- No parking required on site, but they have 8 spaces available
- Zoned commercial low: CL
- The property could be developed before 2045, although the lot is small
- Applicable plans
 - Potomac West Small Area Plan (1992 with updates)
 - Mount Vernon Urban Overlay Zone (2005)
 - Mount Vernon Ave Business Area Plan (2005)
 - Service stations were not permitted - at that time we wanted to get rid of automobile uses because they are inconsistent with PWSAP
- Adjacent to the Hyundai dealership which in 2022 was granted an SUP extension until 2045
 - Potential for redevelopment of both sites together was limited when this extension was granted
- Shell station across the street at the same intersection does not operate under an SUP

Motion from the LUC

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- The Land Use Committee supports the request to extend the SUP to 2045.

Discussion

- Lauren Riley - Walsh Colucci, Land Use Attorney
- Praveen Kathpal: Question
 - What is the basis for the assertion that the gas station site is too small to ever be developed?
 - Response: b/c of MVABP the site would not be able to meet the requirements of the form based code
- Rod Kuckro: Question
 - How about having the applicant conform with new signage requirement for a monument sign?
 - Discussion :
 - The existing sign is necessary for the business use to continue because it advertises gas prices
 - Location at the corner may block vision clearances at intersections
 - Would need to verify with City Staff if location is feasible for a monument sign
- Would redevelopment of a gas station require environmental remediation?
- Rod Kuckro: **Amendment**
 - I move we have the applicant put up a monument sign
 - Seconded by Tom Ortiz
- Discussion and Vote moved to the end of the meeting because of time constraints for next agenda item

7:30pm: Mayor Justin Wilson: Arena and entertainment complex in Potomac Yard

Contact Mayor Wilson: [Alex311](#)

[Link to Video Recording](#)

[Link to Text Transcripts](#)

[Link to Assembled Questions](#)

[Monumental ALX - AEDP](#)

- Katie Waynick: The chat will stay open and everyone will stay muted, please be civil in the comments section, if the chat gets crazy, it will get turned off. This portion of the meeting will be recorded
- Justin: This felt like a surprise announcement to many - Why?
 - Nature of competitive economic initiatives
 - Negotiations regarding City resources need to be private
 - Now entering the phase of public engagement
 - Will spend the next year publicly reviewing this process
 - If there is information that you feel like you need to evaluate this opportunity please reach out and request it directly
- [North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan](#)
 - Historic rail yard

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- North and South different development paces
- North part is planned for 8M SF of density
- Shopping center was always intended as an interim use
- New Potomac Yard Metro
- First bus rapid transit (BRT)- looking for opportunity to increase that capacity
- Vision of N. Potomac yard starting shaping up during construction of Virginia Tech Innovation Campus
- Office space on top of metro stations does not seem to be a functional reality anymore
- Cost of Alexandria government has been handled more and more by residential tax base
- Strategy of the City has been to diversify revenue and more commercial development
- City entered this discussion 6-8 months ago - opportunity first presented itself
 - Great amount of skepticism that this would work in Alexandria
 - Explored with caution initially
- What is missing from the proposal to make it viable, how do we address concerns
 - Transportation
 - Infrastructure
 - City services
- Has potential to be very financially beneficial for the City
- We need to engage with citizens to determine if this is possible
- A report with analysis
 - Has already been done, thorough investigation by the City.
 - Study will be released to the public, all assumptions can be reviewed
- Financials
 - Arena
 - Corporate headquarters w/ 650 employees with over 6 figure salaries
 - Music venue
 - Virginia Stadium authority will be issuing the bonds for the construction of the arena
 - Land and arena will be owned by a State agency
 - Debt paid by
 - Private stream: Monumental \$400M down payment, plus rent over time
 - City will take a portion of the new tax rate that comes from the new development to pay off a portion of the debt
 - The Commonwealth will take a portion of its new revenue to pay off the loans for construction
 - Same way the Potomac Yard metro was funded
- What public dollars will be used?
 - Incremental taxes: Taxes generated by the new development
 - What bond rate: conservative assessments built in, won't know until we go to market
- Creation of a local stadium tax?
- Who will guarantee repayment of debt if tax revenue falls short of expectations?
 - Backstop from City and Commonwealth - more detail of who pays what will be forthcoming
- How will this be different from other studies that have been released showing the negative impacts of stadium development
 - Private money must be on the table up front plus ongoing rent paid by Monumental to make them have skin in the game

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- Public/Private should not be only public
 - https://scholarworks.smith.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=eco_facpubs
 - Traffic / Parking
 - Keep number of parking space on the site to a minimum
 - We do not want to encourage driving and parking
 - This is intended to be transit oriented development (metro and BRT)
 - 2500 parking spaces underground
 - Parking at former movie theater and surface parking that still exists is 3700, so this is an overall reduction in total parking on site
 - Physicality of the site
 - Arena and performing arts are between metro and VT building, do not cross Potomac Ave
 - Headquarters on other side of Potomac Yard
 - This whole proposal is 15% of the density that is approved for Potomac yard
 - Are there impacts to the shopping center in Phase 1? - Target
 - Always intended to redevelop at some point
 - That Target does extremely well
 - Vision was for a more urban Target
 - Parking / Traffic / Transportation
 - WMATA
 - Will the developer reimburse the City for the Metro
 - JBG (Landowner) is already paying for a portion of the Metro through increased tax revenue on the site
 - Special tax district (\$.1 extra) used to pay off debt of the construction of Potomac Yard already in place
 - Improvements to the station to handle volume - current station could not handle
 - Transportation investments would require modifications to the station at the beginning
 - Current process for residential parking district is difficult, would City Council consider proactively creating a parking district
 - Yes, we need to do a series of neighborhood protections including parking
 - What traffic studies have been done
 - Studies would be updated
- Infrastructure
 - Stormwater trunk line - does the arena development change the long term capacity
 - Still need more in depth study on this topic
- School
 - Other 85% is office, residential, commercial and a school site
 - Part of the proposed Potomac Yard project is a future school site
 - Expanded K-12 partnership with Virginia Tech
- Public safety plan and agreement regarding standards and how the City and regional partners will provide safety
 - Will involve multiple public safety entities working together
- What are next steps
 - Beginning engagement process now

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- Specialized micro engagement with immediately adjacent neighborhoods and Civic Associations
- Economic study is getting additional outside review and then will be shared with the public
- Commonwealth general assembly will have to make decisions on financial impacts
 - City / State – will be finalized by General Assembly
- What is a reasonable timeline
 - Very early and not able to determine yet, please let us know and that could inform the councils request
- Community Use of the Facility
 - Indoor court space and ice rinks are limited in the City
 - Have not gotten to that level of detail yet, but if this is a desire by residents for a community use such as this, please reach out to Council and share suggestions
- Does this impact future phases of VT Innovation campus?
 - Don't have current information on their phasing, but they are excited by this investment
 - I don't think it has any negative effects on them
- What will prevent Monument from moving elsewhere to not be in the same
 - The arena and property will be owned by the Stadium Authority
 - 40 year lease, would negotiate a non-relocation agreement with Monumental
 - Ongoing maintenance and modernization agreements - fund built in to agreement
 - An appointed board by the Governor, City expects to have seats on the board
- Transportation funding – where will that go
 - Metro station expansion and connection to the Arena
 - Intersection and roadway improvements
 - Want to talk to the community to develop a robust transportation plan
 - Expanded dedicated BRT corridors and buses
- Housing
 - Limits on short term rentals
 - City has been having non-official conversations about this topic, we do not have anything beyond registration and taxation requirements outlined now
 - Some analysis at staff level about what types of regulations would make sense to protect neighborhoods
 - This will serve as a catalyst for new housing development for the housing proposed in the North PY plan
 - Additional committed affordable housing in the area
 - Significant tax revenue approximately \$50M could be generated from this use and used towards affordable housing

- What is the biggest threat or obstacle ?
- This is not a final done deal, a lot of work still needs to happen
- What income streams go back to the City?

8:30pm Del Ray Service Station Special Use Permit #2023-00097 Continued

Discussion Continued

- Unclear if monument sign would be able to fit here

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- Concern about limiting visibility and placement of the sign
- Praveen Kathpal: Comment from Chat
 - I'd like to move to amend adding a statement of caution about the gas station use through 2045 given that we will need to transition to a net zero greenhouse gas emission economy by 2050 and phase out fossil fuels.
 - Lisa Quandt: Response in Chat
 - Suggest adding this language to the body of the letter rather than an amendment
 - Praveen Kathpal: Accepted

Vote Called on Amendment

- Amendment language: "Have the applicant put up a monument sign"
- Voted on by Membership via Google Form
- Proposed amendment failed

Vote Called on LUC Motion Special Use Permit #2023-00097

- The Del Ray Citizens Association supports the request to extend the SUP to 2045.
- Voted on by Membership via Google Form
- Vote passes

Motion passed

8:42pm: Announcements

- Rachel Lazarus, Activities director
 - DRCA [Holiday decorating contest](#)
 - Categories
 - Homes
 - Business
 - Holiday Card
 - Judges
 - Former Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne
 - Andrew Beaujon of the Washingtonian
 - Elisa Nebolsine
 - New category, Clark W. Griswold award
- Gayler Reuter: DRBA Liaison
 - Thank you for volunteering for the holiday events
 - Scavenger hunt will be out this weekend, picking 5 entries that will receive a gift card
- Lisa Quandt: Del Ray House and Garden Tour Co-Chair
 - In the process of house selection, specifically looking for smaller homes - duplexes and row houses
 - Also looking for homes in the area between MVCS and Uhler Ave going up the hill
 - Please email the committee with houses you would like to nominate to be on the tour: Delrayhousetour@delraycitizen.net

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8:47pm: Meeting adjourn