



A Look Ahead at North Old Town's Future

by Tom Soapes, NOTICe President

The GenOn power company's Potomac River Generating station closed October 1. In our last newsletter we recounted the closing of the GenOn power plant, the concerns our neighbors had expressed about how the site would be managed, and our efforts to engage the city leadership in planning for the future of North Old Town and the inevitable changes that growth and development are bringing to much of this area.

NOTICe took additional action in recent weeks. On January 15, the NOTICe Zoning and Land Use Committee discussed key factors for evaluating future development proposals. Some of the factors discussed were environmental impact; accessibility for pedestrians and vehicles; traffic control; creativity of design; compatibility with existing residential communities; quality of construction and materials; appropriate consideration of the value of the waterfront, and its use and compatibility with existing waterfront uses; adequacy of open space and recreational opportunities; synergy with Potomac Yard, North East, and Old Town; and the extent to which development gives appropriate definition to North Old Town.

This committee will meet again in early March and begin refining these factors into a concise and carefully defined vision statement for North Old Town as the first step in revising the North Old Town Small Area Plan. Small area plans allow citizens to influence future development because proposed development is evaluated against that plan and its standards prior to approval. (Alexandria's small area plans are available on the city's web site at www.alexandriava.gov). The vision statement and the small area plan will encompass all of North Old Town, not just the power plant site.

Because the small area plan is so important and because it is essential that citizens of North Old Town be proactive in anticipating new development in our area, NOTICe wrote the Mayor and City Council members asking that they fund revision of the North Old Town Small Area Plan in the city's 2014 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013. The current plan was written in the early 1990s, and, although it has been amended several times, much of it is out of date and does not consider the closing of the power plant. Revision is an essential step in defining the character of our community and setting the parameters of future development. The letter is posted on the NOTICe web site: www.notice-alexandria.org. If you agree with the urgency and importance of this revision, we urge you to contact city leaders.

Old Town Farmers Market

Make sure you stop by to support our local farmers.

Saturdays
7am-NOON

Located in the market square at
301 King Street.

Find them online at:
www.farmersmarketoldtown.com

Activity at Major North Old Town Sites

- **Power plant rendered inoperative:** Coal and trona (a substance that absorbs sulfur dioxide) have been removed from the power plant. In December the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality issued a "Letter of Mutual Determination for Permanent Shutdown" signed by VDEQ and GenOn stating that the facility has been rendered inoperable and its air permits revoked. GenOn has been acquired by NRG Energy, a New Jersey-based, wholesale power generating company.
- **Activity at ABC/Giant:** We observed survey work and drilling, apparently for soil testing in this block in early February. The City provided information that Edens (a shopping center developer and owner of the Giant site) and Equity Residential Properties have formed a partnership. These activities suggest that a redevelopment proposal may be in the offing. However, we have been told that no proposal is, at this writing, before the city.

Construction Moves Forward on Oronoco

By Greg Ogden

FROM SHELL TO SELL TO SWELL. Here's a recent view of the "Oronoco," an EYA redevelopment of the former Sheet Metal Workers Union building at the corner of Pendleton and Fairfax Streets. According to an on-site sales manager, demolition leaving only the building's shell is on schedule for late spring 2013, after which construction starts. First occupancy remains projected for early 2014. The finished project of upscale, relatively large condos offers ample off-street parking both for owners and guests.

Traffic problems so far have been manageable. The bike path on the Oronoco Bay Park side remains operational and safely covered, and overall site activity seems to be as EYA projected. No change to the original structure's footprint is planned.

A visit to the EYA Web site (eya.com/oronoco) reveals interesting time lapse video of the demolition progress accompanying the expected sales and promotional material, including a rendering of the finished project.



All photos courtesy Greg Ogden.

NOTICE is for you

We Inquire: *Staying connected with changes and issues that affect North Old Town.*

We Inform: *Circulate information to our members through newsletters and circulars, email and our website.*

We are Open: *Welcoming varying views of our role in North Old Town.*

We Discuss: *Remaining involved in finding alternative solutions and being tolerant of our neighbor's perspectives.*

We Meet: *Membership meeting three times a year, and a winter party in February.*

Membership - Join NOTICE

Single \$15, Family \$25, Sponsor \$50, Angel \$150+

NOTICE is a 501-C3 organization. Dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Mail this form and payment to:

NOTICE; P.O. Box 25571; Alexandria, VA 22313

Events

No Admission March
**Lee-Fendall House
Museum & Garden**
614 Oronoco Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703.548.1789
During the month of March all tours of Lee-Fendall House and Garden will be FREE to the public during normal tour hours. Free admission excludes special events.

Blossoms by Bike River Ride

March 23 to April 14
Friday, Saturday, Sundays
1pm, \$40
Ride the Mount Vernon Trail from Alexandria to DC to see the blossoms at the tidal basin.

Bike and Roll Alexandria
One Wales Alley

NOTICE Board

President: Tom Soapes

Vice President:

Sally Ann Greer

Secretary: Ann Kaupp

Treasurer: Frances Zorn

Webmaster: Greg Ogden

Newsletter Editor:

Christa Watters

At Large:

Ernest Lehmann

Roger Waud

What did we miss?

Email us your suggestions on articles, links, or subjects you would find interesting to you.

Greg@Notice-Alexandria.org

Contact NOTICE

703-684-1547

contact@notice-alexandria.org