



## Survey Seeks Your Opinions

NOTICE developed and recently distributed a survey of public opinion on development issues in North Old Town. While the focus of the questions is on this area, we seek the opinions of all residents of Alexandria. Responses are anonymous, and we will make the results public. Anyone can access the survey on Survey Monkey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZQMHJSM>

It is vital that we have the opinions of as many residents as possible so that we can inform city leaders of the expectations of the community. It takes only a few minutes to complete the survey.

## Farmers' Market

Make sure you stop by to support our local farmers.

**Saturdays  
7 a.m. - noon**

Located in the market square at 301 King Street.

## Dominion Power Line Plan Catches City by Surprise

*By Christa Watters*

Dominion Virginia Power Company and PEPCO are proposing to run a new 230 kilovolt power line from the PEPCO transmission site at the closed NRG Power Plant on the Potomac River to the Glebe Road transmission station on Arlington's Four Mile Run. They also propose to build a second transmitter station on the site of the present parking lot at the PEPCO site here in North Old Town.

Dominion representative Debra Johnson, speaking at a presentation to the Alexandria City Council on June 11, said Dominion had not yet selected a route for the proposed 230KV line, which she said is needed to comply with federal energy security requirements. City Manager Rashad Young wrote a letter to Dominion stating that burying such a power line on a route through Potomac Yard would be extremely disruptive. He recommended the company

consider burying the line under the Potomac River or running it along the CSX rail line.

City Council grilled Johnson on details, which she said were not yet known. Rich Baier, director of the Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services asked how the company reached its cost estimate of \$165 million for the project if it did not know the route. Johnson said it was based on a typical point to point cost per foot formula. Asked how big a space the line needs, a PEPCO engineer present said a minimum 8-foot wide trench would be required, but that ideally it would take a 20-foot or wider trench. At least 40 inches of special man-made heat-dispersing soil needs to be filled in above the line. Baier said the City found in other instances of dealing with such lines, they could not build or plant trees above such lines.



## Cotton Factory Redevelopment To House 26 Residential Units

*By Tom Soapes*

The Cotton Factory building at 515 N. Washington is changing from an office building back to a residential development. The developer, CAS Riegler, briefed the NOTICE board at its June 16 meeting on the new design.

Built in 1847 to house a cotton factory, it was used as a civil war prison, then a bottling works and for other commercial uses. From 1935 to 1981 it functioned as an office building. In the plans, the existing building exterior remains intact, becoming 26 rental units. These units will range in size from studio to a few two bedroom units; most will be one bedroom units. (The choice of rental over condo units was driven by historic tax credits available to the developer.) Window shutters will be removed, and the Washington Street entrance will remain. A new pocket park will replace some of the parking spaces at the southwest corner of the property. Each unit will have one surface parking space on the back or south side of the lot.

CAS Riegler proposes to build a new structure on the Pendleton Street side of the property to house eight one-level

condominium units. The new building will be red brick, setting it apart from the existing historic building's white-painted brick facade. The condo building will be oriented toward Pendleton Street, be set back significantly from Washington Street (leaving a grass/tree area at the corner), and provide an archway entrance to the parking area. They estimate that the building will be not more than fifty feet high. Both buildings will have some outdoor space on their top levels.

The developer is asking for a rezoning of the property from RM (residential, medium density) to OC (office/commercial) with a FAR of 1.25. Some residents of the adjoining properties have raised objections to this proposal, saying that the design does not conform to the Washington Street design standards and that the new building is too tall. City staff and the Board of Architectural Review continue working with the developer on these issues, and some changes have been made since the original proposal. Interior construction on the existing building has begun, and the developer expects occupancy sometime in 2015.

*Dominion Power Line Plan Continued* ...Some Council members questioned that the new line, which Johnson said would contribute to reliability in Alexandria's growing Franconia, Van Dorn, Carlyle, and North Old Town areas, would actually benefit the City, as the line would transmit power north out of the City. Council members countered that it would actually enable and benefit new data centers being constructed in Loudoun County.

After more than 90 minutes of presentation and questioning, Johnson promised community outreach and opportunities for input. The Mayor and Council made clear that the way to gain support from the City in the company's request to the relevant state permitting bodies would be to choose a route that caused the least possible inconvenience to Alexandria residents – either under the river or along the CSX right of way, not through city property.

City Council on June 24 voted to form a working group to examine how the proposed line and transmission station would affect residents' quality of life and impacts on the economy, environment, transportation, and electric reliability. The Underground Transmission Line and Substation Working Group is being put together now, with representation from NOTICE included. Dominion has begun a series of meetings with community stakeholders and will meet with the NOTICE board on June 21 at 7:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room at Portner's Landing. NOTICE board meetings are open to the public. Please let us know if you plan to come so we can arrange enough seating.

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## Bus Barn Update

The Bus Garage Advisory committee completed its work in early June. The NOTICE Member meeting in May was devoted to this topic, and we forwarded the comments we received at that meeting to the city for inclusion in its report to WMATA. Other members of the committee also sent their comments, and those comments and the committee's recommendations can be read at <http://www.alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=76115>. These views ranged from full support of the committee's recommendations to substantial criticism. Critical views focused on height and density issues. WMATA, the owner of the property, will decide the next steps. NOTICE will continue to monitor developments.

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## North Old Town History: City's Largest Movie House in 1947

*Reprinted from an Alexandria City History Update item*

On May 22, 1947, Alexandria's largest movie theatre, the Virginia, was dedicated at 601 First Street, with the feature presentation "Carnival in Costa Rica" starring Dick Haymes, as the opening night billing. The new theatre added 1,200 seats to the city's theatre inventory, far surpassing its closest competitors, the Reed Theatre at 1,100 and the Vernon at 980 seats respectively, and increasing capacity at the city's nine theatres to 9,000 seats. Designed by architects John and Drew Ebersson, the theatre reportedly had the largest stage and screen in the Washington metropolitan area. The General Electric Co. featured the new and innovative lighting installed in the theatre, seen here, as part of its nationwide advertising in 1949.



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## 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.*

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## 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

## New Resource List for Senior Residents

The Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services, has published a new Resource Directory of Services for the Aging and Disabled. NOTICE member Jan Macidull, who serves on the Alexandria Commission on Aging, recommends this 55-page trove of information to anyone who either needs services or knows someone who does. "Though focused on aging and disabled folks," she says, "there are a lot of resources in this list that everyone could use."

To access the list, go to [www.Alexandriava.gov/aging](http://www.Alexandriava.gov/aging) or call 703-746-5999.

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## What did we miss?

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

[christa@notice.org](mailto:christa@notice.org)

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## Contact NOTICE

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