



Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

By Ann Kaupp

The long-discussed Metrorail station at Potomac Yard has moved one step closer to reality. On April 24, Alexandria City staff issued to City Council a report recommending Alternative B as the site for the construction of a new Metrorail station. Coupled with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement published in March, the report will be considered by Council on May 20. The intense residential and commercial development taking place in Potomac Yard is expected to bring approximately 11,000 passengers per day to the area. By adding another Metro station to the available transit options, the City hopes to ease traffic congestion for area residents and workers.

Of the four sites considered, Alternative B was deemed desirable with regard to cost, including developer contributions. To gain National Park Service agreement to provide an easement and allow part of the station to be situated in the wetlands, the City offered to transfer 13.56 acres of local parkland adjacent to the George Washington National Parkway to the Park Service. In an April 20 letter, NPS agreed to the easement on 1.71 acres, saying that the land transfer would sufficiently mitigate the impact on wetlands.

Funding for the station would come from regional, state, and federal grants, special tax district revenues, and new tax revenues generated by development. No money would come from the City's General Fund budget.

The City will hold a public hearing May 16, and several boards and commissions are due to review the project prior to the May 20 Council decision. The City estimates the station will take approximately 2.5 years to complete.

President's Note by Tom Soapes

Member Meeting: NOTICE will hold its spring community meeting May 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Best Western Old Colony Inn. The program will be a forum for the candidates for the Democratic nomination for mayor of Alexandria. Mayor William Euille, Vice-Mayor Allison Silberberg, and former Mayor and Councilman Kerry Donley have accepted our invitation to address North Old Town voters. Each candidate will have a set time to speak and respond to questions. There will be time after the meeting for one-on-one conversation with the candidates. We have asked the candidates to give us their vision for the power plant site, the future of which is key to the future of North Old Town. Many complex issues will face the next mayor: redevelopment of many sites, including the waterfront and several sites in this area; tax policy; redesign of the sewer system; compensation for firemen and police; affordable housing; and many others. Bring your questions; hear their answers. The primary election will be June 9. (NOTE: As of this writing, Republicans had not fielded candidates.)

Development updates: City staff reports that they have not received any plans for redevelopment of the Bus Barn site. Recently, we noted survey activity at the

site, but we have no additional information to pass on. Interior demolition work has begun on the former Health Department building in the 500 block of N. St. Asaph Street. Construction of the townhouses there and in the connected parking lot on Oronoco Street will take approximately 18 months.

For more on projected developments on North Washington Street, see the April 28 article in the Washington Business Journal, accessible at: http://www.bizjournals.com/washington/breaking_ground/2015/04/this-old-town-corridor-will-lose-all-of-its-motels.html

NOTICE Community Meeting

Thursday, May 21
7 p.m. Register, mix and mingle


7:30 Candidates' Roundtable

Best Western Old Colony Inn
1101 N. Washington Street

Mixed Use Development Planned for Giant/ABC Site

By Christa Watters

Edens Developers, which purchased the Giant site at the Corner of St. Asaph and First streets some years ago, recently met with the NOTICE Board to present ideas for possible redevelopment of that site and the adjacent ABC building and parking lot, which extends to Montgomery Street between St. Asaph and Pitt streets. Edens was represented by land use attorney Cathy Puskar and Edens Vice President Krista Di Iaconi and Development Associate Alisa Brown. Though the store closed in February, the Giant Corporation still has a lease on the property through 2022. Edens hopes Giant will terminate the lease if the project goes forward. The ABC sale is not yet final, pending the result of exploratory meetings with community stakeholders before closing on the deal.

Edens specializes in retail development and recent projects include the Mosaic project in Merrifield and Union Market in the District of Columbia. They intend to design the 2.2-acre Giant/ABC project so it fits the neighborhood. It could include 50,000 square feet of retail uses at ground level, with potential tenants including a revamped and upgraded ABC store, full-service restaurants, personal services such as a yoga or fitness studio or a salon; a home goods store; and/or locally sourced fashion retail. The upper levels would be residential; whether rental or condo remains undecided; it could be a mix. 

ARHA Development Plans Coming *By Ernie Lehmann*

Some 75 to 80 people overflowing into the hallway outside the conference room at the new ARHA (Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority) headquarters at 401 Wythe Street attended a briefing on the planned redevelopment of two ARHA properties in North Old Town. One is the ARHA Administrative Building at 600 N. Fairfax Street; the other is the Hopkins-Tancil Court public housing located between Royal, Princess, N. Fairfax, and Pendleton Streets, a two-block area separated by Oronoco Street.

ARHA CEO Roy Priest explained that ARHA has faced major reductions in federal spending for public housing in recent years and needs to generate operating funds to maintain and replace the aging housing stock it holds.

As part of its 2012-2022 Strategic Plan, ARHA has issued a request for proposals (RFP) for redevelopment of several sites in the city, including the HQS and Hopkins-Tancil. ARHA plans to redevelop the Ladrey Senior building itself. ARHA is obliged by Council Resolution 830 to maintain 1,150 publicly assisted housing units in Alexandria. It is unclear how many of the units to be demolished at Hopkins-Tancil will be replaced on site. Final proposals are due in June, and ARHA hopes to present plans to the city by the coming fall/winter. Redevelopment is expected to be a multi-year process with residents of the 111 units at Hopkins-Tancil being relocated starting in spring 2017.

Because plans are indefinite until the developer proposals come in, ARHA is focused on meeting with community stakeholders to survey their opinions. Eight developers are competing for the various sites. Mr. Priest and other speakers from ARHA, the City's Planning and Zoning Office, and the Alexandria Office of Housing said developers were asked to submit plans for a mixture of market rate and affordable housing. Market rate housing enables ARHA to sustain the subsidized housing it is committed to.

The majority of those attending were neighborhood residents, with over 70 percent saying, during an instant result electronic survey, that they lived in public housing. The majority of respondents said the most important factor to them was the use of good design. Other concerns mentioned were open space, child care availability, and proximity to public transportation.

For more information, go to: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id+83919>

Mixed Use Development Continued... The project would have two levels of underground parking garage and up to five stories of residential above some portion of the retail. They plan internal loading zones for all uses, including parking.

This plan is still very general, with details to emerge as the project is finalized and goes through all the required City planning, zoning, and architectural review processes. The NOTICE board intends to follow the process closely and be involved at all stages.

Edens has hired Hord Coplan Macht as architects, and Bowman Engineering and Consulting as its civil engineer.

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

Upcoming Events

French Tall Ship to Visit Alexandria

June 10, 11, and 12.

The French ship L'Hermione, a replica of the ship that brought the Marquis de Lafayette and a contingent of French troops to our shores to support General Washington during the American Revolution, is traveling over 3800 miles across the Atlantic and will dock in Alexandria. L'Hermione will offer free tours and activities, but tickets are required for the tours.

Free tickets are available online at <https://shop.alexandriava.gov>

Click on the Events box and scroll down to L'Hermione.

NOTICE Board

President: Tom Soapes

Vice President:

Ernest Lehmann

Secretary:

Christa Watters

Treasurer: Frances Zorn

At Large:

Matt Hennesy

Howard Middleton

Clarence Tong

Roger Waud

What did we miss?

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

christa@notice.org

Contact NOTICE

703-684-1547

contact@notice-alexandria.org