

WINTER 2024

TAKE NOTICE

North Old Town Independent Citizens Association Newsletter



Welcome to the NOTICe Neighborhood

BY MARY HARRIS, PRESIDENT

In 2024, the North Old Town Independent Citizens Association, aka NOTICe, enters its **25th year** as your civic association. From Oronoco Street to Daingerfield Island along the waterfront, North Old Town (remember the old Giant/ABC block, the daily trains and power plant smoke?) has morphed into Old Town North, an active residential neighborhood with plenty of fun things to do. There’s more to improve, but construction is at a pause now. So, let's enjoy our 25th civic anniversary in OTN! We’ve earned it.

Join NOTICe neighbor happy hour socials each month hosted by the creative Trevor Riley. On Feb 7th meet new neighbors and old friends at the new Hotel AKA’s A Lounge and Cloud Bar on First Street from 5:15pm-7pm. Come to the NOTICe Winter Party at St. Elmo’s on March 7th. See page 2 for more details!

And 2024 is a big election year, from President & Congress to Mayor & City Council. We’ll be organizing a candidate’s forum in May before the June 18th primary election. OTN History Walking Tours and pop up events will also start in the Spring. If you want to hear what’s on the civic agenda (police, parks, streets, development...), RSVP to NOTICe monthly board meetings on the 2nd Wednesdays at 7 PM.

As always your help is needed to make meetings and social events a success, so if you can spare a few hours to volunteer please email us at NOTICe.communications@gmail.com . We want you!

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Who We Are: A Review of the NOTICe Bylaws

BY MELISSA KUENNEN, TREASURER

We thought with all the new residents in Old Town North, that it would be timely to re-introduce ourselves, and state the purpose and goals of the NORTH OLD TOWN INDEPENDENT CITIZENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION.

The Constitution and Bylaws were approved at the Membership Meeting on Nov 15, 2012 for this non-profit 501 C(3) entity composed of residents of the City of Alexandria, and others, who have a special interest in North Old Town. North Old Town is defined by the Old Town North Small Area Plan approved by the city in 2017, and is bounded by the Potomac River on the east, Oronoco Street on the south, the west side of North Washington Street on the east, and Daingerfield Island on the north.

Our purpose is to educate city residents, especially those residing in North Old Town, on matters of public interest, and to promote their interests, welfare and common good. You may be aware of our bi-monthly electronic newsletter and our twice-yearly membership meetings where we invite public speakers, but if any other of our goals pique your interest we always welcome your ideas and/or participation!

The Bylaws indicate how NOTICe accomplishes its purpose by:

A. Using written, oral and electronic communications and holding meetings 1) to educate and inform residents about current local issues such as upcoming development; 2) to educate and encourage residents to become aware of and involved in city policies, procedures and practices; and 3) to improve residents interaction with government officials.

B. Providing forum opportunities for city and other officials to discuss issues and proposed changes to standard practices with residents, particularly relevant to North Old Town.

C. Calling for and establishing resident task forces to monitor and study specific concerns and issues, and to inform the North Old Town neighborhood, elected officials, and civic leaders.

D. Communicating on a regular basis with other Alexandria civic associations, homeowner associations, and residents to maintain the awareness of the community regarding common interests and issues.

E. Keeping residents informed of local crimes, trends, and safety issues.

Share this newsletter with your new neighbors and friends and get them involved with NOTICe! We are only as strong as our members.

Meet Your 2024 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors elected their slate of officers for 2024. Learn more about them on our [website today!](#)

President: Mary Harris
Vice President: Margaret Townsend
Secretary: Kathryn Condello
Treasurer: Melissa Kuennen
President Emeritus: Mace Carpenter

Trevor A Riley will serve as **Communications and Events Manager.**



Introducing the NOTICe Social, our Monthly Neighborhood Social Hour

We are excited to announce a new monthly event: The NOTICe Social. There is not a dedicated program or speaker, just an opportunity to socialize with fellow neighbors at a local OTN restaurant. We were excited to take over the bar at A La Lucia in January and look forward to seeing everyone at the A Lounge and Cloud Bar in the Hotel AKA on **February 7th!** This is a great opportunity to introduce your new neighbors to NOTICe. We hope to see you there!



NOTICe Neighborhood Party Returns!

Join us on **Thursday, March 7th** at St Elmo's Old Town for our Annual Neighborhood Party! St Elmo's rolled out the stops for us last year, including a signature NOTICe Cocktail, and we are very excited to be back at this neighborhood favorite, right in the heart of Old Town North!

Program details and tickets will go on sale soon, so mark your calendars now so you don't miss our signature event.

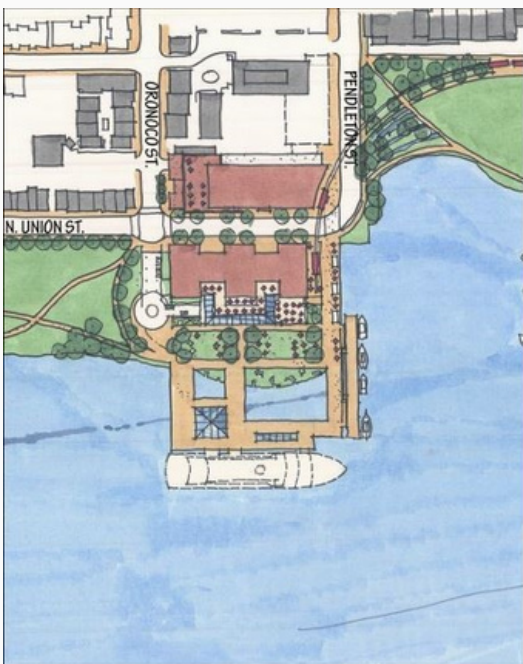
The 2023 Signature Cocktail:
The Hip to Be Squared

ROBINSON NORTH DEVELOPERS ARE BACK WITH ANOTHER PROPOSAL

BY AGNES ARTEMEL, BOARD MEMBER

Rooney Properties purchased the two Robinson Terminal North parcels (west and east) in 2015, after the Waterfront Plan was adopted. However, it was not able to make its plan for apartments and a hotel a reality at that time. Later, it proposed townhouses on the waterfront but that scheme was not compatible with the Waterfront Plan concepts of maximum accessibility to the waterfront for pedestrians. Now, another concept is coming forward that would provide mixed-use residential buildings on both sides of N. Union Street.

What does the Waterfront Plan prescribe for the site? Development on the site is largely governed by the Waterfront Settlement Agreement with the Federal Government. The three development parcels are allowed about 239,000 square feet of building. Height is a consideration, with the two riverfront parcels limited to 50 feet and 30 feet (closest to the river). The parcel west of Union St, currently occupied by a warehouse, is allowed 66 feet in height. The Waterfront Plan anticipates public space on the existing piers and fronting along Pendleton Street, where the RiverRenew project is currently active. It also requires “active frontage” on much of the ground floor of both buildings. The Plan goals include a land use mix that invites the public and encourages activity, extensive amenities and free access to the water’s edge, and improved pedestrian connections. The preferred use on the site is mixed use, emphasizing arts, history and culture and including vibrant commercial uses. The photo below illustrates the development concept according to the Plan adopted in 2012.



*Robinson Terminal North detail from
Waterfront Plan Illustrative Map*

The Waterfront Commission was slated to receive a briefing on the project proposal at its January meeting, which was cancelled due to snow. A briefing is now expected on February 20. There’s an opportunity earlier than that: the Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Group (UDAC) will receive a presentation on this project on February 7 at 9 am.

LADREY APARTMENTS REDEVELOPMENT GREENLIGHTED BY COUNCIL

BY AGNES ARTEMEL, NOTICE MEMBER

That tall institutional-looking building on the 300 block of Wythe Street is the Ladrey highrise that provides 170 apartments for extremely low-income elderly and disabled persons. On January 20, the Alexandria City Council gave the go-ahead to ARHA (the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority), WinnCompanies, and IBF Development to replace the current structure with a new building along both Wythe and Fairfax Streets that can provide 270 modern comfortable apartments for people 55 and over. All current residents will have the opportunity to return to the building after construction is complete. Residents of the building spoke passionately at the City Council public hearing about the deficits in the current building and their excitement of the prospect of returning to modern apartments and more building amenities.

The building provides a number of community benefits, including reducing the height from 11 stories to a maximum of 7 stories, undergrounding of utilities and parking, wider sidewalks with two rows of trees and landscaping, two pocket parks, an “Art Wall” and facades that are more compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding buildings.



Wythe Street facade, with Art Wall on the Fairfax St. facade

What happens next? The developer is going to be applying for low-income housing tax credit financing, while simultaneously preparing more detailed engineering and architectural drawings leading to a Final Site Plan to be approved by the City staff. It will also be preparing a detailed Construction Management Plan that spells out the techniques and safety measures it will use in taking down the existing building and constructing the new building. There will continue to be public outreach during these stages, and particularly as construction approaches. Current residents will be temporarily relocated to other buildings in Alexandria or other locations of their choice; a subcontractor is already working with them to identify their needs and desires.

This proposed new building helps to fulfill several objectives of the Old Town North Small Area Plan, including making Old Town North more of a mixed-income neighborhood.

SPEICAL GUEST WRITER

Power Plant Redevelopment Update: New Submissions & Community Resources

BY AMELIA CHASSE ALCIVAR, HILCO REDEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Plans for the first phase of Hilco Redevelopment Partners' (HRP) sustainable redevelopment of the former Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) in Old Town North continue to move through the City's review process as the project team maintains our commitment to provide regular community updates and opportunities for input from our neighbors.

In October 2023, HRP submitted the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) Concept 2 design plans for the first three blocks of development for City review and presented to the Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC). The designs present HRP's vision – informed by community feedback – for a vibrant mixed-use space with the mission to integrate the redevelopment with the rest of the neighborhood and connect the community with the waterfront while leveraging sustainable development strategies. The updated designs were also presented at a virtual community meeting hosted by HRP and are available at the project [website](#).

In January 2024, HRP filed our DSUP Concept 2 Plan for the nearly 14 acres of public open space that will be provided on and adjacent to the site. The plan was directly informed by the public Open Space Survey HRP conducted in the spring of 2023, which received over 800 responses. An analysis of the survey results is available at the project [website](#).



Rendering of Block A of the Hilco Redevelopment

SPEICAL GUEST WRITER

Power Plant Redevelopment Update: Continued

As deconstruction and development plans move forward, HRP is providing updated information on key topics of community interest via a new Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. Covering deconstruction and building timelines, building design and end use, parking plans, and wildlife management, the new FAQ is available at the project [website](#).

The HRP team continued to demonstrate our commitment to being good neighbors and community partners by sponsoring Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue's [kids coat drive event](#) in October and [joining ARHA to provide 250 turkeys](#) for residents of the Ladrey Hi-Rise apartments and their families ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday. Continued collaboration with local civic organizations and community leaders is a critical component of our work to build resilient and sustainable communities.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with our neighbors, community partners, and City leaders and staff to move this exciting redevelopment forward in 2024. Stay tuned to our website, social media platforms ([Facebook](#); [Twitter](#); [Instagram](#); [LinkedIn](#)), and sign up for our email list to receive updates on upcoming community meetings, events, and announcements.



Hilco Volunteers

NOTICe Celebrates Black History Month

BY MARY HARRIS, NOTICE TREASURER

This month NOTICe takes a look at some OTN black residents who made history.

Earl Lloyd (1928-2015)

These days everyone's talking about an NBA Arena in Potomac Yard. OTN has its own link to basketball history. In 1950 OTN "Berg" resident Earl Lloyd became the first black basketball player in the NBA. Growing up on the 400 block of Oronoco Street, Earl attended segregated black schools - Lyles Crouch in Old Town and Parker Gray High School. At 6'7", he was tall and talented. He became an All American basketball star at West Virginia State University and was recruited by then Washington Capitols NBA team. On October 31, 1950, Earl stepped onto the Uline Arena court in the Capitols first NBA season game making history as the National Basketball League's first black player. He is recognized in the Basketball Hall of Fame and on an historical plaque at 1020 Montgomery Street. You can also see his statue at Charles Houston Rec Center. Learn more and hear about Earl Lloyd's life and career at his [Hall of Fame induction](#)



Margaret Lomax (1951-) and James Lomax (1949-)

In 1959, Margaret Lomax was just 6 years old. She lived with her family in Cross Canal, an historic rural enclave in OTN populated by free black homeowners since the 1830's now surrounded by post WWII garden apartments. (Cross Canal stretched from First Street to Bashford Lane.) From her home on N. Fairfax Street Margaret could see the Ficklin Elementary school for white children at N 2nd & Royal Sts just steps from her door. But Margaret and her brother, James (8), had to walk a mile to the closest black school in south Old Town. On Feb 10th, 1959, following the Supreme Court's Brown vs Board of Education ruling to desegregate schools, with their mother Hazel, Margaret and James walked across the road and the color line to be the first black students at Ficklin School. Both excelled at school and Margaret later graduated as valedictorian. You can read about that day and school desegregation in Alexandria in this [2019 Zebra article](#).

Things to do in OTN for Black History Month

BY MARY HARRIS, NOTICE TREASURER

Walk : Take the self guided [African American Heritage Trail North](#) starting at the Cross Canal historic marker on Montgomery & N. Fairfax Sts. As you stroll around OTN read more than a dozen history “storyboards” along the street at new developments like the Alexan Florence, the Venue, and the Muse.

Watch: Two Youtube videos about OTN history and life in the Berg and Cross Canal: [NOTICE Time Capsule -100 years ago in Old Town North](#) featuring former City archaeologist Pam Cressey and [History of the Tide Lock property](#) (on N Fairfax St.in Cross Canal) with Ryan Whitaker, President of OTNA.

Listen: to the [Oral History of Virginia Knapper](#), resident of Cross Canal and Glass Factory worker. You can also read her story transcribed by NOTICE member and Office of Historic Alexandria volunteer .

Visit:the historic [Lee Fendall House Museum](#) at 614 Oronoco Street to learn about enslaved and free black workers or venture a few blocks across Washington Street to [Alexandria’s Black History Museum](#) on Wythe Street (now designated Parker Gray Way)

Eat: Dine in or Take out at [Haute Dogs and Fries](#), a Black-owned eatery in OTN at 610 Montgomery

Be sure to check out the Farmer’s Market article on page to learn about the Black-owned vendors.



Virginia Knapper



Haute Dogs on
Montgomery Street

What's Happening At The Farmer's Market

BY MARGARET TOWNSEND, VICE PRESIDENT

The Old Town North Farmers' and Artisans' Markets are continuing to flourish and grow as we head into late Winter with new vendors including David Argento of Papa's Produce, bringing us the very best from Adam's County, Pennsylvania and his Amish neighbors in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Sincerely, Carbs, SustainblyDMarie, Jerry's All Natural Mixtures, Hyper - Goat and several other local artisans.

Look for several old favorites as wellIgnacio's Fresh Produce returning in mid February with fresh produce from the Valencia Family Farm in Northern Neck Virginia, Buddin Bakery with gluten-free, egg-free options, Rolling Sloane's baked sourdough bread fresh from the oven, Ana's Twist 's Signature Soups and Empanadas and Harlow's Cakes and Cupcakes.

One of the delights of the market is the wide variety of offerings; sustainably grown local produce, fresh baked goods, a variety of easy take home meals including Jerk Chicken, samosas with an Afro Caribbean vibe and starting Sunday, the market's newest vendor joins with Asian food offerings, made with fresh sourced ingredients from the local farms.

For our farmers, the growing and sharing of fresh, healthy produce is a true labor of love and over the past year they have participated in gleaning programs donating produce to ALIVE, the Annie B. Rose House, Samuel Tucker Elementary School and Friends of Guest House.

Artisans at the market also offer indulgences for the body and soul from Glow Body and Soul Spa, Jean Bee Apothecary, Jerry's Mixtures, handcrafted jewelry and vintage goods, and for our four legged friends, healthy treats from Baney Bones and Grateful Pup.

The market also serves as a community hub with Compost Drop off Station on Sundays, a SNAP Table, making it possible for our neighbors in need to shop at the market for fresh healthy foods , a community table where local updates are shared and community members can come together and chat with their neighbors.

Also important to note in the month of February, African American History Month, several of our local vendors are black owned small businesses including, Sincerely, Carbs, Buddin Bakery, Regi's Slaws, SustainblyD Marie and Jerry's All Natural Mixtures.

It's all at the Market, Alexandria's Favorite Dog Friendly Market.

The Thursday Market returns on Thursday, March 21st, the Spring Equinox. 3 pm -7 pm