

Take

NOTICe

North Old Town Independent Citizens' Association

Spring 2021

Welcome Spring and COVID vaccinations!

Here we are at last year's winter party before the shut down!



We've missed seeing each other in person but I hope by the end of summer we'll be meeting again and doing some neighborhood walking tours and social events.

It's been a busy winter in North Old Town. NOTICe launched our new [website](#) and hosted a [Winter History Time Capsule](#) event for members and neighbors featuring former ALX Archeologist Pam Cressey last month. NOTICe Board also worked with City Transportation Mobility staff and the Traffic and Parking Board to define a new District 9 Residential Parking Permit (RPP) map and relocate the [BikeShare station](#) on N St Asaph to N Pitt and Montgomery Streets. Thanks to NOTICe Member James Lewis for keeping us plugged in. With Agnes Artemel's help, we're reviewing the City's proposed Mobility Plan and DASH transit changes for effects on Old Town North. NOTICe is advocating for a shuttle bus loop between Old Town North and King Street. NOTICe Board Member Eleanor Quigley took the lead in crafting NOTICe's position urging the City to consider alternatives to tree removal and channelizing [Taylor Run](#). Agenda Alexandria featured two NOTICe Board members – Mary Harris and Agnes Artemel - in its March broadcast discussing the Power Plant site and "[Transformation in Old Town North](#)". We are so happy the Power Plant has a developer. Over the next month, we're putting together NOTICe expectations for the Power Plant site to share with City officials and Hilco. We want to hear your questions and thoughts at: notice.communications@gmail.com

Heartfelt thanks to NOTICe Member Louise Kenny and Board Members Margaret Townsend and Mace Carpenter who worked with City leaders to bring a remembrance of Alexandria loved ones lost to COVID-19 to Old Town North's Rivergate Park. *The Remembrance* will open April 16th.

Finally, it's a local election year in Alexandria – Mayor and City Council races as well as state offices are on the ballot June 8th and in November. We're now asking candidates their views on matters of importance to Old Town North – the Power Plant site, the Arts, public space and development. We will share those responses with you beginning next week!

So, it's time to get outside and enjoy Spring in North Old Town. The ospreys have returned to their Potomac perches. Neighbors are heading to the Mount Vernon Trail, waterfront parks and local restaurants. Need some help deciding what to do? Visit NOTICe on Facebook @NOTICeALX and take the virtual tour of [North Old Town is Delicious](#).

Mary Harris, President

Membership Corner

The popularity of our "North Old Town Is..." digital series (OTN is Delicious, Artistic, Open, and Health & Safety in OTN), our NOTICe Time Capsule presentation and NOTICe's influence in development in our neighborhood (especially interest in the Power Plant development) has led to a surge in NOTICe membership in the past several months! We are grateful for your support!

Now is time to invite your neighbors to join in the fun, stay up-to-date on what's happening in our neighborhood, and have a voice to improve our quality of life in Old Town North! They can join [online](#) or have them submit the membership form at the bottom of this newsletter.

Karen Branding, Treasurer and Membership Chair

North Old Town Development Update

Construction in our neighborhood has picked up recently. While three projects that started this year are near topping off (**Muse** at 1201 N. Royal, **Venue** at 925 N. Fairfax, **The Alexan** at the Bus Barn block), we recently witnessed the start of the partial demolition and future reconstruction of the office building at **801 N. Fairfax** Street. The exterior finishes will be stripped off (creating a lot of dust at the moment) and the building's facade will change completely as it is remodeled into residential units.

On the small business front, **Yunnan by Potomac** just completed an interior renovation and is now open for dinner.

Please look at our new [Development Status](#) map which will be updated weekly to reflect what's going on in our neighborhood.

Agnès Artemel, Board Member Emeritus and Trevor A. Riley, Secretary

The Power Plant Site Development

NOTICe has been monitoring and participating in all activities and events related to the Power Plant site in the north end of Old Town North since its inception in 1999. NOTICe made its first

grant of \$250 to NOTICE member Elizabeth Chimento to help her attend a conference on coal emissions. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Power Plant site is located along the Mount Vernon Trail and waterfront between Bashford and Slaters Lanes, with its entrance at the end of N Royal Street (1300 N Royal). Over the last 10 years, NOTICE worked with City Council, City Attorneys and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services to clean up emissions from the site, monitor its compliance and advocate for its closure and eventual redevelopment with extensive public uses and parkland. Long time NOTICE members will recall our project with Dr. Shelley Mastran and Virginia Tech's School of Urban Planning and architecture to develop a conceptual design for what the site could become. They envisioned a major cultural anchor building, expanded public space and an adjacent transit corridor linking Old Town North and Potomac Yard. Most of these ideas are in the current Old Town North Small Area Plan (SAP) adopted in 2017.

The Old Town North SAP outlined a [vision for future redevelopment of the site](#) informed by residents, stakeholders and planning staff. But the actual concept and design for the site will now be developed by the property owners through a coordinated and consultative planning process over the next year. It's been a long road but the last bit of industrial blight on the Alexandria Waterfront will soon be transformed.

Since its purchase in November, Hilco, the new owner of 18 acres of the 25-acre former PEPCO /Mirant then NRG-GenOn Power Plant, has been meeting with City officials, city appointees and city staff. Council members and city staff have toured the site with Hilco staff and consultants. In February, Hilco held a public ZOOM webinar to introduce themselves and their design and planning consultants to the rest of us. NOTICE welcomed Hilco to our neighborhood and asked questions about both the process and the timeline for early public involvement. If you missed it, you can watch it [here](#). Watch the NOTICE [website](#) for Power Plant news and updates as it happens.

Mary Harris, President

Update on the Taylor Run project

Since the NOTICE Board voted unanimously to urge the City to postpone and pursue alternatives to its proposed Taylor Run project in February, there has been growing opposition to the destruction of over 200 healthy trees including many towering giants, removal of tons of soil along 1900 ft. of the stream, and harm to rare plant communities, small aquatic creatures, and the web of underground life.

After studying the waterway, Dr John Fielding, a respected professional in fluviology, testified further erosion is not likely to occur and any further damage could be addressed with natural log pilings. In addition, other nearby stream renovation projects have failed or invasive plants took over. He believes that initiating this project as planned will lead to damage, not remediation. Please note that this project will not improve the City's flooding problems.

NOTICE carefully reviewed the City's Environmental Policy Commission's (EPC) March 10th position letter. This thoughtful, thorough, and well-written document integrates pertinent issues about why the Taylor Run project should not proceed. It affirms errors of judgment and possible ethical lapses inherent in the project. The letter twice includes the phrase "by the least ecologically destructive method" as it addresses protection of the sanitary sewer pipes and

prevention of stream bank erosion. Click [here](#) to read the entire EPC letter.

NOTICE is in good company. In addition to the EPC, Councilwoman Amy Jackson, former Mayor Alison Silberberg, ten other civic associations, the Alexandria Environmental Council, the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, and the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society oppose the Taylor Run project. Click [here](#) to read NOTICE's resolution.

Eleanor Quigley, Member at Large

The Reimagined Taste of Old Town North

This two-month stroll through the Neighborhood begins April 21st and continues through June 21st. Presented by the Old Town North Community Partnership, with support from the City of Alexandria, local businesses and not for profits; the Reimagined Taste provides an opportunity for friends and neighbors in Alexandria and the DMV to check out the goods and services of Old Town North's local businesses. The Reimagined Taste, a perfect opportunity to shop local, shop happy, and do some good!

During the two months of the Reimagined Taste, participating businesses will offer discounts to Passport holders. Passports will be available for purchase on the Old Town North Community Partnership [website](#) and at the Community Table at the Thursday Farmer's Market beginning in early April. The Taste Passport is \$10 and a percentage of Passport Sales will benefit local not for profit ALIVE! Participating businesses include Cafe 44 and their new venture, Bar 44, Goldfinch Design and Decor, River's Edge Yoga, St Elmo's Old Town North, Tamburro Interiors, The Royal Restaurant and Wheel Nuts Bike Shop.

Alexandria City Mayor, Justin Wilson will kick off the event, Thursday, April 22nd at 5pm at the Old Town North Farmer's Market.

Margaret Townsend, Member at Large

Upcoming NOTICE and North Old Town Events

Candidates Spotlight Several of the candidates running for City Council will share their thoughts with us on issues facing North Old Town and the City. We will feature one candidate a day on [Facebook](#) beginning April 12th and their responses will be collected and posted on our website. Early voting for the primary begins on April 23rd.

The Remembrance North Old Town's Memorial to the victims of Covid-19 was spearheaded by North Old Town Resident Louise Kenny and will be on display in Rivergate Park from April 16th to June 21st. The dedication will take place on April 16th at 4:30pm. The memorial is sponsored by NOTICE and the City of Alexandria.

Thursday's Farmers Market The Farmers Market continues in Montgomery Park, with new warm weather hours of 3p-7p. Stop by to shop our local vendors, rain or shine!

Want to Join NOTICe or Renew Your Membership?

NOTICe Membership Form

North Old Town Independent Citizens Civic Association

Fiscal Year November 1, 2020 – October 31, 2021

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: ___ INDIVIDUAL (\$15) ___ COUPLE/FAMILY (\$25)

___ SPONSOR (\$50) ___ ANGEL (\$150 or more)

Make your check payable to NOTICe and mail your payment to:

NOTICe
P. O. Box 25571
Alexandria, VA 22313

***Have suggestions, comments, recommendations for Take NOTICe? Email us at
notice.communications@gmail.com***