

# The Old Town Crier

The Monthly Newsletter of the Old Town Civic Association, Inc.

## Announcing the June Program and Notice of the Meeting And the Notice for the Annual Meeting

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 11, 2008

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m., Socializing with Neighbors; 7:30 p.m., Program

**LOCATION:** The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street

### PROGRAM AGENDA:

- (1) **POLICE REPORT: LT. JAMIE BARTLETT**
- (2) **REPORT FROM THE VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE: DEL. DAVID ENGLIN**
- (3) **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2008-2010**

### ELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

The Nominating Committee is pleased to submit the following slate of nominees for election to terms beginning at the June 11, 2008 Annual Meeting:

#### OFFICER NOMINEES

		<b><i>TERM</i></b>
President	Poul Hertel, 1217 Michigan Court	2008-2009
Vice President	Douglas Thurman, 804 Duke Street	2008-2009
Treasurer	Bert Ely, 901 King Street	2008-2009
Corresponding Secretary	Linda Couture, 505 Duke Street	2008-2009
Recording Secretary	Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet, 26 Wolfe St.	2008-2009

#### DIRECTOR NOMINEES

At Large	John Gosling, 208 South Fayette Street	2008-2010
North of King Street, West	Christa Lyons, 818 Cameron Street	2008-2009*
South of Franklin	Dianne Hicks, 202 Green Street	2008-2010
South of King Street, West	Vincent "Chip" Carlin, 1302 Prince St.	2008-2010

\*Nomination to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Poul Hertel.

#### CONTINUING DIRECTORS

Central	Timothy Elliott, 422 South Fairfax Street	2007-2009
North of King Street, East	Jonathan Aaronsohn, 821 Rivergate Place	2007-2009

(Messrs. Aaronsohn and Elliott are completing the first year of their two-year terms.)

The election will take place at the June 11, 2008 Annual Members Meeting, among the nominees submitted by the Nominating Committee. No additional members were nominated

from the floor at the May 14, 2008 meeting; no other nominations (including nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting) are in order.

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Old Town Civic Association, Inc., for the election of officers and directors and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before it, will be held on June 11, 2008 at the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria, beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Board of Directors has fixed May 20, 2008 as the record date for the meeting; all persons who are members of the association as of that date will be entitled to receive notice and to vote at the Annual Meeting.

### **REMARKS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON ADMINISTRATIVE SUPs**

Dear Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission:

Here we go again. Another unneeded change to the way we currently do business in the City of Alexandria. Haven't there been enough adverse changes to the landscapes of King and Washington Streets? The egregious small mall; the ugly art deco façade on the Hotel Monaco; the oversized Saul Center; the non-conforming Jefferson Building; the valet parking disrupting traffic on King Street and the tour buses running wild. Who continues to ignore 802 N. Washington Street which has been boarded up for probably 10 years and now has been encapsulated in chicken wire?

Every time I turn around someone in the City Government is intent on destroying the character and historic fabric of Old Town. Where does all this end? Now we want to let restaurants with less than 60 patrons to be approved administratively. It sure can't be because there are too few restaurants being approved for King Street.

At last count there are 60 restaurants from the unit block of King to the King Street Metro and that doesn't include the 22 restaurants two blocks north or south of King Street.

Why after just three years since the Planning Commission and the Council approved the King Street Retail Strategy in May of 2005 are we now going to change the ground rules for restaurants on King Street? What has changed? NOTHING. Except that someone whispered in the Mayor's ear that the City Government of Alexandria was unfriendly toward new businesses. In fact there is no data available to support the need for a change. Ironically the old system sure hasn't curtailed restaurants coming into Old Town.

Doing away with formal SUPs for restaurants is a terrible policy. The formal system was transparent so that every citizen had the opportunity to publicly comment during the process before the Planning Commission and the Council. The lack of transparency happens when government attempts to do things they know the citizenry would oppose. To supplant the old system's notifications with newspaper ads, and mail/email notices to civic associations is absolutely ridiculous. Associations conduct business differently. One may only need the Board of Directors while others may have to have the approval of the entire membership. The associations meet at varied times so there is absolutely no way you can capture all of these concerned citizen organizations simultaneously.

I personally asked the Planning Staff “Why not at least put these SUP requests on the Consent Calendar?” As you might guess I was blown off. Look the Planning Staff doesn’t have the sufficient number of personnel to conduct business this way. They can’t start the Waterfront Plan until next January, plus they have a number of development areas that require their full attention. They can’t even get the BAR docket out in sufficient time for those interested in the historic preservation of Old Town so that we can do our due diligence before the BAR’s hearing. Why are they biting off more than they can chew?

Now we get a 92 page document last week outlining the new ground rules for the zoning for small businesses in Alexandria. OTCA stands hand and glove with the Federation of Civic Association’s request that this item be deferred to at least the September time frame.

OTCA Board of Directors  
Townsend A. “Van” Van Fleet, President

**WHERE WE HAVE BEEN**

The City’s Planning Directorate has informed us that IDI (Mr. Cecchi) will not bring back their request to build a 172 foot structure at Hunting Terrace back to the Planning Commission until October. On the 20th of May, the Waterfront Committee was briefed regarding the building of a boutique hotel at Robinson Terminal North. OTCA joined with the Federation of Civic Associations in voting to defer the Administrative SUP process until at least September. Subsequently, the Planning Commission deferred the process until July. The OTCA Board of Directors approved a set of Tour Bus Standards that will keep these large buses out of Old Town. Now, the City’s newly created Tour Bus Task Force will have to follow suit. Our two members appointed to the Task Force are Sarita Schotta and Bert Ely. Many thanks to all of you and the Board of Directors for your kind assistance during my two years as your President.

*Townsend A. “Van” Van Fleet  
President*

**NEXT MEETING ABOARD THE CHERRY BLOSSOM IN SEPTEMBER**