



SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

MINUTES

SRCA BOARD MEETING

October 6, 2022 – 7:30 PM by Zoom Conference Call

In attendance:

Richie Weiblinger, President; Jeanne Jacob, Immediate Past President; Karen Meade, Secretary; Scott Sutherland, Treasurer; Krista Ludwig Poretz, First Vice President; Katie Dominick, Second Vice President; David Pritzker, Parliamentarian; Beth Chase, SSSAS Liaison; Mike Brookbank, Historian; SRCA Residents: Pat Tokarz, Patricia Evans, Harriett, and one unidentified “Zoom user”

1. Welcome and President’s Report – Richie Weiblinger

1.1. Welcome to the New SRCA Board Members and SR Residents Joining Meeting:

Weiblinger welcomed new and returning Board members, Committee Chairs and new block captains.

1.1.1 Questions/Concerns from SR Residents – “Open Mic”: There were no issues raised during the first Open Mic session.

1.2. Any Additions to Agenda: There were no new additions made to the agenda.

1.3. Reports from SRCA’s ACPD Liaison/Alexandria’s Sheriff’s Liaison

1.3.1. Officer Moore: Officer Moore was unable to attend the meeting.

1.3.2. Officer Houston: Officer Houston was unable to attend the meeting.

1.4. Confirm Date/Time of SRCA Future Meetings (First Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm): The Board agreed to maintain this meeting schedule.

2. Secretary’s Report – Karen Meade

2.1. Feedback received since Annual Meeting regarding delivery format preference for future SRCA directories:

Meade noted that five additional household votes were received via email after the picnic (two in favor of electronic, three in favor of printed). Combined with the votes received at the annual picnic (21 in favor of electronic, nine in favor of printed), this brings the total number of household votes received to date to 23

in favor of electronic, 12 in favor of printed. Since a total of only 35 votes were received out of 237 SRCA households, the Board agreed it would be best to table the decision for now, give residents at least one more opportunity to provide feedback, and follow-up at a later date. A discussion ensued about possible solutions moving forward. Some preliminary suggestions included the following: Jacob noted it may make sense to print directories at least once more since at the very least, the Board needs to print the new bylaws and covenants that were just approved (which Pritzker is in the process of updating), so bundling them together would be logical. One resident suggested posting the directory, bylaws and covenants online for one year and then taking a new vote a year from now. Meade responded that concerns have been raised from some residents in the past about having their contact information posted on a public website, but that we could research how to post it to a password protected page on the website if there's enough interest in this option. It was noted, however, that the password for password-protected sites are difficult to remember so that not be an ideal solution. Another suggestion was made to provide an electronic version to all and offer a printed version for a fee. Poretz noted that some prefer a PDF version of the directory for environmental reasons, while others still prefer a printed copy, so she questioned whether we could offer both options depending on personal preference, and that the printed version could be more simple vs. nicely bound to keep costs down. Pritzker recommended distributing the directory in PDF format via email to all SRCA residents but indicating in the newsletter that if the electronic version presents a problem for anyone and a resident would still prefer a printed copy, to provide instructions for whom they can contact to obtain a printed copy. All of these suggestions will be taken into consideration when we revisit this discussion at a later date.

2.2. Google Drive repository for SRCA documents: Meade is working on storing and organizing SRCA-related documentation on a Google shared drive associated with the news4srca@gmail.com email so that important SRCA documents no longer reside only on individual hard drives. Many SRCA documents such as meeting agendas, minutes, and newsletters already reside on the public SRCA website, but others do not such as Board position roles and responsibilities, software training materials, event flyers, etc. Sutherland suggested that Meade confer with SRCA Historian, Mike Brookbank, to include him in this effort and make sure we're not duplicating efforts or reinventing the wheel.

3. Treasurer's Report – Scott Sutherland

3.1. Dues Income/New Members Through September 30: Through September 30th, 109 neighbors had paid SRCA dues. Sutherland has received about five additional checks since September 30th and will be depositing them soon. Pritzker inquired about how many paying members there were last year. Sutherland did not know but offered to look it up. Jacob said she felt we're about average, possibly even a little higher than normal at this time of year.

3.2. Total SRCA Assets as of September 30: Deposits to the account totaled \$5758.92 during September. Our bank balance as of September 30th was \$21,907.32.

3.3. Annual Meeting/Picnic Expenses: There are three checks outstanding totaling \$4,300.73 to reimburse: Laura Plati for rental of the Moon Bounce, generator, and several field games for the annual picnic and for eight new neighbor's gift cards; Susan Clark-Sestak for expenses related to the annual meeting and picnic including the food, water, ice, and stationery supplies; and Jeanne Jacob for expenses related to the annual meeting including printing, neighborhood signs and stationery supplies.

4. First Vice President's Report – Issues Affecting Seminary Ridge – Krista Ludwig Poretz

4.1. Seminary Hill Civic Association Report – Poretz: SHA last met 8 September 2022. Paul Judge provided updates from SHA President Carter Flemming at our last SRCA Board meeting and at the annual meeting as documented in the minutes for those events. To learn more about the topics discussed by SHA, please visit [Home \(seminaryhillassn.org\)](http://seminaryhillassn.org).

Poretz reached out to Ms. Flemming via email to introduce herself and confirm various upcoming dates and methods of communication including subscribing to SHA news (which anyone can request via their website to receive monthly updates and meeting notices). Please note the SHA is currently without a volunteer webmaster so some items have not been updated or posted for September such as the 8 September meeting minutes. The next meeting of SHA Board will take place on **Thursday, 13 October at 7:00 p.m. at 3606 Seminary Road (Immanuel Church on the Hill Parish Hall)**. Poretz plans to attend this meeting. Per the SHA website, Jeff Farner, Office of Planning and Zoning, will discuss the new Alexandria West Plan process. The Alexandria West Planning Process will “update the long-term vision for the 1992 Alexandria West Plan and integrate the 2012 Beauregard Plan.” Seminary Hill will be an active participant in this process. More information can be found about this project at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/AlexandriaWest>.

Ms. Flemming is planning to email Poretz the agenda this week for the meeting on 13 October.

One issue of interest communicated by Ms. Flemming since the SHA 8 September meeting and our SRCA 18 September Annual meeting was a letter that SHA sent on behalf of the neighbors in the Varsity Park area surrounding Hammond on 4 October to Karl Moritz, Director of Planning and Zoning, asking for determination on several questions that have been raised about the Special Use Permit for lighting at Hammond Middle School (HMS).

The Planning Commission was planning on hearing the HMS lighting issue at their meeting tonight, 6 October. On behalf of the neighbors, Ms. Flemming “plans to speak asking the Planning Commission to defer a decision on this approval until the legal questions have been answered about this application, as well as other questions regarding the issues that neighbors have raised regarding maintenance, response to

complaints, etc. **A copy of the letter has been included for reference in Exhibit 1 of this document.**

At tonight's hearing, staff will be requesting deferral of docket item #5 (athletic field lights at five locations). The purpose of the deferral is for staff to prepare additional exhibits that will more clearly show how the proposals meet all applicable requirements. **Update as of 10/6:** The letter was successful in deferring the topic for decision at the Planning Commission meeting and also means it will not be considered by City Council on the 15th as planned.

Per the SHA website, "coming up this fall will be several initiatives in which Seminary Hill Association will be participating. The "Zoning for Housing" initiative that has resulted in the adoption of ADUs, co-living, and other "soft density" zoning changes will be brought forward, as per Mayor Wilson's instruction to staff, as a bundled group of zoning changes intended to create more affordable housing in the city. Mayor Wilson writes that this comprehensive "Zoning for Housing" proposal will be "more substantial" and "make an impact in improving affordability" in our city. It can be anticipated that some of these changes will relate to the zoning for single-family homes.

In addition, this fall the city will start community engagement for an Alexandria "Vision Plan." Mayor Wilson writes that this plan "will craft an updated community vision for our city's future." This vision will ultimately update our Master Plan, future Small Area Plans, and our zoning ordinance. SHA will pay close attention to any information about this "Vision Plan" and let residents know how and when to let their voices be heard in this very important discussion."

In addition to the upcoming 13 October SHA Board meeting, Poretz will also attend, along with Paul Judge, the **SHA Annual meeting at the VA Theological Seminary, Evans Auditorium, on 10 November 2022 at 7pm.**

Poretz also shared the following updates regarding construction of the new Douglas MacArthur Elementary School:

Douglas MacArthur Elementary School Construction

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

Bill Pfister

wcpfister@gmail.com

Below is a two-week look ahead for construction at Douglas MacArthur. We want to thank you for distributing these updates to your community. Please continue to do so, as we want to ensure all of our neighbors receive timely and accurate information

straight from the source. We have recently navigated to a new platform to distribute our newsletter. The new platform requires everyone, including those who have previously signed up, to subscribe again. Subscribing to our newsletter here: <https://acps.cc/acps-newsletters> ensures you will be updated on the latest project developments and updates.

Two Week Lookahead: October 3, 2022– October 16, 2022

Virginia American Water is planning on starting utility work this week, beginning at the west side of the site. One lane will be closed this week and is expected to continue through next week. The contractor will be performing this work under the extended public space permit. The affected sidewalks have been closed, and a temporary crosswalk and alternate pedestrian routes have been established. Once the work is complete and driven fence posts are installed, Skanska will open up the sidewalk for public use.

The following activities will begin on site:

- Fireproof patching
- Waterline installation
- Level 2 Sprinkler Installation
- Courtyard Exterior Sheathing
- Roofing installation in Area A and B

The following activities are ongoing at the site:

- Level 1 Sprinkler Installation
- Storm and Sanitary Branch Lines Installation
- Site Walls 1 and 2 Installation
- Area D - Miscellaneous Concrete Pours
- Waterline Installation
- Stair B and Stair D - Concrete Installation
- Brickshelf Angle Detailing and Installation
- Level 1 Area A, Level 2 Area B - Duct Installation
- Level 2 Mechanical Room – Equipment Installation
- Level 3 Exterior Framing Install
- Level 1 Area C and Level 2 Area B - Interior Framing Install

Community members may contact our new Project Superintendent, Bill Lemley, with Skanska at any time with issues or complaints they are experiencing related to construction at bill.lemley@skanska.com or via cell phone at 301-672-7151. In addition, general project questions should continue to be sent to newmacarthur@acps.k12.va.us.

4.2. West End Coalition Report – Jacob: Mike D’Orazio and Jeff Farmer made a presentation on the City’s AlexWEST plan to the civic association presidents of Alexandria’s West End.

Farmer provided an overview of the outreach and explained why this is being done now. The City has received many requests from developers for changes in zoning and, instead of doing this all individually, the City decide to include the community so it could be done all at once instead of piece meal. There is great diversity in this part of Alexandria. They want to build partnerships, to hear from everyone – renters as well as owners. They will be updating the website, which is very basic right now and including using social media to reach out. It should take 14-15 months to complete the plan. There are concerns for safety, open spaces, retail (mom & pop type), traffic flow, etc. They want to know the community’s concerns before planning starts.

This was a very different presentation than the one at AFCA the previous evening. This one had many more questions from the civic association leaders. Questions included:

- Ecology – What are the sustainability plans. Will more native species be planted. In the past, the City planted trees with no plan for appropriate location, type, etc.
- Transportation – Alexandria needs and uses cars as well as public transportation. Why bike lanes?
- Density – Discussion around The Hamlets fate. Will it be razed to make multi-storied affordable housing? What happens to the mature tree cover?
- Open Space – Plan will deplete the West End of open space. Where are the parks?
- Home Ownership vs Rentals – Very few owners in West End, mostly renters.
- Infrastructure Missing in West End – Not enough to support new growth. Will there be new schools if more people?
- Basic Necessities – City is not providing the basics (road pavement, high-speed internet, trash services, etc.)
- 2049 Vision Plan – How does AlexWEST mesh with the City’s 2049 plan.

4.3. Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations Report – Jacob: President Carter Flemming welcomed the group and introduced APD Chief Don Hayes who said he plans to meet with all civic association. He is concerned that they have lost contact with the community due to Covid, and he wants to get back into the neighborhoods. Chief Hayes said they will be going to Alexandria’s schools as well.

He has 40 years with ACPD. He noted that crime is up 7% in Alexandria, and it is mostly property crime – stolen autos up 53% and larceny up 13%. He noted that they are budgeted for 321 full-time staff of which 104 are professional staff. Yet they are still short as they have only 298 officers now with 273 active officers (others out for various reasons). Because of the shortage, they have gone to a “modified” call to services; if an issue can be resolved by phone, they won’t send an officer out.

He then took questions from the group. Jacob thanked him for sending 5 staff to SRCA's Annual Meeting and noted how pleased SRCA is with Officer Moore's reporting to us by attending our monthly meetings and relaying issues of concern to our community.

Next on the Agenda was a briefing by Planning and Zoning Staff. City staffer JC Ayala reported on the AlexWEST Plan. The City has been approached by developers to change the Beauregard Plan to be able to build more affordable housing. Instead of doing this piece-meal, the City decided to move forward with an AlexWEST Plan. He noted that it is an 18-month input process with the first meeting being virtual on November 3. There were very few questions, but most concerned density issues.

Stephanie Sample reported next on Loading Zones in Alexandria and the impact of big trucks taking up sidewalk and street space. The City is considering FAR Exclusions and Special Use Permitting to expand loading space within buildings to help keep delivery truck off of public ways.

Tony La Calla addressed Development issues normally covered by Rob who was on vacation. There are five athletic fields seeking SPUs for lighting (4646 Seminary Road – Hammond School; 1501 – Jefferson Houston School; 4643 King – Patrick Henry School; and 6000 – Simpson Field. Woodbine Nursing Home is seeking an addition permit.

Also, staff has been saying "no" with the community saying "yes" on expanded space in the West End. The former Land Rover property on Duke Street will be temporarily used by Lindsay Cadillac until the building is razed to build affordable housing. There is still a major issue of an ADU built at 1814 Vassar Street that "hovers over" the property at 811 Clovercrest. The City will not do anything about the size of the ADU as it has been built within the "zoning rules" covering ADUs.

Announcements:

Roy Byrd reported that AFCA has a new application form and is reviewing the bylaws. Yon Lambert (Director of T&ES) has been promoted to Assistant City Manager. (Acting??)

Jeff Lipsky, the new AFCA Communications Chair, noted that virtual meetings are making it easier for all to attend.

Weiblinger noted that if anyone is interested in having any of these City representatives come present at a future SRCA Board meeting to please contact him.

5. Second Vice President's Report – SRCA Events – Katie Dominick

5.1. Annual Meeting Recap – Weiblinger: Weiblinger commented that the annual picnic was a fantastic event, with great weather and great representation from families. There was a lot of really good dialog at the annual meeting, with many great questions posed to the police officers.

5.2. Picnic Recap – Jacob: Jacob reported that 150+ people signed up for the picnic. Laura Plati did a great job with the games that were set up, and the moon bounce was the most popular. Everyone enjoyed the food and Susan Clark-Sestak did a great job labeling names on all of the meal boxes. Two recommendations were made for next year: (1) offer a boxed option more suitable for children next year such as chicken nuggets as an example, and/or (2) switch back to traditional potluck/buffet style food instead of boxed sandwiches.

5.3. Upcoming Events/Activities – Dominick

5.3.1. October 31 – Halloween Celebration:

- **Cul-de-Sac Location:** Dominick confirmed the Halloween party and parade will be held in the Hardee Place cul-de-sac again this year starting at 5:00 pm.
- **Pizza Party Revival:** Pizzas and individual bags of chips, juice and small water bottles will be served. Poretz suggested using Fairlington Pizza which SRCA has used in prior years. Jacob noted that any leftover water bottles can be used at the Holiday party. Glow sticks will also be provided for the children. Dominick plans to reach out to Officer Moore to see if he would be willing to select the best costumes in the costume parade and perhaps provide a small prize to the top three winners.
- **Fire Truck/Ambulance:** Dominick has already reached out to the local fire department (#206) and Officer Moore, and a fire truck and police car will be present pending any emergencies that may arise.
- **House Decoration Contest:** Per Jacob, the Board held this contest in 2020 in lieu of the Halloween cul-de-sac party due to Covid. Several Board members expressed interest in organizing the contest again this year since there has been a lot of turnover in the neighborhood lately and a lot of new families with children have moved in. Jacob suggested it could be very simple this year. She indicated dropping nickels in buckets didn't work well last year because some disappeared, so instead she recommended putting together a committee to judge the contest. Jacob also reminded the Board that the contest should include both covenant and non-covenant members. Dominick will ask that residents email her if they would like to participate in the Halloween Decoration Contest or be part of the judging committee.
- **Approval of Funds –** Dominick will send Sutherland and Weiblinger the proposed budget for Halloween for review and approval.

5.3.2. December Holiday Party: Dominick hasn't started planning this event yet since the details still need to be confirmed.

- **Location – Wainstein’s Home ??** – Location has not yet been confirmed so Dominick will reach out to the Wainsteins to confirm whether they are willing and able to offer the use of their home for this year’s party.
- **Select Date with Wainstein Family:** Jacob suggested that something to consider would be holding this event in early January vs. before the December holidays if it would make it easier for more people to join after the hustle and bustle of the holiday season is over.
- **Caterer – Bittersweet ??:** To be discussed at a later meeting.
- **Event Chair & Volunteers:** To be discussed at a later meeting.

6. Communications – Stephanie Clements Karner

6.1. Newsletter Schedule: Karner was unable to attend the meeting, so Meade provided updates on her behalf. Karner is still trying to get access to the SRCA website so that she can upload the latest newsletters and “Duke Street *In Motion*” information. She was able to post the “Duke Street *In Motion*” open houses on the SRCA Facebook page in the meantime. If Karner doesn’t hear from Mike at SquareSpace by end of day today, she’ll give him a call so that she can get everything uploaded by the end of the week. Meade will be responsible for sending out the newsletters and will aim to send out two per month. Jacob noted that additional newsletters may be necessary in months when events are held, such as additional reminders about the Halloween event and holiday party for example. Meade agreed.

6.2. Halloween and Other New Photos Needed for Website: Karner would like to request that SRCA residents please send photos from the Annual Picnic and upcoming Halloween event to her directly at sclements0926@gmail.com so she can post some on our SRCA website and Facebook page.

7. City of Alexandria Projects – Weiblinger/Sutherland/Jacob

7.1. “Duke Street in Motion” Update – Sutherland:

SRCA members and neighbors that travel on Duke Street should know about the “Duke Street in Motion” project being undertaken by the City. The next 3 weeks is the time the City appointed Advisory Group and city staff is accepting citizen input for the project.

Here is a summary provided by a West End citizens group:

Duke Street in Motion (i.e., Duke Street Transitway or Corridor B): The Duke Street in Motion project is what used to be called the Duke Street Corridor Plan. Per the City website, this plan is “focused on ensuring that transit improvements in the Duke Street corridor, from the Landmark Mall area to the King Street Metro Station, provide efficient transportation options that align with all users’ needs, wants, and expectations ... This October, the project team will conduct a second round of public outreach to gather feedback about three proposed alternative alignments for a transitway on the corridor.” Per City staff handout, in September 2022, there will be review of public input

and final comments on three proposed alternative alignments. In October 2022, there will be endorsement of alternatives to move forward to the Transportation Commission and then to City Council. In February 2023, there will be review of elements for inclusion in preferred alternative, followed by 2nd round of public input in March and April. In June 2023 it is anticipated that there will be final endorsement by the City of a preferred alternative. Actual construction will begin in 2024. An Ad Hoc Advisory Committee has been appointed to facilitate this process.

At the September 15 2022, Advisory Group meeting, City Staff showed three options for BRT:

(1) Center-running buses: buses would have a dedicated center lane running down the center of Duke Street, similar to the transitway at Potomac Yard.

(2) Bi-Directional Transit Lanes: the buses would have a single transit lane with center stations.

(3) Mixed traffic: buses are mixed in with regular car traffic.

For more information, go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/HighCapacityTransit> and <https://www.alexandriava.gov/TES/INFO/DEFAULT.ASPX?id=116707>

There is an online opportunity to learn more and express your view on these possible changes. Go to the website for Duke Street in Motion and you can:

- 1. View an explanatory webinar: Available online now.**
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.
- 2. Share your input using the online feedback form: Available online now.**
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.
- 3. If you would like to learn more and express your opinion at in-person gatherings there are 11 meetings planned over the next 3 weeks. Some offer the opportunity to provide feedback, and some are only informational.**

October 7, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 2:00 – 7:00 PM at Foxchase Apartments (766 N Howard St). For more information, go to:
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

October 8, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Dukes Laundromat (80 N Gordon St). For more information, go to:
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

October 9, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 9:00 AM – 2:00 at Brenman Park (4800 Brenman Park Dr). For more information, go to:
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

***October 12, 2022: Duke Street Advisory Group 6:30-8:30pm, Presentation on easternmost road segment (#3) (runs from Roth Street – King Street Metro Station), Bishop Ireton Auditorium, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria**

October 14, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 2:00 –7:00 PM at The Mark Apartments (100 S Reynolds St). For more information, go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

October 15, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Speedy Laundromat (235 S Van Dorn St). For more information, go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

October 16, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Angel Park (201 W Taylor Run Pkwy). For more information, go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

October 16, 2022: Duke Street in Motion pop-up event from 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM at Witter Field (2660 Witter Dr). For more information, go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>.

***October 17, 2022: Duke Street Advisory Group 6:30-8:30pm, Presentation on the center segment of the project (#2) (runs from Jordan Street – Roth Street), Bishop Ireton Auditorium, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria**

***October 20, 2022 Duke Street Advisory Group 6:30-8:30pm, Presentation on the westernmost segment of the project (#1) (West End Alexandria – Jordan Street) Patrick Henry Rec Center, 4653 Taney Ave, Alexandria**

October 26, 2022 5:30-8:30pm, Open House on the Entire Project (no presentations at this meeting, drop in any time), Patrick Henry Rec Center, 4653 Taney Ave, Alexandria

A discussion on this topic followed. Weiblinger noted he received a post card advertising these new open houses. Other Board members commented that they had received post cards as well. Sutherland explained that residents can attend any of the meetings and that eight additional meetings have been added to the website. Pop-up meetings are being held all around town. One concern about the new proposed plan is the ability for trash trucks to get up and down Duke street. If there are vehicle backups on Duke street, it could impact City's ability to collect trash.

Pritzker asked if Sutherland had any sense about whether the meetings on the postcard are intended to be for us to talk to the City or for the City to talk to us. Sutherland believes it's a mix and indicated the three segment meetings taking place on October 12, 17 and 20 are the most important and offer us the best chances to provide

feedback to the City. Sutherland will be unable to attend these meetings unfortunately, so we'll need to find someone else to carry the torch. Jacob will be attending but others are encouraged to attend as well. The more residents who attend the better, since the pro-bus folks have a lot of representation at these meetings.

Meade and Weiblinger agreed to meet to discuss how best to communicate this information to the neighborhood.

7.2. Strawberry Run Update – Jacob: To be discussed at a later meeting.

7.3. Inova Hospital site Update – Weiblinger: To be discussed at a later meeting.

8. Parliamentary Report – David Pritzker

Bylaws Revisions Recap Next Steps: Pritzker has volunteered to update the Bylaws and covenants which he is still in the process of doing.

9. SSSAS (St. Stephens & St. Agnes School) Liaison – Beth Chase

9.1. SSSAS Updates: Chase reported that SSSAS's homecoming was rained out last weekend so the rescheduled game will be held tomorrow on October 7 against Episcopal at SSSAS starting at 4:30pm.

SSSAS will be having a play in early November that will be open to the public. Please visit the SSSAS website for more information.

10. BEHC Update – Flachs: Flachs was unable to attend the meeting.

10.1. Karig Estates Update

11. Home Sales in Seminary Ridge – Kate Hennigan: Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting.

12. Welcome Committee of New Residents – Kate Hennigan: Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting.

13. SRCA Historian – Mike Brookbank: Brookbank had no new updates to report this month.

14. Old Business – Weiblinger: There was no old business to report.

15. New Business – Weiblinger

15.1. Next SRCA Board Meeting – Thursday, November 3, 2022 at 7:30 pm:

Weiblinger indicated he will not be able to host or attend the November 3 meeting so Poretz agreed to host in his absence.

16. Continued "Open Mic" for SRCA Community – Weiblinger

16.1. SR Community Additional Time for Questions/Answers:

Pritzker sings in the Alexandria Choral Society, and on Saturday October 15 at 7pm a

concert will be taking place at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Pay what you wish.

Jacob noted that for anyone interested in sports, former Redskins football player, Ken Harvey, will be speaking in the ballroom of the Old Dominion Boat Club. The event begins at 6:30pm and includes a free spaghetti meal.

17. Adjournment of SRCA Board Meeting – Weiblinger: Weiblinger moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm; it was seconded by Jacob and unanimously approved.

Exhibit 1

SEMINARY HILL ASSOCIATION, INC.

October 4, 2022

Mr. Karl Moritz
Director of Planning & Zoning
City of Alexandria
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street,
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: September 13, 2022 Letter from City Manager Jim Parajon to Seminary Hill Association, Inc.

Mr. Karl Moritz:

On August 8, 2022, Seminary Hill Association, Inc., (SHA) submitted a letter to City Manager Jim Parajon and Alexandria School Board Chairman Meaghan Alderton seeking information in connection with Special Use Permit (SUP) Application 2022-00042 to install lighting on one of the athletic fields at Francis Hammond Middle School (Hammond). Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) holds Development Site Plan 2000-0044 for Hammond. DSP 2000-0044 contains a provision prohibiting lighting unless ACPS applies for and receives a Special Use Permit (SUP). Despite this requirement, SUP 2022-00042 was submitted by the City of Alexandria Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs (RPCA). The September 13, 2022 letter did not mention or address DSP 2000-0044.

The Alexandria Planning Commission has docketed the item for its October 6, 2022 hearing. The September 13, 2022 letter concedes the SUP application is pursuant to Section 6-304(F) of the Alexandria Zoning Code as a congregate recreational facility.

We note that RPCA signed the application. RPCA was also identified in the staff report as a reviewer and approval authority of the application on behalf of the city staff, creating an irreconcilable conflict of interest. We further note that the staff report and supporting materials did not contain either the SHA August 8 letter or City's September 13 response.¹

¹ The staff report is skeletal and does not address issues in this request for determinations.

There are four questions which SHA requests a Determination from the Planning Director in accordance with Section 11-1200 of the Alexandria Zoning Code:

1. A determination from the Planning Director that RPCA serving as both applicant and reviewer of its own application creates an irreconcilable conflict of interest.

ACPS operates a middle school at Hammond, and its DSP 2000-0044 contains Condition 16, requiring ACPS to seek and be responsible for a Special Use Permit (SUP) for any lighting at Hammond. Despite this clear requirement, RPCA submitted the application. Part of the rationale behind DSP 2000-0044 was to maintain integrity of the planning process, and avoid conflicts for the city to act as applicant and reviewing authority of itself. In this instance, RPCA is identified as reviewing authority and recommended approval of its own application. This is precisely what Condition 16 was meant to address.²

Please determine that it violates state and Alexandria conflict of interest requirements for an applicant to serve as its own reviewing and recommending authority on behalf of the city.

2. A determination from the Planning Director stating that all requirements of Section 6-403(F) must be met.

In the September 13, 2022, response, City Manager Parajon states that application for SUP 2022-00042 is in accordance with Zoning Code Section 6-403(F) as a congregate recreational facility. The application is silent on which section of the zoning code the application was under, and we appreciated this information. Please note that there is very little or almost no space between the track and the school wall, and very little between the track and the public right of way on Pickett Street. The application contained no analysis on this matter.

In this regard, we note that Section 6-403(F) of the Alexandria Zoning Code, adopted in 2018, granted relief from height requirements for lighting congregate facilities. It states that:

“d) Poles shall be setback a minimum of 35 feet from any right-of-way or residential property line; . . .” Section 6-403(F)(2)(d). The plain language used is an unambiguous minimum requirement. At the October 13, 2018, Public Hearing, Council amended the draft legislation specifically to add a mandatory 35 foot setback requirement.³ There was

² The staff report shows public comments were sent to and filtered through RPCA.

³ The Planning Commission had recommended a 25 foot setback requirement. Council felt that a 35 foot setback was more appropriate and increased the setback requirement from 25 to 35 feet. Staff noted that “[t]here are additional setback and screening provisions for congregate athletic facilities near residential properties . . .” that

a full and robust discussion on this specific issue. Council stated that it recognized that athletic lighting was close to public rights of way and residences in many locations, recognized the negative impacts, and determined it was critical to provide assurances that athletic light poles must be 35 feet from the public right of way.⁴

As well, Council also cautioned against viewing adoption of height relief for athletic lighting for “congregate recreational facilities” as approval of lighting every potential field in the city. That is how RPCA seeks to use it here, seeking SUPs for multiple athletic fields with almost no analysis or study other than it meets the definition of congregate recreational facility – precisely what Council warned not to do. Instead, Council voted for a mandatory 35 foot setback to provide assurances of minimum required setback to mitigate negative impacts.

There is less than 35 feet between any possible poles and the right of way on Pickett Street.⁵ The application and staff report for SUP 2022-00042 is silent on setback requirements.

Please determine that all requirements of Section 6-403(F) must be met, including mandatory setback requirements of Section 6-403(F)(2)(d).

3. A determination from the Planning Director stating that the Condition 16 in DSP 2000-0044 continues to apply at the Hammond site.

ACPS holds Development Site Plan 2000-0044 for Hammond. DSP 2000-0044 contains a provision stating that any application for lighting must be through an SUP submitted by ACPS. City staff verified this in its report accompanying ACPS’ application for lighting at Hammond in 2011, Staff Report, page 4, citing that DSP 2000-0044 contains “a development condition requiring ACPS to go through a Special Use Permit review when considering the installation of athletic lighting” at Hammond. Despite this requirement, the September 13, 2022 letter states that the City can seek an SUP on the same site on the same property.

We are aware that on September 8, 2022, ACPS passed a Resolution that the School Board “consents to the SUP applications set forth above” (for Hammond, George Washington, Jefferson Houston, and Patrick Henry), but ACPS declined to sign the application or serve as the applicant, as we believe Condition 16 requires. Condition 16 in DSP 2000-0044 remains in effect, and ACPS is not seeking an amendment or

would compel more than 35 feet setback requirement. The staff report on this SUP application is silent on setback, even though the proposal cannot meet the requirement.

⁴ The motion was made by Councilor Paul Smedberg and then Vice Mayor Wilson asserted that amending and increasing the setback from 25 to 35 feet was a friendly amendment. Council voted for it 6-1.

⁵ We calculated a total of about 25 feet from the track to the public right of way. We assume that neither the City nor ACPS are planning to remove the track, an asset of great community importance.

modification, nor does the application for SUP 2022-00042 seek relief from Condition 16. The failure of ACPS to apply for the SUP, has created the irreconcilable conflict of interest as cited in our Question #1.

Please determine that Condition 16 of DSP 2000-0044 remains in effect.

4. **A determination from the Planning Director on whether the DSP 2000-0044 or SUP 2022-00042 takes precedence.** ACPS holds the current DSP for the Hammond site. In the event the application for SUP 2022-00043 is granted, there will be dual permit holders for the same site on the same property. It is highly unusual for one site on one property to have multiple permits and permit holders governing activity at the site. This leads to confusion and conflicts. For example, the RPCA application states that “ACPS security” is responsible for maintenance and security. The September 13, 2022, letter states that the city is responsible for management and maintenance after school hours. This is a matter of great importance since RPCA has asserted it lacks resources to oversee compliance with SUP requirements regarding lights each evening. In effect, RPCA points to ACPS as responsible for compliance and security, the city points to RPCA, and both ACPS and RPCA point to the Alexandria Police Department as responsible for oversight. APD has informed us that since it views the property as “owned” by ACPS (not the city), compliance and security are ACPS responsibilities “at all times,” unless there is criminal activity.

Please determine whether the ACPS’ DSP or RPCA’s SUP takes precedence where a conflict occurs.

SHA reserves the right to appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals, if necessary. We look forward to hearing from you. Because the Planning Commission hearing is October 6, 2022, SHA was notified of the proposal in June 2022, and the City’s delayed response to our request for information, SHA requests an expedited review and determinations.

Sincerely,

/s/

Carter Flemming
President, Seminary Hill Association, Inc.

CC:

Jim Parajon, Alexandria City Manager
Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Interim Superintendent of ACPS
Members of the Alexandria School Board
Alexandria Mayor and City Council
Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission
James Spengler, Director, Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs