



**National Trust *for*
Historic Preservation**

Save the past. Enrich the future.

January 8, 2013

VIA EMAIL

**Ms. Yvonne Weight Callahan
President, Old Town Civic Association
P.O. Box 1213
Alexandria, VA 22313-1213**

Dear Ms. Callahan:

Old Town Alexandria is well known as one of the most significant historic places in the United States. This irreplaceable historic city, of course, deserves our very best efforts to preserve its unique historic qualities for the benefit of this and future generations. Your organization, the Old Town Civic Association, has for many years been dedicated to preserving the historical and residential character, architecture, and traditions of Old Town.

I understand that the Old Town Civic Association has reiterated its commitment to the Civic Association's 2012 public position regarding the proposed re-development of Alexandria's waterfront. In its role as a steward of Old Town, the Civic Association today stated that:

Old Town Civic Association remains committed to the position it took during calendar year 2012 with regards to the development of the Alexandria waterfront, as follows:

1. Plan comprehensively, not hastily, including recognition of the implications of the closure of the GenOn power plant;
2. No Small Area Plan or Text Amendment should be adopted until and unless its fundamental elements are clear and precise and have achieved broad public understanding and support;
3. Stay within the existing densities;
4. Make a stronger commitment to historic/cultural amenities;
5. Set limits on the type of allowable commercial uses in the waterfront area;
6. Establish a Parking Plan ahead of any new commercial or public sector development or redevelopment;
7. Include more open space;
8. Scale back substantially the number of hotel rooms;
9. Demonstrate that the Plan is fiscally sound; and,
10. Establish specific criteria for hotel/restaurant/commercial special-use permit applications.

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As you may know, in 2011 the National Trust for Historic Preservation was approached by longtime residents of Old Town who had raised questions regarding a number of important aspects of the draft waterfront plan, including the scale and massing of proposed new development, potential adverse impacts to residents' quality of life, and the closure of the waterfront power plant. We also learned that the Old Town Civic Association had asked the City Council not to adopt the draft waterfront plan and text amendment until the Association's issues were addressed.

The National Trust remains concerned that substantive, preservation-related issues previously raised by the Old Town Civic Association and other interested residents were not addressed in the waterfront planning process, and that the City has not achieved broad-based public understanding and support for the waterfront plan. Consequently, we support the Old Town Civic Association's continuing efforts to protect and preserve Old Town, and respectfully urge City leaders to consider new ways to build public understanding and consensus around a compromise waterfront development plan that would protect the interests of local residents and preserve the historic character of Old Town Alexandria.

Sincerely,



Robert Nieweg
Field Director & Attorney
Washington Field Office
National Trust for Historic Preservation

cc: Allison Silberberg, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
Elizabeth Kostelny, Preservation Virginia