

# Plans for Waterfront and Bowling Alley Redevelopment Shared at Civic Association Meeting

By Maya M. Noronha

Twenty-five residents attended a general membership meeting of the Cameron Station Civic Association on April 7 during which two development plans were discussed. First, a city planner discussed the Alexandria waterfront plan. Second, the land on 100 South Pickett Street – currently leased to U.S. Bowling – is expected to be converted into a five-story, multi-family complex.

Farroll Hamer, Director of Planning and Zoning for the City of Alexandria, presented a plan to add five acres of open space to the Alexandria waterfront. The city, which developed this plan two years ago, has since arranged approximately 115 meetings to discuss the plan with stakeholders and boat, recreation and arts interest groups. The plan, which can be implemented in pieces, would highlight the view from the pier, create a place to dock an historic ship, showcase a large public plaza named Fitzgerald Square and encourage the construction of a new hotel and restaurants. The cost of the project is \$30-40 million, which the city would generate through new real estate taxes, meal taxes in restaurants and hotel taxes. This figure does not include \$8-10 million that Hamer said would be for necessary flood mitigation the city must implement anyway. As to concerns about parking,

Hamer said that the city would put signs in Alexandria directing drivers to unused garage spaces, encourage more efficient valet parking and negotiate with private office building garages to open their spots to the public.

Owner Steve Bannister, counsel Duncan Blair and engineer Paul Waters presented their idea to redevelop 100 South Pickett Street by building a complex of 180 residential units with two levels of underground parking. Although he hopes to have a business center and fitness center as part of the complex, Bannister said he does not plan to have a pool. They are also hoping to have a neighborhood grocery store at the ground floor of the building. Although the city has expressed objections, they also hope to have surface parking available on South Pickett for customers of the retailers. Bannister expressed his willingness to discuss a connection between Cameron Station and a planned courtyard behind the complex. U.S. Bowling has a private lease on the property with three years left before expiration, but Bannister has negotiated early termination. The building would be 30 feet higher than the existing structure. The redevelopment is currently unnamed but is informally called “The Lanes.” Bannister said he hopes to attract more young professionals to the corridor.

## Al Fresco Lifestyle *(Continued from page 1)*

Understandably, this caused concern among many residents. The community’s “Main Street” is especially lovely in the warm months, with tables, chairs and umbrellas at the Main Street Market, Cameron Café and Food Matters making it feel more like Paris than West End Alexandria (or at least more like Old Town or Capitol Hill). Toka Salon and Day Spa had even purchased an umbrella, table and chairs simply to add to the ambience.

So what was going on? Phone calls were placed, emails sent, questions raised, but no one seemed able or willing to explain.

Well, at press time *The Compass* finally got an answer. Even though the City of Alexandria had approved outdoor seating, and the owner of the retail space, Main Street Retail L.C. was in full support of it, and even though proper insurance was seemingly in place, the condo board was concerned that they would be liable if anyone fell off a chair, tripped over a table or otherwise hurt themselves in that eight feet of space that the condo association and its condo owners owned.

Cut to the happy ending. After many months of negotiation, with Kevin Brooks of Main Street Retail working on behalf of the tenants to find a resolution for all parties, an agreement was reached – with no increase in cost to any resident, condo

or community association, retailer or landlord – and the umbrellas, tables and chairs were brought back out.

So cancel the flight to Paris. Don’t even think about dealing with the traffic and parking in Old Town or on Capitol Hill. Instead, take a walk over to our own lovely boulevard and grab a beverage or something to eat, or just relax outside while you wait for your salon appointment or massage. Spring has come to Cameron Station...enjoy!

Main Street Market



Food Matters

