



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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May 6, 2013

Ms. Lena Rainey
Member, Trustee Ministry
Oakland Baptist Church
3408 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Ms. Frances Terrell
The Fort Ward and Seminary
African American Descendants Society
1005 North Quaker Lane
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Dear Ms. Rainey and Ms. Terrell:

Thank you for meeting with the Mayor, City staff, interested community residents, and myself on April 18. I would like to take this opportunity to confirm the archaeological activities and plans discussed in our conversation, as well as the Fort Ward stormwater issues and the planned management/mitigation initiatives to address these stormwater problems, so that we can establish better lines of communication as Fort Ward Park work programs and budget requests proceed.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES

To recap, last year the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA), with support from the Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation & Environmental Services, substantially completed three stages of archaeological survey work at Fort Ward Park. The stages executed to date, including year initiated, funding amount and work program authorized by City Council were:

1. Stage 1, \$50,000, FY 2011, performed Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) on select areas suspected of containing unmarked graves and "ground truthing" of positive areas by archaeological investigation;
2. Stage 2A, 75,000, FY 2012, archaeological investigation expanded to suspected burial areas and home sites, shovel test survey of entire park at 30-foot intervals;

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3. Stage 2B, \$75,000, FY 2012, archaeological investigation of areas associated with storm water management systems. Of this amount, \$33,034 has been set aside for archaeology work associated with the permanent drainage improvements which will soon be in the design stage. Once the final design has been established, OHA will execute that remaining archaeological segment of the project, which is expected to be complete by June 30, 2014.
4. Information on these and other Fort Ward investigations, work products and updates can be found by clicking on "Archaeology and History at Fort Ward Park" on OHA's homepage, www.historicalexandria.org.

As a result of these archaeological investigations, to date, external to the Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery, OHA has documented 43 gravesites at Fort Ward, including three burials marked by a gravestone and 40 unmarked burials. Survey work has also retrieved over 10,000 artifacts at Fort Ward associated with Native Americans, the Civil War, and the African American community known as "The Fort."

A Stage 3 project to continue the archaeological survey has been defined and is estimated to cost \$145,000. This Stage 3 project is currently not funded. OHA will be unable to implement and manage a full Stage 3 project in FY 2014 due to necessary archaeological commitments Citywide to ongoing design review and other projects now under construction. An option to spread this Stage 3 project over several years, with a reduced amount of \$75,000, has been developed.

OHA Archaeologist labor and supply costs (potential grave areas, house sites, parking lots)	\$55,000
Trenching/T&ES equipment	10,000
Ground restoration (re-grading, seeding)	<u>10,000</u>
TOTAL	\$75,000

At this time, it appears that this \$75,000 Stage 3 project will not be funded in FY 2014; however, it is clear that archaeological investigation at Fort Ward will need to continue for a number of years yet, either through an intense Stage 3 Study, or by smaller less intense individual surveys associated with specific areas or projects. No negative impact on potential gravesites or park cultural resources should occur during this intervening time period, as an inter-departmental Memorandum of Understanding among City departments has been adopted that prevents any ground disturbance in the park without advance archaeological review. Unmarked graves, if any, that remain undiscovered at this time are therefore protected until such time as they may be located in a future stage.

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STORMWATER PROBLEMS AND PLANNED MANAGEMENT/MITIGATION INITIATIVES

There was agreement that the drainage over cemetery property emanates from the following three sources: the adjacent park, the adjacent upstream residential properties, and the upper terrace of the cemetery itself. Despite the actions already taken by the City to control park runoff, there was consensus in our meeting on additional actions that the City would undertake to further reduce park runoff drainage impacts to the cemetery.

Short-Term:

1. Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES) staff will further improve the interim drainage system on the park side of the southwest corner of the Oakland Baptist Cemetery. This will involve the installation of a small inlet inside a bermed area shaped to collect runoff that now enters the cemetery. The collected runoff will then be directed down the existing flex pipe that runs along the cemetery south fence boundary (park side) and terminates at the cemetery entrance. It was also agreed that the outlet of the existing flex pipe would be extended, below ground, to discharge into the swale and the above ground pipe will be buried or covered so as to not be visible from the cemetery. This work would be performed by T&ES Maintenance staff and is projected to be completed in the next several weeks.
2. Parks staff will continue to maintain the straw wattles and replace them when needed.
3. T&ES staff will initiate a new dialog with Marlboro Estate residents, whose stormwater runoff directly or indirectly influences runoff that enters the cemetery, informing these residents of the City Code with respect to downspout and other storm water discharges and the best management practices encouraged when those discharges become a nuisance to neighbors. The residents will also be informed that the City is authorized under the existing City Code to take enforcement actions where there are clear stormwater runoff violations of City Code. It is the City's goal to obtain compliance through voluntary action on the part of homeowners.
4. The Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery Trustees will implement an erosion damage/prevention plan in the cemetery area once the three above short-term actions have been completed (or earlier if the Trustees so choose).

Long-Term:

1. Earlier this week, a contract was awarded to the URS Corporation to provide consultant services to formulate the Fort Ward Master Drainage Plan. The Plan scope includes determining and analyzing existing drainage patterns leading up to and through the park.


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The consultant will analyze tributary runoff, or off-site drainage that runs through the park, and evaluate potential improvements to the Seminary property to slow drainage tributary to the park that collects south of Braddock Road. The consultant will also be directed to work closely with all Fort Ward Park stakeholder groups, as well as the consultant who soon will be working on the Fort Ward Park & Museum Management Plan. A kick-off meeting between staff and the consultant is being scheduled for the week of May 13. The study will take approximately six months to complete. At the end of the study, a Master Drainage Plan for the park will have been developed, as well as Concept Designs for stormwater capital improvements for the park. Those recommended improvements will be considered for programming into the multi-year capital improvement budget for the coming fiscal budget cycles.

2. The stormwater study will conclude with a stormwater master plan document for the public and also a 10% concept design for drainage capital improvements within the park. The concept design plans will then be further developed and coordinated with the park master plan. During the study period, T&ES staff will provide updates approximately bi-weekly to the Cemetery Trustees, the Fort Ward and Seminary African American Descendants Society Members and the park management departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, the Office of Historic Alexandria, as well as to adjacent property owners who request to be kept informed.

I hope that the written explanation of the archaeological investigations and the planned short- and long-term stormwater management/mitigation initiatives detailed in this letter clarifies the City's resolve (as indicated by the funding provided in FY 2011 and FY 2012) to address Fort Ward issues. If you have any further questions, please contact Lance Mallamo (at 703.746.4554) or Rich Baier (at 703.746.4025).

Sincerely,



Rashad M. Young
City Manager

cc: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
Other Meeting Attendees: Edwin Haynes, Iburia Haynes, Glenn Eugster, Sharon Annear, Debra Collins, Mark Jinks, Lance Mallamo, Jim Spengler, Rich Baier, Brian Rahal