



Figure 1. Detail from the 1863 Bird's Eye View of Alexandria by Charles Magnus showing the commercial and industrial waterfront from Wolfe Street (left) to King Street (right) during the Civil War. (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

excerpt from History of Robinson Terminal South Property by History Matter, LLC

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Background

The City of Alexandria is steeped in maritime history. Since its founding in the mid 1700s, Old Town Alexandria has harbored industrial and commercial stowage and loading operations along its shores ensuring its place as a significant city in America’s history. The Alexandria Robinson Terminal South (Robinson Terminal South or RTS) site exemplifies this being home to shipbuilding facilities, lumber yards, railroad freight yards, iron foundries, flour and paper manufacturing plants, offices, stores, and warehouses for more than 250 years.

As the historical industrial and commercial operations sited along the waterfront moved inland and to larger ports, the City was left with an abandoned waterfront disconnected from historical Old Town. The historical significance of Old Town brought a new economy – tourism – and the City began a concerted effort to reopen the waterfront. The redevelopment of Robinson Terminal South is one of the first phases to reopen the waterfront.



excerpt from City of Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan (courtesy of Olin)

In January of 2012 the Alexandria City Council approved the Waterfront Small Area Plan (a recent rendering of the plan is shown above). The Plan provides a “*framework for revitalizing Alexandria's waterfront through several means, including incorporating Alexandria's history as a foundation for planning and design, expanding and enhancing public open spaces, improving public access and connectivity, promoting the waterfront as an arts and cultural destination, ensuring compatible development*” (excerpt from Alexandria Waterfront Plan Implementation website, <http://www.alexandriava.gov/special/waterfront/>). Private redevelopment of three sites was included in the Plan, including Robinson Terminal South, at the time privately held by the Washington Post. A summary of the current status of the master plan implementation is included in Attachment 2 Supporting Documents (Waterfront Implementation Project Matrix Winter 2015, <http://www.alexandriava.gov/Waterfront>).

Need

The City of Alexandria is currently embarking on a transformation from its historic use as an industrial and commercial port to a more publicly accessible multi-use thoroughfare. Recreational boating on the Potomac River is prevalent year round for residents and visitors alike. The Old Marina has 22 designated transient slips; in-season the demand for these slips

often exceed the supply. Therefore, the City investigated potential new transient dock sites during development of its waterfront master plan. **Smith's Dock site is a prime location for transient docking facilities given its proximity to Old Town Alexandria and Old Marina and as such is included in the City's current Waterfront Plan.**

Purpose

The new docks at the Smith's Dock will provide **transient, recreational boaters a new way-point to the public waterfront of Old Town Alexandria.** The intent of the floating docks is to serve recreational transient boaters in a flexible docking arrangement. **Dedicated dockage for up to 13 transient recreational vessels greater than 26 feet in length will be maintained at Smith's Dock.**

Life within walking distance – Preston Smith, owner of the project, strives to realize this vision in each project and incorporation of transient docking at Smith's Dock extends this ideal to not only the future and nearby residents but boaters from the region. The development team's goal is to open the waterfront to visiting recreational boaters to stop and enjoy the many attractions Alexandria has to offer in walking distance of the proposed docks. Given the great distance from Chesapeake Bay (~100 miles), the primary transient boaters in this region are local/day boaters traveling from other marinas in the vicinity. Smith's Dock will cater to day boaters – no overnight dockage permitted – as this is seen as the greatest need, allowing for the Old Marina to continue focusing on overnight transient boaters where services for these boaters are already in place.

Objectives

Redevelopment of the Robinson Terminal South site is based on the framework set by the City's Waterfront Plan – connecting the public to the water and to Alexandria's history. Smith's Dock reflects this goal through the following objectives:

- **Convert a historical commercial docking facility for recreational use with accommodation for 13 transient boats** plus dockage for water taxis and visiting historical vessels in the heart of Old Town Alexandria
- Revitalize the historical waterfront
- Extend public access to the water

Expected Results and Benefits

Transient boaters docking at Smith's Dock will experience the following benefits:

- **Dedicated transient slips**
- **ADA compliant docking facility**
- **Access way-point to attractions in the Virginia-Maryland-District of Columbia corridor, including nearby waterfront parks, Old Town Alexandria, and water taxi and metro service to National Harbor (Maryland) and Washington, DC.**

In addition to the benefits for the transient boater, the surrounding community will realize benefits directly related to Smith's Dock including:

- Increased patrons to local stores and restaurants and other venues without additional vehicular traffic

- Unique on-water event venue space within the City's downtown waterfront

The Smith's Dock development team is working with the City of Alexandria to realize the City's waterfront master plan which employs a more public accessible downtown waterfront including more transient dockage along the entire waterfront corridor. The inclusion of transient slips at Smith's Dock is in concert with the City's master plan goals and opens a historically industrial section of the waterfront to the public. Smith's Dock will provide transient boaters – whether area residents or cruising tourists – direct access to the many cultural, recreational, natural, and commercial venues the region has to offer.

Approach

The project is a result of many years of planning represented by the City of Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan which provides a framework for the revitalization of this historic waterfront. Since the initial approval (January 2012), the City has continued to evolve its redevelopment plan. Figure 1 (Attachment 1) depicts the initial and current Plans. This plan identifies key areas along the shore from Wolfe Street on the south to the railroad tracks on the north connected via a waterside promenade from Shipyard Park (Wolfe Street) at the southern end to Tide Lock Park (3rd Street) at the northern end. The Plan incorporates a variety of public connections to the water including open green space and natural shore, kayak launch areas, water taxi and small passenger vessel loading, historic vessel moorage, commercial vessel slips, recreational marinas, and transient recreational vessel dockage (depicted in red in Figure 1).

The redevelopment of Robinson Terminal South is at the forefront of realizing the City's effort to revitalize and reconnect the waterfront of Old Town. Historically, vessels calling on Smith's Dock were delivering goods (lumber, paper, iron, etc.); while the pier is being preserved, a more pedestrian, public friendly atmosphere is planned. The pier will be an extension of the landside public open space providing pedestrian access and event space on the water. Landside access to the pier will be enhanced with the connection of the waterfront promenade and redevelopment of the site – including residential, retails, restaurant, and park spaces – and waterside access enhanced through improvements to the pier and the addition of floating docks on both ends of the pier.

Project Description

Slips for transient recreational vessels, 13 in total for vessels 26 feet to 100 feet in length, will be provided at Smith's Dock in addition to 3 slips available for multiple visiting vessel types (transient, historical, and water taxi). A flexible docking arrangement will be provided with vessels mooring either side-to or stern-to on floating docks or a fixed pier with sufficient maneuvering space between the docks and new and existing structures at adjacent waterside facilities. Figure 1 (Attachment 1) presents an overview of the City's Waterfront Plan with Robinson Terminal South depicted (numbers 2 and 3 on the January 2012 plan and 1 on the July 2014 plan) and Figure 2 (Attachment 1) presents an overall plan view of the retrofitted pier and proposed docks and Figure 3 (Attachment 1) presents photos of the existing historical pier at Robinson Terminal South.

Floating docks, anchored with guide piles, will comprise the docking structures with minimum dock widths of 8 feet for vessel docking areas. Access will be via ADA compliant gangways –

connecting to the existing pier - designed to accommodate the full range of typical water elevations with a maximum slope of 8%. The docks will be outfitted with life safety services and equipment including fire protection, ladders and life rings, low level lighting and solar-powered navigation lighting. Figure 4 (Attachment 1) shows a typical dock cross-section view and typical gangway elevation view.

The existing pier – a double T-pier comprised of steel piles and concrete deck and connecting to land at the existing bulkhead - will be repaired to further its serviceable life and outfitted with amenities (surface treatment lighting, benches, railings, shade structures, life safety services and equipment, etc.) to make them a more pedestrian/boater-friendly open space. Additional vessel mooring will be available along waterward face of the rehabilitated pier. Due to the height of the fixed pier (8 feet above the project datum), a 40-foot vessel was used to determine the number of available side-tie slips (versus a 26-foot vessel for the floating docks).

Project Schedule

The planning, permitting and design effort for Smith's Dock has been underway for several years as part of the development of the City of Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan, approved by City Council in January of 2012. Further, the Waterfront Plan established the development guidelines and zoning parameters for Robinson Terminal South. Although Smith's Dock is being developed by private entities, the property is subject to a settlement agreement among the owner, the City, and the National Park Service that sets the broad development parameters for the site. Additionally, approval by the City Council and federal, state and local regulatory agencies will be required before development may commence.

In 2013, National New Homes became the contract purchaser of the Smith's Dock property. Concept development and project entitlement work began that fall. The project has been reviewed by the Alexandria Waterfront Commission and the Alexandria Planning Commission. In addition, the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review for the Old and Historic District has held multiple work sessions to discuss the project. Smith's Dock received Development Special Use Permit Approval (#2014-0006) from the Alexandria City Council in April of 2015 (relevant sections included in Attachment 2 Supporting Documents). Final approval of the building architecture and site features is expected from the Board of Architecture Review in late 2015. Final design and preparation of environmental permits for the waterside effort are underway. Installation of the floating docks and repair and restoration work on the existing pier is slated to begin in the second half of 2016 following completion of on-site demolition with completion anticipated before the start of the 2018 boating season, pending receipt of regulatory permits and approvals.

Key Personnel

The Smith's Dock project as a whole involves public, private and community partners. The key organizations currently involved in the development of the docking facility are as follows:

Key Organizations	Contact	Role
Virginia Department of Health Office of Environmental Health Services 109 Governor Street, 5th Floor Richmond, VA 23219	Preston Smith Marina Programs Manager (804) 864-7468 Preston.Smith@vdh.virginia.gov	State Project Officer <i>BIG administrator for State of Virginia, BIG applicant</i>
City of Alexandria 301 King Street Alexandria, VA 22314	City Liaison <i>providing assistance & approval during permitting & design of development</i>	
National Park Service 1100 Ohio Drive, SW Washington, DC 20242	Park Service Liaison <i>providing assistance & approval during permitting & design of development</i>	

Additionally, the Smith’s Dock development team has engaged several consultants to assist with planning, permitting, and design services for the project. For the project components described herein, Moffatt & Nichol is providing permitting, grant application, design and construction support services.

Relationships with Other Grants

No other federal or state funding is being solicited for the docking facility at Smith’s Dock. Fees and construction costs identified in the project budget will be solely covered by BIG funding, if awarded, and the Smith’s Dock development team.

Project Location

Smith’s Dock (Latitude 38° 48’ 3.92” N, Longitude 77° 2’ 20.95” W) is located on the Potomac River between Point Lumley Park and Shipyard Park at the southern end of Old Town Alexandria and bordered by Wolfe, Duke and Union Streets. Figure 5 (Attachment 1) shows the project location on GoogleEarth imagery.

Ranking Criteria

(a) Need, Access and Cost Efficiency

(1) Will the proposed boating infrastructure meet a need for more or improved facilities?

The proposed project meets a need identified by the City of Alexandria in its Waterfront Small Area Plan for more transient docking opportunities in Old Town Alexandria. The City of Alexandria has long been a destination for boaters – from early military and commercial vessels to ferry and historical vessels to recreational boaters, all of which both call on Alexandria and call it home. In the current waterfront plan, the Old Marina – located less than ½ mile from Smith’s Dock – has 22 slips available to transient boaters and during the boating season (May to October) **the demand regularly exceeds the available transient dockage** with overnight guests often taking precedence over day boaters. The addition of transient slips at Smith’s Dock will help alleviate this discrepancy, catering to the day boater, in concert with City’s Waterfront Master Plan. The proposed project repurposes an existing pier for recreational boating purposes and adds new recreational boating docks to an area not currently available to recreational boaters.

(2) Will eligible users receive benefits from the proposed boating infrastructure that justify the cost of the project?

The proposed project is part of a revitalization of an existing urban waterfront not formerly available to the public. **The docking facility will tie into existing waterside and new landside infrastructure at the development, including piers, parking and roads, waterfront promenade and walkways, and electrical and water service; no costs associated with the landside elements, including repairs to the existing bulkhead, are included in the stated project costs.** Additionally, other landside amenities included in the development and at the City-owned public spaces in between, such as parks and open spaces, restaurants, public restrooms and retail and residential spaces will be available to transient boaters docked at Smith’s Dock at no cost to the project.

Construction costs included in this application comprise the infrastructure costs for work waterward of the existing bulkhead line. These costs include the structures (gangways and landings, guide pile supported floating dock system, and existing pier repair and retrofit) and associated boater amenities on the docks and pier (life and safety equipment, cleats and bollards, lighting). **No dredging is proposed** for this project as the waterway has sufficient water depths to sustain the proposed boating traffic. In addition, the new docks and pier repairs will be designed for a minimum serviceable life of 20 years. **The total allowable cost of this work is \$1,397,060 and, with the 51% match provided by the project partners, equates to a Federal cost share of \$52,658 per transient slip or a life cycle cost of \$34,228 for the facilities 20-year minimum useful life.**

(3) Will the proposed boating infrastructure accommodate boater access to significant destinations and services that support transient boater travel?

The Smith’s Dock project is located on the Potomac River, adjacent to a federal channel, in Alexandria, VA. The docking facility will provide dedicated docking for transient recreational boaters visiting Alexandria in an area not previously open to the public. Smith’s Dock is the southernmost anchor of the City’s waterfront master plan complementing

the public waterfront facilities (marina and parks) included and implementing much needed additional transient dockage for the City. **Navigation routes to the marina comprise both the upstream and downstream directions of the Potomac River.** Recreational boater traffic moves along the Potomac from Georgetown in DC (approximately 7 miles upstream of Alexandria) to Chesapeake Bay (approximately 100 miles downstream of Alexandria) passing a multitude of marinas and private docks along the way.

There are a multitude of recreational, historic, cultural, natural and scenic venues within walking and biking distance or accessible via water taxi, metro or vehicular means from Robinson Terminal South, many of which are located within the heart of Old Town Alexandria. In addition, grocery and convenience stores and restaurants are located within walking or biking distance from the docking facility, including those proposed for the Smith’s Dock project. Publicly accessible restrooms available to transient boaters will be located at Smith’s Dock, the newly renovated Civic Center and the City Marina.

The following table lists a sample of these opportunities accessible from the Smith’s Dock docking facility with transportation mechanisms and associated travel distances, including 3 DC attractions that have recently received BIG funding – The Yards, The Wharf and Washington Fish Market. Figure 6 (Attachment 1) depicts the geographical distance of some of the local, regional and national attractions and Capital Bike Share and WMATA metro stations within 2 miles of the proposed docks.

Attraction Table		
Local	Regional	National
Jones Joint Park, Tide Lock Park, Oronoco Bay Park, & Founders Park <i>walk/bike/kayak ½ to 2 miles</i>	National Harbor, MD <i>water taxi 2 miles</i>	African American Heritage Memorial Park <i>walk/bike 1½ miles</i>
Kate Waller Barret Branch Library & Alfred Street Baptist Church <i>walk/bike ½ to 1 mile</i>	Nationals Park & The Yards <i>water taxi 5 miles metro 9 miles</i>	George Washington Masonic Memorial <i>walk/bike 2 miles</i>
Market Square & Town Hall <i>walk/bike ½ mile</i>	Mount Vernon <i>water taxi 9 miles</i>	East Potomac Park <i>water taxi 5 miles metro 8 miles</i>
Alexandria City Marina, Torpedo Art Factory & Alexandria History Center & Museum <i>walk/bike <½ mile</i>	The Wharf & Washington Fish Market <i>water taxi 5 miles metro 9 miles</i>	National Mall, Smithsonian Museums, White House & Capitol <i>water taxi 6 miles metro 9 miles</i>

Access to public transportation mechanisms are within a short distance from Smith’s Dock. The closest bike share stations are at the intersection of Union and Prince Streets (less than ½ mile). The closest metro station (WMATA Yellow and Blue Lines) is on King Street (approximately 1½ miles). Water taxi service – to Alexandria, National Harbor, Mount Vernon and Washington, DC – is currently available at the City Marina (less than ½ mile), with possible future pick-up service at Smith’s Dock as well.

(b) Match and Partnerships

- (1) Will the proposed project include private, local, or State funds greater than the minimum match?

The estimated total cost of the Smith's Dock pier and docking facility is \$2.28 million. This cost includes construction of the docks and gangways (90% eligible), pier repair and retrofit (50% eligible), and associated design, planning, and permitting costs (50% eligible), resulting in a total BIG eligible cost of \$1,397,060. **The project partners are committed to provide a minimum of 51% of the eligible costs from non-Federal sources in the amount of \$712,501.**

- (2) Will the proposed project include contributions by private or public partners that contribute to the project objectives?

Smith's Dock is an urban redevelopment project owned and headed by a local, private development team – a partnership with **National New Homes Company**. Its completion will mark one of the first phases of the City of Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan – the City's master plan for its downtown waterfront. The development team is working closely with the City of Alexandria, in particular the City Waterfront Commission and City Planning Commission to maintain the intent of the City's master plan and the historical and cultural significance of this historic shoreline. While the City is not a financial partner for the current development of Smith's Dock, the City did include concept level development of each site in its waterfront master plan and continues to play an important role in the final plan for these properties, as such the **City serves as a partner in the development of Robinson Terminal South**. Similarly, other governmental agencies are partners in the development and operation of this project providing review and advise on design, construction and implementation of the Smith's Dock development; **these federal and state partners include the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Health Office of Environmental Health Services Marina Programs**.

(c) Innovation

- (1) Will the proposed project include physical components, technology, or techniques that improve eligible-user access?

The proposed project will not only provide transient slips to an area currently closed to public and recreational boating access, but also **slips that are ADA accessible for a wide array of vessel sizes and associated vessel freeboards**. The combination of fixed and floating dock areas improves eligible user access with docks that have varying boarding elevations. On this section of the Potomac River, water level fluctuations are more tightly determined by storm events, i.e. flood waters, than daily tidal fluctuations. Larger vessels (40+ feet) with higher boarding heights may prefer the fixed pier while smaller vessels (26+ feet) the floating docks.

- (2) Will the proposed project include innovative physical components, technology, or techniques that improve the BIG-funded project?

The design of the Smith's Dock property considers the myriad of operational, maintenance, and environmental factors at the existing site. **The resulting plan blends the**

existing infrastructure with current technology to construct a cost-effective, environmentally sustainable docking facility.

- The docking facilities at Smith’s Dock will be designed and constructed (or repaired) utilizing materials and products suitable for this marine environment including marine-grade concrete; aluminum, galvanized, marine-grade coated, or stainless steel exposed metals; UV and fungal resistant plastic, composite and rubber materials; and preservative treated timber or hardwoods suitable for marine atmosphere.
- A structural assessment of the existing pier (completed in September 2014) determined that overall the pier was in good condition, even considering its age, and repair measures could be employed to further its serviceable life for its new purpose – a recreational pier – in a cost effective manner.
- The configuration of the new floating docks follows the alignment of the existing pier, utilizing historically deeper water at each pier, so no dredging will be required. The existing pier also serves as access point for the new docks and provides some protection, in particular to the gangways, from floating debris.
- An operational and maintenance plan will be developed to plan for regular condition assessments of both the pier and floating docks. This will include inspection guidelines for the existing pier, regular maintenance schedules, debris protection measures, and operational guidelines for use of the pier and docks.

These measures will ensure a transient boating facility that will remain in good, serviceable condition for many (20+) years to come.

- (3) Has the facility where the project is located demonstrated a commitment to environmental compliance, sustainability, and stewardship and has an agency or organization officially recognized the facility for its commitment?

The development team is in the process of applying for environmental and regulatory permits for both the upland and waterside infrastructure improvements including applications to US Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia Department of Health, and the City of Alexandria. At a minimum, the **project will employ best management procedures with respect to environmental compliance, sustainability and stewardship** including collecting and treating runoff from landside operations, signage directing boaters to the public pump-out facility at the adjacent Old Marina, trash and recycling receptacles on the pier and landside, use of environmentally sustainable materials such as solar powered lights, and proper debris, sediment and turbidity control measures during construction. In addition, **the reuse of existing infrastructure – bulkhead and pier – significantly reduces the increased impact to the aquatic environment and, due to the change in use from industrial to recreational, should in fact reduce the overall negative environmental impacts.** The new docks account for approximately 3,500 square feet of new surface area or 20% of the total footprint over the water. **Lastly, this project as part of the master plan of the City of Alexandria is required to meet the City’s flood control and environmental measures for their waterfront.**