



**Resolution to Tell Alexandria City Council:
Development Replacing Coal Plant Needs to Create
Good, Sustainable Jobs**

Sponsored by Russell Davis, Sean Casey, Tim Beaty, and the ADC Labor Caucus

Whereas, recently, the City of Alexandria approved an agreement to build a luxury hotel in Old Town at 699 Prince Street without any commitment to hold the hotel accountable for creating high-quality jobs. While disappointed that the city chose to move forward with the Prince Street project despite the opposition of Alexandria residents, community organizations, and labor unions urging the city not to settle for low-wage, no benefits jobs, residents are hopeful that the city is intent on avoiding such a situation going forward;

Whereas, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s 2021 Annual Report “Out of Reach,” [1] the hourly wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment without paying more than 30% of income on housing in Alexandria is \$33.94; this is more than twice the median wage for housekeepers in the local hotel industry. While UNITE HERE* members have higher wages that help offset the high costs of living in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria Metro Area, many of their friends and families in the industry do not. Even with the higher wages, many still struggle with rising rents in Alexandria;

Whereas, Hilco Redevelopment Partners’ first Coordinated Development District (CDD) Conceptual Plan submission to the City of Alexandria in August 2021 for the Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) site [3] outlined a 300-room, 225,000 square foot hotel. This plan indicated that a 300-room hotel could create 180 low-wage jobs;

Whereas, proposals for a Coordinated Development District (CDD) for the PRGS site could come before the Alexandria Planning Commission and City Council in June 2022;

Whereas, Hilco has a similar project redeveloping the site of a former coal plant in Boston that has many community benefits and is not being opposed by community groups and labor. Alexandria should expect the same high standards for development here;

Whereas, in Boston, Hilco’s website for that project states that “Starting with the first demolition permit and continuing during active construction, the project will offer apprenticeship and employment opportunities for city residents”. By contrast, in Alexandria there is no known plan for local hire or job training and apprenticeship programs;

* Union of hospitality workers [2]

Whereas, it was stated as one of the economic development goals and objectives of the community in establishing the vision and recommendations of the Old Town North Small Area Plan to “encourage and provide employment opportunities for local residents,”

Whereas, this proposed extensive development should ensure the creation of good, sustainable jobs during construction and at the future hotel on the site;

Be it therefore resolved that, given the need for more community engagement, the ADC calls for the City Council to delay consideration of Hilco’s CDD submission for the Potomac River Generating Site (PRGS) in Old Town North, and urges every member to contact Alexandria City Councilmembers and Mayor Wilson to demand that the development replacing coal plant needs to create good, sustainable jobs.

References:

- [1] M. Newman *et al.*, “Out of Reach, the Hight Cost of Housing,” *National Low Income Housing Coalition*, 2021. https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach_2021.pdf (accessed Jun. 01, 2022).
- [2] “Unite Here!,” <https://unitehere.org/> (accessed Jun. 01, 2022).
- [3] “Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) Power Plant Redevelopment (Old Town North),” *City of Alexandria, VA*. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/neighborhood-development/potomac-river-generating-station-prgs-power-plant-redevelopment-old-town> (accessed Jun. 01, 2022).