

## **Shockoe Bottom Baseball Stadium Project Site**

~ Focus on understanding and memorializing historical sites, preserving artifacts, and sharing information with residents ~

Mayor Dwight C. Jones today shared details of his administration’s plans to conduct an archaeological and historical review of the Shockoe Bottom site proposed for a new baseball stadium.

The comprehensive process includes historical research, expert reviews, archaeological excavations, curation of found artifacts, public review and participation, and long-term sharing of historical information.

“Shockoe Bottom has played a central role in our city’s history since its earliest development. Today, it is a vibrant, thriving commercial and residential area. Its history must continue to be discovered, recorded, memorialized, and shared with our citizens and those who visit our capital city from around Virginia, the nation, and the world,” said Mayor Jones.

“We have taken great care to put together an archaeological and historical review process that would be regarded by experts as the right thing to do and the right way to do it,” said Mayor Jones. “The process we are laying out is what archaeologists and historians would expect us to do.”

The archaeological investigation and historical review will be led by Dutton + Associates, LLC, a Richmond-based historical and cultural resources management firm that has conducted archeological surveys for public and private projects throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Archaeologists and historians from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, local historical organizations, and area universities also will be involved.

As part of the archeological and historical investigation and review, Mayor Jones will appoint a panel of experts to review the research, data collection, excavations, found artifacts, and technical reports and other publications.

There also will be extensive opportunities for citizens and visitors to observe the excavations and interact with archaeologists. A special focus will be on outreach to schools, providing opportunities for teachers and students to visit the excavation site to see history being discovered and recorded.

“Public involvement is important,” said Jones. “We want our citizens and students to be a part of this process and project. We must share this valuable learning experience.”

### **Archaeological and Historical Review Process**

The archaeological and historical review process will include the following:

#### **Documentary Research**

- o Research and record development, patterns, and trends in the Shockoe Bottom project area, including existing historic buildings;
- o Concentrate on identifying sites related to the slave trade and other noteworthy religious, commercial, and residential sites;
- o Identify historic and modern development impacts; determine location of archaeological deposits; and
- o Prepare report on documentary research, including historic maps, photographs, and graphics.

## Expert Review and Validation of Documentary Research

- o Present research for third-party expert review and validation;
- o Experts likely to be from Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Library of Virginia, Richmond Virginia Slave Trail Commission, Historic Richmond Foundation, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Union University, University of Richmond, and University of Virginia, among others; and
- o Place research online for public review and input.

## Archaeological Excavations

- o Develop archaeological excavation plan based upon results of documentary research;
- o Plan will include identification of areas of proposed excavation, relevant research themes and questions, and proposed field methods. Field methods will include a combination of the following:
  - § Monitor areas where significant archeological deposits may exist but have been compromised due to past development; monitor during construction;
  - § Investigate significant archaeological deposits and record information from unique historical residential and commercial areas; sampling will take place before construction; and
  - § Recover and record significant archaeological data from historically important or unique sites at the project area; recording will take place before construction.
  - § Prior to implementation, the archaeological excavation plan will be submitted for expert third-party review and comment.
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## Public Participation

- o During project archaeological investigations, archaeologists will establish field areas for public observation of excavations, artifact recovery, and interaction with archaeologists;
- o Onsite field laboratory to be established for cleaning and processing of artifacts, with public interaction with archaeologists;
- o Archaeologists to prepare written monthly updates on archaeological investigations, and will schedule monthly site visits and tours for City officials, members of the public, and City school groups; and
- o During field investigations, a program for using social media to provide updates regarding progress and finds will be coordinated through the City's website and Facebook page.

## Reporting and Artifact Curation

- o When archaeological fieldwork is completed, a written and illustrated document summarizing excavations will be submitted to City officials, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Library of Virginia, and Historic

Richmond Foundation;

- o Final results of all archaeological investigations will be presented in a written and illustrated technical report in accordance with current state and federal guidelines for such studies; report will be reviewed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Library of Virginia, and the Historic Richmond Foundation before being finalized; final report will be filed with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Library of Virginia, and the Richmond Public Library;
- o A popular publication will be prepared summarizing key findings from excavations; publication will be made available for distribution;
- o An interactive web site – keyed to the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Standards of Learning – will be developed for classroom use in K-12 schools; and
- o All artifacts recovered during excavations will be processed and curated in accordance with federal and state guidelines; artifacts will be curated at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and made available to institutions and organizations for education and display purposes.

Early documentary research and expert review is expected to take three months. Archaeological excavation will take approximately four months. Preparing final technical reports for submission to City and state officials as well as other educational materials documenting findings at the Shockoe Bottom site will take some 18 months. If additional consultation is required by state or federal law, the City will adjust this archaeological and historical review process accordingly.

#### **About Dutton + Associates, LLC**

Dutton + Associates, LLC located in Richmond, Virginia, is a cultural resources management firm and provides services to public, private, and institutional clients. The firm conducts archival research, archaeological investigations, architectural investigations, National Register nominations, and educational and interpretive programs. Past clients have included the National Park Service, the United States Navy, NASA, numerous Virginia local governments, Dominion, Rolls Royce, Martin Marietta Materials, and others.

David H. Dutton, Managing Partner at Dutton + Associates, LLC, has more than 25 years of experience in archaeology, cultural resource management, and historic preservation law. He formerly worked for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, where he managed all federal and state environmental reviews, rehabilitation tax credit project certification, historic preservation easements, covenants, and archaeological permits. He also worked as a project review archaeologist for the President’s Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Mr. Dutton received his B.S. in anthropology and sociology from Virginia Commonwealth University and his M.A. in archaeological studies from Boston University.

Posted by Office of the Press Secretary to the Mayor at **4:30 PM**