

Travelers Take Notice: A Norfolk Neighborhood Is Hailed 'Great'

Written by Australian Business

NORFOLK, Va., Oct. 9, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Great neighborhoods define a destination. The coastal Virginia city of Norfolk may now confirm its place among cities with great neighborhoods. The

[American Planning Association](#)

(APA) has designated the city's West Freemason Neighborhood as one of 10 Great Neighborhoods for 2013. Like

London's

Covent Garden,

New York's

Greenwich Village or

Paris'

St. Germain, renowned neighborhoods, like West Freemason, share a distinct vibe and culture that contributes to what ultimately makes the cities where these neighborhoods hail extraordinary.

APA singled out West Freemason for its historic Colonial architecture, community activism that prevented a proposed freeway through the neighborhood, planning efforts to protect the neighborhood's character and identity, and ongoing revitalization efforts.

"Visitors to West Freemason will find a community of people dedicated to preserving the historical authenticity and charm that makes a visit to this neighborhood simply great," said Anthony J. DiFilippo

, President & CEO of

[VisitNorfolk](#)

, the official resource for travel information in Norfolk

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Located along Norfolk's waterfront, West Freemason was the first neighborhood to be rebuilt in the city after Norfolk was nearly completely destroyed during the Revolutionary War. Responding to a proposal in the 1960s to build a waterfront freeway through the neighborhood, West Freemason's residents worked together with local authorities to save the neighborhood's historic infrastructure – including the city's the oldest surviving cobblestone paving and granite curbs. The city has continued its commitment of revitalization and

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improvement in the West Freemason area including adding a stop along "The Tide" light rail line, which connects the neighborhood to ten other rail stops in the City.

According to DiFilippo, in addition to the architecture and charm of cobble-stone streets, visitors to West Freemason should not miss the beautiful [Pagoda and Oriental Garden](#) , a gift to the city and honoring the trading ties between the Taiwan Provincial Government and Virginia

. This peaceful sanctuary includes natural bamboo and the largest Koi pond on the East Coast. For dinner, DiFilippo recommends the "she crab soup," a

Norfolk

favorite, at the Freemason Abbey Restaurant and Tavern, a 135-year old renovated church.

For accommodations, the neighborhood offers the historic

[Freemason Inn Bed & Breakfast](#)

, a completely renovated turn of the century Victorian home, just steps away from the harbor.

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