



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
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Minutes

Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

3:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Chair
The Honorable Kim Gray – Vice Chair
The Honorable Michael Jones – Committee member
Bonnie Ashley, Deputy City Attorney
Lisa Braxton, Interim Deputy City Clerk
Bill Echelberger Jr., Council Budget Analyst
Allison Miessler, Boards and Commissions Administrator
Pamela Nichols, Assistant City Clerk
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

Call to Order

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Pamela Nichols, assistant city clerk, provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Paper(s) for Consideration

Vice Chair Gray moved to amend the agenda as follows:

RES. 2018-R092

To declare a public necessity to amend the City's zoning ordinance and to initiate an amendment to the City's zoning ordinance to require that certificates of zoning compliance and letters of zoning confirmation be reviewed by the City Attorney prior to issuance.

Patron: Mr. Agelasto

To be continued to February 19, 2019 Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting

ORD. 2018-153

To reserve the easternmost southbound lane of North Belvidere Street on the north side of North Belvidere Street's intersection with West Broad Street for vehicular traffic making a left turn from southbound North Belvidere Street onto eastbound West Broad Street.

Patron: Ms. Gray

To be continued to February 19, 2019 Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting

ORD. 2018-289

To amend ch. 24, art. I of the City Code by adding therein a new § 24-4 for the purpose of requiring the Department of Public Works to conduct a study of the conditions of all streets, roads, and bridges in the city and to provide a report to City Council by no later than Feb. 1, 2019, and by no later than Feb. 1 each year thereafter.

Patron: Ms. Larson

To be continued to February 19, 2019 Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting

ORD. 2018-231

To amend and reordain City Code §§ 26-397, concerning definitions, 26-399, concerning the eligibility criteria for partial exemption of rehabilitated residential and multifamily structures or other improvements from real estate taxation, and 26-401, concerning the amount of exemption for rehabilitated residential and multifamily qualified structures, and to amend ch. 26, art. V, div. 3 by adding therein new §§ 26-398.1, concerning the evaluation of such program, and 26-401.1, concerning affordable housing certification, for the purpose of revising the City's partial tax exemption program for residential and multifamily structures by defining certain terms and modifying the qualification requirements for the receipt and duration of partial exemption from real estate taxation.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

To be continued to February 19, 2019 Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Discussion Item(s)

The committee agreed to consider the following agenda items in a block: ORD. 2018-330, ORD. 2018-331, ORD. 2018-332, ORD. 2018-333 and ORD. 2019-007.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Kim Gray moved to approve the meeting minutes of Tuesday, November 20, 2018, at 1:00 p.m., which was seconded and approved: Ayes 2, Gray, Robertson. Jones was excused.

Board Vacancies

Allison Miessler, boards and commissions administrator, reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Vice Chair Gray moved to forward the following appointment and reappointment board applications to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

Board Name	Criteria for Appointment	Applicant Name
Board of Building Code Appeals, General Division (5 members & 3 alternates)	Citizen Representative* (2 vacancies)	William Laffoon (reappointment)
	Licensed General Contractor* (1 vacancy)	Thomas Davis (reappointment)
Capital Region Airport Commission (4 commissioners)	Reside or work in city of Richmond 1 vacancy	Charles Macfarlane (reappointment)
City Planning Commission (9 members)	Qualified Voter* (1 vacancy)	Max Hepp-Buchanan (reappointment)
Clean City Commission (15 members)	2 nd District Representative* (1 vacancy)	Miriam Lack (reappointment)
	3 rd District Representative* (1 vacancy)	Edward Gilchrist (reappointment)
	Corporate/Citizen Volunteer Representative* (3 vacancies)	Avohom Carpenter Julian Gordon (reappointment) M. Jane Hotchkiss (reappointment)
Safe and Healthy Streets Commission (12 members)	Qualified voters of the city who hold no office of profit with the city (1 vacancy)	Mary Larson (reappointment)
Urban Design Committee (10 members)	Landscape Architect* (1 vacancy)	Andrea Almond (reappointment)
	Citizen-At-Large Representative * (1 vacancy)	John D. Reyna
Urban Forestry Commission (9 voting members)	Resident of city* (1 vacancy)	Mary Larson (reappointment)

* Applicants must either reside or work in the city.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Robertson asked Council staff to consider possible policy recommendations to ensure representation from each Council District on Council's Boards and Commissions.

Presentations

Bike Share Program

Jakob Helmboldt, Department of Public Works pedestrian, bicycle and trails coordinator, provided an update on RVA Bike Share System's current status and phase 2 expansion and timeline. Mr. Helmboldt stated that phase 2 includes, upgrading the existing bikes to electric-assist and the addition of twenty docking stations. He further stated that 100% funding for the Bike Share phase 2 was from the Federal Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Opportunity Zones

Kristen Dahlman, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development senior policy analyst, presented an overview of opportunity zones which included tax benefits, variety of uses, location of local and statewide opportunity zones and proposed regulations. Ms. Dahlman also provided a fact sheet on opportunity zones.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked Council staff to coordinate a work session for the Land Use, Housing and Transportation and the Finance and Economic Development Standing committees to review and fully discuss opportunity zones in the city.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinances were considered:

ORD. 2018-330

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for the upgrading of the City's traffic signal system by integrating it with regional automated vehicle location systems to control the timing of traffic signals for transit, emergency, and other City-operated vehicles equipped with automated vehicle location systems for the purpose of maintaining transit schedules, improving emergency vehicle response, enhancing multimodal operations, and lowering vehicle emissions.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2018-331

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for the installation of pedestrian access and safety improvements including crosswalks and traffic speed controls, and street enhancements including decorative paving, public art, landscaping, signage, and lighting on that portion of U.S. 360 known as Hull Street, between its intersection with West 9th Street and the southern terminus of the Mayo Bridge.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2018-332

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for the installation of pedestrian access and safety improvements including crosswalks, refuge areas, continuous routes, and traffic channelization on the streets surrounding the park at Kanawha Plaza.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2018-333

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for the design and construction of the fully accessible pedestrian infrastructure necessary to improve access to Greater Richmond Transit Company transit stops.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2019-007

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute an Agreement between the City of Richmond and Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation for Adjustment of Water and Sanitary Sewer Facilities for the purpose of establishing the terms and conditions for funding the relocation and adjustment of water and sanitary sewer facilities as part of the Virginia Department of Transportation's I-95, Exit 74B, Franklin Street Off Ramp project.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

There were no comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Gray moved to forward ORDS. 2018-330, 2018-331, 2018-332, 2018-333 and 2019-007 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2018-335

To designate the Cannon Creek Greenway bicycle and pedestrian trail located between its intersection with Henrico Drive and its intersection with Richmond Henrico Turnpike in honor of Dr. Charles Price.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

There were no comments or discussions and **Member Jones moved to forward ORD. 2018-335 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2018-194

To prohibit, on Brook Road between Brook Road's intersection with Azalea Avenue and Brook Road's intersection with West Charity Street, new travel lanes from being designated to accommodate bicycle travel and lanes currently designated for motor vehicle travel from being converted to accommodate bicycle travel.

Patrons: Ms. Gray and President Hilbert

Vice Chair Kim Gray provided an overview of ORD. 2018-194 and remarked that, on numerous occasions, she and the co-patron requested responses from city administration on possible modifications to the proposed bike lanes and to discuss safety concerns; however, no one responded to their inquiries.

Jakob Helmboldt, Department of Public Works pedestrian, bicycle and trail coordinator, presented an overview of the Brook Road project and timelines of the public engagement. Mr. Helmboldt explained the issues, existing and future conditions, and key design consideration associated with Brook Road, and remarked that prohibiting the bike lanes could have a negative impact on future funding allocations from the Virginia Department of Transportation.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Vice Chair Kim Gray advised Mr. Helmboldt that residents along Brook Road signed a petition of opposition for the proposed bike lanes.

Mr. Helmboldt explained that a majority of people who signed the petition opposing the bike lanes, participated in the adopted VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan, which included a bike lane project. Mr. Helmboldt further stated that the proposed bike lanes were designed to address concerns regarding safety and tractor trailer access.

Support

Jean T. Williams, Edgehill-Chamberlayne Court Civic Association member, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-194 expressing concerns regarding safety, floating lanes, right-of-ways, and traffic congestion. Ms. Williams stated that residents would like to discuss a plan that incorporates cyclist, residents and business owners; however, Brook Road should not be altered to accommodate the few cyclists in the area.

Allen Griffin spoke in support of ORD. 2018-194 stating that there were not a lot of cyclist on Brook Road and the proposed bike lanes does not connect to other areas in the city. Mr. Griffin stated that the floating lanes will cause traffic hazards.

Elisa Hemmingway, Chamberlayne Industrial Center Association secretary, speaking in support of ORD. 2018-194, provided photographs of Brook Road following heavy rains and a snow storm. Ms. Hemmingway stated that the proposed bike lanes will create additional traffic hazards making Brook Road unsafe.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Opposition

Louise Lockett, Sports Backers Bike Walk RVA member, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that the fully funded project was designed with community input and support. Ms. Lockett further stated that biking and walking were main transportation options for many residents and the proposed bike lanes would create a safer environment for residents.

Derrick Gregory spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that approval of the proposed ordinance could set a precedent for the elimination of other planned bike lanes on Brook Road and other parts of the city.

Sarah Shaughnessy, Richmond City Health District community health planner, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that the redesign of the Brook Road corridor will mitigate unsafe and unhealthy conditions by facilitating active living and reducing vehicular speeds, decreasing the risk of vehicle crashes and deaths.

Elaine Summerfield spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that a well-coordinated bike lane infrastructure will increase access to the city's parks and recreation facilities. Ms. Summerfield further stated that the bike lanes will provide opportunities for connection between other area neighborhoods, and access to Brookland Park Boulevard and downtown.

Dr. Susan Miller spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that the propose ordinance contradicts the mayor's Vision Zero – Richmond Action Plan. Dr. Miller further stated that prohibiting the bike lanes could impact the city's ability to receive funding from the Commonwealth for other transportation projects, and the design of the bike lanes addresses emergency vehicles access, leaf cleaning, bike safety and traffic flow.

Jim Adams spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-194 stating that cyclists do not travel Brook Road because of existing unsafe conditions; however, the bike lanes will provide safety. Mr. Adams further stated that, over the years, thousands of residents participated and supported a bicycle plan, and the city should consider the desire of the people.

Vice Chair Kim Gray expressed concern that the design of the bike lanes will create unsafe traffic hazards for pedestrians, and negatively impact residents and businesses on Brook Road.

Member Michael Jones stated that he would like a citywide multimodal transportation plan, which will provide pedestrian and cyclist access to the entire city.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked for clarification regarding floating zones, the need for bike lanes, speed enforcement on Brook Road, connectivity of the proposed bike lanes to other parts of the city.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Gray moved to forward ORD. 2018-194 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2018-228

To rename the Boulevard from its northerly terminus at its intersection with Brookland Parkway and Westwood Avenue to its southerly terminus at Byrd Park as “Arthur Ashe Boulevard.”

Patron: Ms. Gray

Vice Chair Kim Gray explained the intent of ORD. 2018-228.

Support

Shima Grover spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that the Boulevard was one of the gateways of the city, and renaming the street could attract visitors to the city. Ms. Grover further stated that Arthur Ashe should be recognized locally for his many accomplishments.

Louise Lockett, National Pan-Hellenic Council Metro Richmond member, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that Arthur Ashe was a tennis trailblazer, activist, philanthropist, member of Kappa Alpha Psi and son of Richmond who demonstrated a commitment to excellence and justice.

Melissa Ferrell spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that she was proud to think that her address could be changed to Arthur Ashe Boulevard. Ms. Ferrell further stated that Arthur Ashe was known nationally and renaming the Boulevard would speak volumes about the city.

Lee Stewart, Scotts Addition Boulevard Association vice president, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that Arthur Ashe was a native of the city and should be recognized.

Keenan Caldwell, Richmond Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity member, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that former Kappa Alpha Psi member Arthur Ashe epitomized the motto of the fraternity in his achievements.

Derrick Thomas, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity member, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that Arthur Ashe received the Laurel Wreath Award because of his demonstration of national meritorious achievements and renaming the Boulevard would bestow a high honor for a deserving individual.

Vanessa Johnson, National Pan-Hellenic Council Metro Richmond’s Social Action Task Force chair, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that Arthur Ashe was a household name and his dedication to education and sports resonates internationally. Ms. Johnson further stated that renaming the Boulevard would pay homage to a global servant and hero.

Bill Gallasch, on behalf of the Monument Avenue Preservation Society, expressed support of ORD. 2018-228 and stated that now was the time for the city to show its diversity in honoring citizens who had made historical differences.

Jonathan Marcus, West Grace Street Association’s member, spoke in support of ORD. 2018-228 stating that the West Grace Street Association voted unanimously to support the renaming of the Boulevard. Mr. Marcus further stated that other cities changed the names of streets to honor its natives and Richmond should do the same to honor Arthur Ashe.

Opposition

Grace Silverstein spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that renaming the Boulevard will not bring unity to the city, and suggested the city name the newly proposed coliseum or another neighborhood or street in the city after Mr. Ashe. Ms. Silverstein further stated that she was concern about the fiscal impact associated with changing the name.

Betty Booker spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that renaming the Boulevard will set a precedent for further elected officials to change the names of neighborhoods or streets within an historic district. Ms. Booker urged the committee, on behalf of the Boulevard Coalition, to preserve the historic name of the Boulevard and instead, consider honorary signage on the Boulevard.

Brian Spencer, Boulevard District Coalition member, speaking in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 provided a packet of information regarding the renaming of the Boulevard. Mr. Spencer stated that residents and business owners located on the Boulevard would like a democratic process in which an amicable agreement could be determined. Mr. Spencer stated that a majority of property owners on the Boulevard opposed the renaming; however, they were willing to support an honorary designation, which would not have a fiscal impact.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Sue Patow, Boulevard District Coalition member and volunteer co-chair of the Arthur Ashe Book for Kids Program, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that an honorary street naming to recognize Arthur Ashe would be a win-win situation and would preserve the historic Boulevard neighborhood.

Riley Pratt spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that the proposed request does not align with the City Code and should not be considered by City Council. Mr. Pratt asked the committee to consider an honorary designation, which will have no impact on area residents.

Christopher Small, Boulevard District Coalition member, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating the Boulevard was listed in the National Register of Historic places in Virginia and should be valued. Mr. Small asked the committee to consider an honorary designation on the Boulevard.

Bill Payne spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that the historic characteristic of the Boulevard neighborhood should be preserved, and asked that consideration be given to an honorary designation to recognize Arthur Ashe while preserving the neighborhood.

Adam Zelinsky spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 indicating that residents and business owners on the Boulevard community were not given the opportunity to participate in discussions regarding the proposed naming, and suggested that the city consider an honorary designation to recognized Arthur Ashe.

Shawn Brooks spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 asking that consideration be given to an honorary designation to recognize Arthur Ashe instead of a renaming the Boulevard.

April Peck spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that residents and business owners will be directly impacted by the renaming, and the proposed request will create division amongst neighborhoods. Ms. Peck further stated that the best way to honor Arthur Ashe would be to rename the downtown expressway.

Steven Versen, Museum District Association president, spoke in opposition of ORD. 2018-228 stating that the proposed renaming does not comply with the City Code, and a large majority of property owners located on the Boulevard opposed the request but were willing to support an honorary designation. Mr. Versen further stated that the honorary designation would be a win-win situation for the entire city.

Vice Chair Kim Gray stated that she attempted to contact the presidents of all of the community groups which encompasses the Boulevard, but was interrupted due to circumstances beyond her control. She stated that she was willing to meet with interested parties to further discuss the request.

Member Michael Jones remarked that Arthur Ashe, former Alpha Kappa Psi member, tennis extraordinaire and humanitarian, should be recognized beyond an honorary designation, and that he hopes the city unifies in an opportunity to bestow a great honor on one of its natives.

M. Khara, Department of Public Works deputy director, reported that approximately 38 signs would be change as a result of the renaming with an estimated cost of three hundred thirty thousand dollars.

Vice Chair Gray reported that the mayor was working with the Virginia Secretary regarding Transportation the sign replacement costs.

Chair Ellen Robertson commented that she hopes there will be unity while providing an opportunity to significantly enlighten the world as to Arthur Ashe's legacy.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Gray moved to forward ORD. 2018-228 to Council with no recommendation, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

The following ordinances were considered:

ORD. 2018-311

To erect stop signs on the northwest and southeast corners at the intersection of Juniper Street and 3rd Avenue and to install a curb ramp on the northeast corner at the intersection of Juniper Street and 3rd Avenue.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

ORD. 2018-334

To amend City Code § 24-63, concerning permit fees, and to amend the fees set forth in Appendix A of the City Code for City Code § 24-63, for the purpose of revising the fees for permits for certain activities in the public right-of-way.

Patron: Mayor Stoney

ORD. 2018-287

To amend and reordain City Code § 8-12, concerning the use of City-owned real estate, for the purpose of imposing certain requirements on the use of City-owned real estate as cold weather shelters for homeless persons.

Patron: Ms. Robertson

There were no comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Gray moved to forward ORDS. 2018-311, 2018-334 and 2018-287 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

Staff Report

Steve Taylor, council policy analyst, and Bill Echelberger, council budget analyst, provided the committee with the January staff report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.