

**PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS/QUESTIONS
ANSWERS FROM CITY AND NHDC STAFFS
CPC MEETING HELD ON 9/10/19**

ARENA/HOTEL/CONVENTION CENTER

- 1. What is the interplay with Convention Center – How many event nights? Would this increase with the development?**

NHDC Staff Response

The arena will be used in the promotion of the Convention Center business, and will be a key factor in certain conventions coming to Richmond. The arena will provide support for Convention Center programs and the adjacent mixed use development will provide ancillary support with restaurants and services. The 500-room convention hotel itself will provide the greatest benefit to the GRCC's ability to attract more and larger conventions.

- 2. Do we know how frequently the convention center is occupied? Will new hotel boost ability for larger conventions?**

NHDC Staff Response

Please see the attached chart providing the current attendance of the Convention Center broken down by event type, together with historical data.

- 3. What is the total number of hotel rooms existing in the area?**

NHDC Staff Response

As discussed on Tuesday, the Greater Richmond Convention Center notes that 50,000 room nights of conventions were lost because there is not a convention hotel with a room block agreement. The hotel room inventory in the immediate area is as follows:

1,498 rooms between the following hotels:

Hilton Downtown Richmond
Delta Hotel Richmond Downtown
Omni Richmond Hotel
Marriott Richmond
Jefferson Hotel

The GRCC provided the total inventory of hotel rooms in the region, which is as follows:

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| Chesterfield | 3,833 |
| Hanover | 883 |
| Ashland | 646 |
| Henrico | 8,674 |
| Richmond | 3,671 |
| TOTAL. | 17,707 |

4. You have conservatively projected the days per year that the arena (180) will be used. Those uses will be between 3000 and 17,000?

NHDC Staff Response

Yes – our projections show approximately 180 event days with attendance ranging from a few thousand to over 15,000. Arena capacity of over 17,000 ensures that events with the opportunity to draw attendance at sell-out levels will book the Richmond arena. These sell-out attendance levels will likely occur on several dates each year. Regional tournaments, or NCAA tournament activities are no included in these conservative numbers, although it is highly likely that the Richmond Arena will receive considerable attention from these programs once the venue is open.

The projected breakdown for the range of events, attendance per event and total annual attendance are as follows:

| ANNUAL EVENTS & ATTENDANCE | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Events | Annual Events | Average Paid Attendance | Total Paid Attendance |
| G-League | 24 | 2,000 | 48,000 |
| Minor League Hockey | 36 | 3,500 | 126,000 |
| Concert - A | 5 | 15,000 | 75,000 |
| Concert - B | 12 | 8,500 | 102,000 |
| Concert - C | 6 | 5,000 | 30,000 |
| Family Shows | 10 | 3,250 | 32,500 |
| Ice Shows | 8 | 2,500 | 20,000 |
| Motorsports | 3 | 6,500 | 19,500 |
| Rodeos | 2 | 7,000 | 14,000 |
| Boxing | 1 | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| Religious | 6 | 6,500 | 39,000 |
| Other Sports | 10 | 5,500 | 55,000 |
| HS Basketball | 2 | 2,000 | 4,000 |
| Graduations | 10 | 3,500 | 35,000 |
| Miscellaneous | 40 | 1,000 | 40,000 |
| Entertainment | 6 | 6,000 | 36,000 |
| TOTAL | 181 | 82,750 | 683,000 |

5. What is the maximum capacity of the Coliseum?

NHDC Staff Response 13,500

6. Will other sports tourism project in the region impact this proposal and have conversation been had regarding regional participation?

Specifically:

a. Chesterfield Complex

b. Henrico Sports Area

NHDC Staff Response

Regional youth sports tourism programs are a very specific economic development initiative in communities across the country and have little or no relationship to the programs developed for large arenas. They both exist to support very different programs.

Regional sports tourism events will not adversely impact arena uses and we expect would bring more tourists to Navy Hill (although not the goal of these projects, which is to bring those dollars to their own communities). The arena will include a wide range of events and the new facilities in Chesterfield and Henrico will not conflict with the arena programming. Youth sports tourism in adjacent counties may in fact drive additional activities at the convention center and convention hotel, in addition to the district generally as a destination attractor.

DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION

7. Will there be multiple architects for the project as a whole?

NHDC Staff Response

Yes. Each use has a different architect and in all cases these are firms that are expert in the use/type. HOK will be the architect of the arena. Cooper Carry will be the architect of the Convention Hotel. The residential work will be primarily led by Baskervill, and as the construction plans move forward, the developer will engage other local firms. SMBW is currently advancing plans for a build to suit on parcel D. Having a variety of views and voices within the development will help assure diversity of result appropriate for the urban context of the City Center.

8. Explain the public spaces and how they interact. The Master Plan proposes a hierarchy of public space organized around a reopened and realigned Clay Street spine, which will serve as the primary east / west connector.

NHDC Staff Response

Except for the Hotel drop off sequence, Clay Street will have no driveway cuts to impede pedestrian flow. Variety and diversity are important features of the plan, with each block representing its own unique program while contributing to the whole.

The plan is more specifically described in the attached “**Open Space Concept Plan**”

9. Would like to see a spine in forms of connectivity and 6th Street pedestrian plaza to the south side of Broad Street that draws South to North.

NHDC Staff Response

We agree with the comment. The Navy Hill development is the initial component of the spine, which will in turn inform improvements and connecting uses that will link not only 6th Street north and south, but Marshall Street east and west connecting Jackson Ward through to the VCU health Systems campus. Enclosed is a study by the developer - “**East Marshall Street & GRCC Activation Plan**” - on how that might work along Marshall Street with the programming of existing spaces largely controlled by public entities.

10. Is there a pattern book/design guidelines included with the development proposal?

NHDC Staff Response

Elements of a pattern book have been in development since the RFP response and involve the refinement of the Master Plan, uses for each block, proposed public spaces, street sections and the like. These relate to the form, relationship with the street, transparency and open space. In addition, the text amendment requires a plan of development for each block.

11. How would the construction work with the surrounding area?

NHDC Staff Response

The Navy Hill sites within the Marshall Street to Leigh Street, and 5th Street to 10th Street boundaries are uniquely insular to the City Center when it comes to construction activities. There are no residences, and the primary businesses are government uses. We have been in direct communications with Doorways, as well as the John Marshall Foundation and Preservation Virginia, regarding the construction activities that would occur with the development. A plan of construction activities, utility replacements and road closures necessary will be carefully coordinated with various City departments as the project progresses, but given the scope and scale of overall development, the development will have an unusually small impact for its size.

SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENTS/DEMOGRAPHICS

12. What is being done to incentivize redevelopment of the public housing developments north of the project site?

City Staff Response

The Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority (RRHA) issued a RFQ in August of this year to attract non-profit and for profit developers to redevelop the Gilpin Court development site. RRHA received inquiries from approximately 19 entities and is currently reviewing the qualifications of the firms. It is the intent of RRHA to redevelop Gilpin Court, the City’s oldest public housing development that currently has 783 public housing units with approximately 2000 residents, into a 2000 unit mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhood. RRHA also applied for a Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant for Gilpin Court in April 2019. HUD has not yet made awards. Depending on the

progress and funding that may be available to RRHA from HUD it is the intent of the City's HCD department to support the redevelopment efforts, however the specific forms of assistance has not yet been discussed.

13. What are the other major developments going up in the area?

NHDC Staff Response

The two major projects currently underway on the VCU Medical campus include the Ambulatory Outpatient Clinic that fronts Leigh Street and is 600,000+ square feet of clinical space and 1139 parking spaces due for completion in the first quarter of 2021 and the second building is the Children's Hospital of Richmond Inpatient Hospital located between 10th and 11th on East Marshall Street due to open in December 2022.

Activation Capital is creating a premier anchor for the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem through the 8th+Leigh project in their VA Bio+Tech Park – providing the leading space in the Commonwealth for second-stage growth of advanced-technology and life sciences companies. In addition to the 6-floor building, a parking deck will be included in the project.

In addition the City Staff Response

Virginia General Assembly Building (Broad & 9th): 15-story building site under construction (500-space parking deck proposed across 9th)

14. What is the population size of the area – in terms of the VCU medical campus both workers and students

City Staff Response

City staff has contacted VCU for demographic information for the VCU Medical Campus.

15. What is the size of the workforce and population in the area? -1/4 mile radius and 1/2 mile radius.

City Staff Response

Quarter-Mile Radius:

Total Population: 545

In Labor Force: 263

Half-Mile Radius:

Total Population: 9,052

In Labor Force: 4,656

NOTE: Staff is researching data on the overall number of individuals that work within 1/4 and 1/2 mile radius of the Navy Hill site.

TRANSPORTATION

16. Explain the traffic pattern of the project area during AM and PM times and during events. This includes movements, capacity, peak times and circulation patterns for all modes of transportation.

NHDC Staff Response

Generally, the roads in the immediate vicinity of the development are currently operating under capacity. Peak periods of traffic demand are during the AM and PM work commute periods, typically within the 7-9 AM and 4-6 PM time frames, although there is a third peak in traffic associated with the nearby VCU Health campus that generally occurs later in the morning. The peak congestion is usually confined to approximately a 15-20 minute window based on anecdotal observations and previous studies in the vicinity. Event traffic at the arena will typically fall outside the normal commuting peak periods. Further, the documents require a traffic impact study, the scope of which to be provided by the City Engineer, City Transportation Engineer, and City Bike/Ped. Coordinator.

17. Is reducing vehicle miles travelled a goal?

NHDC Staff Response

Yes. The development is intended not only to create its own live/work environment for new Richmond businesses and residents, but to support the workers North of Broad with convenient access to services, restaurants and housing. Today, most of that work force drives into the City in the morning, then drives home in the evening. Navy Hill proposes to induce many of those commuters to locate nearer where they work. In addition, the existing workforce and residents in the area will have new services and retail opportunities without having to make additional vehicular trips.

18. Please provide information regarding the alternative locations for the Transit Center.

NHDC Staff Response

Were other sites identified for the GRTC transfer center? It seems being blocks off the Pulse line diminishes the dignified opportunities that the transit center may afford if one is using the Pulse.

We worked with GRTC to explore options, and looked at sites along Broad Street and Marshall Street. These sites did not solve for GRTC program needs. The inclusion of a GRTC Transit Center within the Navy Hill plan came about only after these other options were analyzed.

19. What is the distance between the transit center and existing Pulse stations?

NHDC Staff Response

- a. 4th & Broad
- b. 9th & Broad -- closest to proposed transit center
- c. 12th & Broad

The station at 9th is located in front of the City Hall building. The shelter is two blocks, which is approximately an 800-ft walk (measured) from the southeast corner of the proposed transit center block to the shelter. This is well within typical transit walk sheds.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER CITIES

20. What is the relative acreage of the other cities examples to the acreage proposed with the Richmond project?

NHDC staff will provide at the CPC meeting on Monday.

21. What is the population size of each Kansas City, Allentown and Columbus?

NHDC Staff Response

In 2010, the population of **Kansas City Missouri** was about 450,000, a land area of 319 square miles, and a population density 1,400 / sq. mile. Total population for the metro area of the 15 surrounding counties was approximately 2 million. The population of **Allentown Pennsylvania** in 2010 was approximately 118,000, with a metro area population of approximately 827,000.

22. With respect to other example cities for arena based development districts:

NHDC Staff Response

- a. How much directed to schools, housing, etc. in other projects?
All of these programs were different. There were no specific requirements of which we are aware and none were initiated to underwrite a specific city funding need, but rather to lift up new property and other ad valorem taxes for the overall benefit of public programs. What each City has done with its additional revenues is a matter for ongoing, annual budget determinations. The difference is that each city now has more funds generally to use.
- b. What were design guidelines or proffers provided to guide the development?
No design guidelines other than traditional municipal approvals, different in each community. In Los Angeles, this involved acquiring key parcels of land from non-city owners, with the City using its powers of eminent domain to assemble privately-held blighted properties. To offset the impact of that action, the developer was required to provide a range of community benefits negotiated specifically to underwrite the disruption to a community directly impacted by the development.