

INTRODUCED: April 24, 2023

A RESOLUTION No. 2023-R023

To overrule the decision of the City Planning Commission denying approval of the City's application to relocate the Department of Fire and Emergency Services training facility to the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrons – Ms. Trammell and Mayor Stoney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC HEARING: MAY 8 2023 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, on January 19, 2023, the City submitted an application for review by the Urban Design Committee to the Department of Planning and Development Review for general location, character, and extent approval concerning the City's proposal to relocate the Department of Fire and Emergency Services training facility to the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, on April 3, 2023 and following a public hearing on the application by the Urban Design Committee, the City Planning Commission disapproved the City's application and communicated such denial to the Council in accordance with City Charter section 17.07 and section 15.2-2232(B) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, on <INSERT DATE>; and

AYES:           8           NOES:           0           ABSTAIN:       1  
\_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED:   MAY 8 2023   REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_   STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, in accordance with section 15.2-2232(B) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the City, as the owner of the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard, appealed the aforementioned decision of the City Planning Commission to the Council on April 13, 2023; and

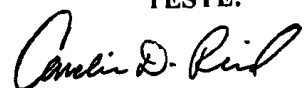
WHEREAS, in response to the City's appeal and in accordance with section 15.2-2232(B) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the Council believes that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Richmond that the Council overrule the action of the City Planning Commission to deny approval of the City's general location, character, and extent application concerning relocation of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services' training facility to the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard and approve the general location, character, and extent of a Department of Fire and Emergency Services training facility at the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard as proposed in the City's application;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That, in response to the City's appeal and in accordance with section 15.2-2232(B) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the Council hereby overrules the action of the City Planning Commission to deny approval of the City's general location, character, and extent application concerning relocation of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services training facility to the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard and approves the general location, character, and extent of a Department of Fire and Emergency Services' training facility at the Hickory Hill Community Center located at 3000 East Belt Boulevard as proposed in the City's application.

A TRUE COPY:  
TESTE:



City Clerk



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Council Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney

**THROUGH** LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

**COPY** Reva Trammell, 18<sup>th</sup> District Council Member  
Rick Bishop, 8<sup>th</sup> Council Liaison

**DATE** April 18, 2023

**PAGE/s** 1 of 1

**TITLE** **Reject Planning Commission Recommendation & Approve Application to construct Fire Training Facility**

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance**  **Resolution**

**REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON**

R. Trammell

**SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE**

Public Safety Committee

**ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

Patron requests that legislation be drafted for Council's consideration rejecting the recommendation of the Planning Commission regarding the City Administration's application to re-locate the City's Fire Training Facility from its current aged structure located in Henrico County to City owned property at 3000 Belt Boulevard to City-owned property currently in the Rec & Parks Department's portfolio. The patron would like to have the legislation introduced at Council's April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**BACKGROUND**

The Planning Commission denied application of the City Administration to relocate the City's Fire training to City owned property at 3000 Belt Boulevard. The City's current training facility is located in Henrico County near the Richmond International Airport and is outdated and in need of replacement. The proposed new site is City-owned property controlled by the Rec & Parks Department. Note the following:

- Plans for this new facility are designed to provide landscaping to protect the beauty of the area.
- Plans for a modern and updated fire training facility will allow fire personnel to train and maintain necessary skills to protect the public safety.
- The Fire Department also plans to use the proposed facility to train the public in life saving techniques such as CPR and first aid at the facility, thereby enhancing public safety in the City.
- Plans for use of the property insure that the public's safety and comfort of area residents is protected.
- Plans for use the proposed training facility insure the natural environment is protected.
- The Rec & Parks Department intends to transfer current recreational uses of the proposed Fire Training Facility site to another playing field on the 19 acre property.

- Control of the proposed site will be transferred from the Rec & Parks Department portfolio to the Fire Department's portfolio.
- The Administration has a number of petitions demonstrating community support for installation of the Fire Training Facilities at this location.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Fiscal Impact Yes  No   
Budget Amendment Required Yes  No   
Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact \$ Costs of mailing

**Attachment/s** Yes  No  Petitions



## RICHMOND DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

**DATE:** April 10, 2023

**TO:** Latesha S. Holmes, Council Chief of staff  
Richmond City Council

**THROUGH:** J.E. Lincoln Saunders, CAO  
Chief Administrative Officer

**FROM:** Christopher Frelke, Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities

Melvin D. Carter, Fire Chief  
Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services

**SUBJECT: PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DECISION APPEAL**

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities along with the Richmond Department of Fire and Emergency Services do not agree with the Planning Commission's decision to deny approval for the use of Hickory Hill Community Center soccer field for the relocation of the Fire Training Facility. Both Departments would like to appeal the Planning commission's recommended decision to deny the approval of the Fire Training Facility relocation.

The City of Richmond tasked Greeley and Hansen to relocate the City's aging Fire Training Facility at Richmond Airport in Henrico County and design a new, live fire structure that will be constructed at 3000 East Belt Boulevard in Richmond. The property is owned by the City of Richmond and only a portion of the property will be designated for the new facility. The proposed site is approximately 1.97 acres located on the grounds of the Hickory Hill Community Center.

The site is bounded by the north and west by heavily wooded areas. The site can be accessed from East Belt Boulevard which bounds the east side of the site. CSX/AMTRAK railroad is on the west side of the property just past the wooded area. Existing residences are located opposite of the proposed site across East Belt Boulevard. The existing Hickory Hill Community Center bounds the southern portion of the site. The site is well screened by the wooded areas on the north and west sides of the property.

The site will consist of an approximately 1.17-acre concrete apron for fire trucks to maneuver; a small training building; an ornamental fence surrounding the site; site lighting; landscaping that includes tree and shrub planting; and required storm water facilities.

Richmond Fire Department representatives have canvassed the Cherry Gardens, Cullenwood Civic Association, and Deerbourne Civic Association to discuss the proposal and handout flyers with questions and answers for review. Overall, 93 percent of the residents in the three neighborhoods support this relocation effort to Hickory Hill Community Center. The Fire Department representatives also attended four Southside District-wide meetings to discuss this effort.

Since 2021, the Richmond Fire and emergency Services has examined all feasible alternatives to the Hickory Hill Community Center site and believes the following:

- Delaying construction will cost the City thousands of dollars.
- Delaying construction of the facility will jeopardize the grant funding that was obtained for the building.
- A study of the area concluded that there are no design or construction restrictions required by the surrounding properties.
- Peak storm water flows will be decreased from the fire training facility site by the design of a retention pond.
- Noise levels will be about 55 decibels (dBA) which is compatible to an average conversation.
- No Virginia Environmental Protection Agency Air permits are required based on the following Virginia Administrative Code (9VAC5-130-40) Permissible burning (Six times a year).
- This site addresses our ability to maintain the City's Insurance Services Organization (ISO) rating of a Class-1.
- No adverse environmental impacts from noise or pollutants
- The Department of Recreation and Parks will allocate about 10% of the usable facility space at the Hickory Hill Community Center for the Fire Department.
- The Fire Department will operate from 0800 hours to 1700 hours Monday through Friday and occasionally on weekends.

Thank you for the review of our concerns and we look forward to having our appeal heard by City Council.

C: The Honorable Michael Jones, Council President, 9<sup>th</sup> District  
Council Member Kristen Nye, 4<sup>th</sup> District

**BROOKBURY CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

Mr. Shawne Hammett, President  
3717 Birdwood Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23234  
[brookburycivicasociation1753@gmail.com](mailto:brookburycivicasociation1753@gmail.com)  
(704) 898-0166

April 10, 2023

Mr. Melvin Carter, Fire Chief  
City of Richmond Fire Department  
201 East Franklin Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Fire Chief Carter:

Thank you for coming to our Brookbury Civic Association (BCA) Informational Meeting on Thursday evening, March 30, 2023.

Your presentation was awesome and very informative. Thank you for shedding the true light on the location of the proposed Fire Training Center and specific details of the Burn Building and its' use. You made it very clear why the location at the Hickory Hill Community Center and the property adjacent to the back of it is the selected site. First and foremost, saving the City of Richmond millions of dollars that is now being paid to Henrico County is reason enough to support it.

Please take note that the information you previously received about the Brookbury Community being in opposition of the location, was and still is not true. Every household in the Brookbury Community was notified of our meeting and if everyone had attended and heard your transparent presentation, I'm quite sure many of them would not have a problem with supporting the project. Many thanks for taking the time to answer all of our questions. We support the project and look forward to the time when it is completed and the Center will be made more available for use by the citizens of Richmond and especially of the Eighth District Communities.

We are very appreciative of your leadership of the Fire Department and the availability of your Units in serving our City and our Brookbury Community when called on for emergencies. We hope that you will consider the idea of the formation of a partnership with the City of Richmond Schools and it will come to fruition.

Keep up the good work!!!

Sincerely yours,



Shawne Hammett  
President

sh/jgh

April 11, 2023  
3507 Skipping Rock Way  
Richmond, VA 23234

Re: Hickory Hill Community Center (HHCC)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I would like to take this opportunity to recommend the City of Richmond Fire Department to have a training facility located here on the Southside of Richmond namely HHCC.

This would give the citizens some type of security knowing that a facility of that nature is located for some in walking distance. In addition, it would allow the citizens to come and observe the women and men at work. They truly would be a great enhancement to our community and also save the City millions of dollars being paid out to other localities namely Henrico.

Please open up HHCC to the fire department and save our hard earned tax dollars and spend it on us...Richmond citizens.

If any additional information or concerns you may have, please let me know. I can be reached at the above address or 804-274-4414 (h).

Respectfully,

  
Willette King