



# City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
www.Richmondgov.com

## Meeting Minutes - Final Urban Design Committee

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Thursday, October 9, 2014

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

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### Call to Order

*Ms. Nolt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.*

### Roll Call

**Present:** 8 - Ms. Andrea Almond, Mr. Chris Arias, Mr. Doug Cole, Vice Chair Bryan Green, Ms. Giles Harnsberger, Ms. Andrea Levine, Chair Jill Nolt and Mr. Robert Smith

**Absent:** 2 - Mr. Vaughn Garland and Ms. Claire Shirley

#### Staff Present

*Jeff Eastman, PDR  
Tara Ross, PDR  
Mark Olinger, PDR  
Jim Hill, PDR  
Will Palmquist, PDR*

#### Others Present

*Heywood Harrison, Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities  
Maritza Feliz-Reyes, Dept. of Public Works  
Tom Flynn, Dept. of Public Works  
Manouchehr Nosrati, Dept. of Public Works  
Brian McPeters, Kimley-Horn and Associates  
Jake Helmboldt, City Bicycle, Trails and Pedestrian Coordinator  
Keith Whipple, Waterstreet Studio  
Mike Mather, Dept. of Public Works  
Lacy Salomone, Dept. of Public Works  
Don Summers, Dept. of Public Works  
Dennis Craig, 3north Architects  
Sgt. Mike Bohannon, Richmond Police Department, K-9 division  
Jian Xu, Dept. of Public Works  
Travis Bridewell, Dept. of Public Works  
Melody Imburg, Orhcard House School  
Bill Gallasch, Monument Avenue Preservation Society  
Alice Massie  
Marianne Pitts, 2nd District Council Liaison  
Phil Riggan, Richmond.com*

### Approval of Minutes

[ID 14-040](#) Regular Meeting of September 4, 2014

**Attachments:** [Regular Meeting of September 4, 2014](#)

**A motion was made by Ms. Levine, seconded by Mr. Green, that the minutes from the September 4, 2014 meeting be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Almond, Green, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

**Abstain:** 2 - Arias and Cole

## Secretary's Report

*Mr. Eastman stated that at their September 15th meeting, the Planning Commission approved the final Brown's Island Dam Walk and the conceptual Idlewood roundabout on the consent agenda with the UDC recommendations. Mr. Eastman stated that the Carytown gateway sign was withdrawn by the applicant prior to the consideration by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission approved the conceptual Floyd Avenue bike boulevard with the UDC recommendations and with the recommendations that the applicant provides more research on automobiles, bike and pedestrian streets and how the combination of the modes of transportation effect speed limit and the applicant strongly consider lowering the posted speed limit along the subject corridor to 20mph; that the applicant reconsiders the locations and/or use of design elements, including curb extensions, speed bumps and traffic circles, east of N. Boulevard to Harrison Street. Mr. Eastman stated that the Quirk Hotel has applied for a sidewalk café permit, which is temporary, instead of the permanent outdoor dining encroachment that they had originally sought.*

## Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

*There were no continuances or deletions.*

## CONSENT AGENDA

**A motion was made by Ms. Almond, seconded by Ms. Levine, that the Consent Agenda items be recommended for approval to the Planning Commission. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 8 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Green, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

1. [UDC No. 2014-33](#) Conceptual Location, Character and Extent Review of an athletic field and associated improvements at Hickory Hill Community Center, 3000 Belt Boulevard

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

*Mr. Cole inquired what happens to the tree survey once it's done. Mr. Eastman stated that there are a number of trees that are going to be taken down and they want to know how many and what size trees are coming down so they can replace them effectively. Mr. Cole stated that the applicants understands that what comes out that something must go back in and Mr. Eastman stated that they indicated to him that they are going to replace that buffer but he wants to know what's coming out.*

*Ms. Almond inquired about storm water on the athletic field and stated that they are*

going to be clearing trees and it's a large athletic field and it doesn't drain into the city storm sewer it actually drains straight into a creek which goes into the James River. Ms. Almond stated that it sounds like they are using grass swales to move water off site and they didn't say anything about treatment or bioretention or any water quality measures. Mr. Heywood Harrison with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities stated that they have engineering on board and they will make sure that the drainage will be addressed

**This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for conceptual approval, with the following conditions, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014:**

- That the final plans show any trees that are to be removed as part of the project, indicating the species type and caliper size for any tree larger than 4" in caliper that is proposed to be removed.
- That the final plans include a landscape plan, including plant species, quantity, and size at the time of installation; and that the plans include new trees across the vacated Platinum Road adjacent to the CSX rail line, to continue the existing vegetative buffer.
- That the final plans provide details on the lighting, proposed scoreboard, any proposed benches/bleachers and trash receptacles.
- That the applicant receives Board of Zoning Appeals or other necessary approval for the field lighting prior to submission for final review.
- That the final plans indicate how the playing fields will be connected to the parking areas.
- That the applicant considers burying the overhead power lines that are to be relocated as part of the construction.

2. [UDC No. 2014-38](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of traffic calming modifications in the vicinity of Mary Munford Elementary School, 211 Westmoreland Street

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

**This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for final approval, with the following condition, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014:**

- That the traffic circles are enlarged to the maximum possible dimensions.

3. [UDC No. 2014-32](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of streetscape improvements to Brookland Park Boulevard, between Montrose Avenue and Woodrow Avenue

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

Ms. Almond stated that she has some concerns about the plant palette. The plants are all perennial or deciduous and in the winter all of the shrub beds will be empty or have dead plants which isn't very interesting. Ms. Almond stated that it had been pointed out

to her that the handicap curb ramps are being done in the center of the arc instead of having two separate ones which is not a preferred method.

Mr. Bryan McPeters with Kimley-Horn Associates stated that the handicap ramps at the radii are in the center because on 90 percent of the intersections they can't get the landing area behind the CG-12 (a minimum of 3ft desirably 4ft at the top of those ramps to be able to have people to have a chance to wheel down to the bottom of the crosswalks safely). Mr. McPeters stated that they worked with the city bike and pedestrian coordinator. If they locate them on the sides they do one of two things: either they don't have room because of the adjacent buildings to have that landing behind it or they will negatively impact the landscaping. Mr. McPeters stated that since the purpose of the curb extensions is to open up space for aesthetic landscaping the center is the best place to do that. In regards to the landscape palette, Mr. McPeters inquired if Ms. Almond had a particular species that she is questioning.

Ms. Almond stated that Mr. Flynn stated that in the traffic calming island they want to have something like evergreen that is permanent and visual so that people can see. Mr. McPeters stated that he is not against looking at that and substituting the species if that is desired.

**This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for final approval, with the following conditions, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014:**

- That the applicant continues to work with property owners through the completion of the plans and construction to close, narrow, or relocate vehicular access to the side streets in order to provide curb and sidewalk on Brookland Park Boulevard.
- That the applicant considers additional vertical landscaping in those curb extensions where the presence of overhead or underground utilities or sight line issues prevents the planting of street trees.
- That the landscape palette be modified to add one evergreen species to each curb extension, to replace one of the other plants.
- That the proposed trash can matches the existing can used on the corridor, which does not have a center lid.

4. [UDC No. 2014-37](#) Final Section 17.05 Review of additions to the set of City-standard bike racks

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

Mr. Arias inquired about what they are actually approving and Mr. Eastman stated that a Section 17.05 review is a section of the City Charter where the UDC is tasked with providing aesthetic advice to the Planning Commission. Mr. Arias stated that there are a couple of pages of bike rack types but they are not concerned with the location of these things right now.

Mr. Eastman stated that they have one city standard now, the post and the ring rack. Back in 2009 the UDC and Planning Commission reviewed and approved that design and then the City Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator along with Public Works has been working to have those installed in the right-of-way. Mr. Arias inquired if it comes back to UDC to place them and Mr. Eastman stated no, that the UDC provides an aesthetic review of the rack and then once approved they are administratively installed.

This Section 17.05 item was recommended for final approval as submitted, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014.

5. [UDC No. 2014-36](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of landscaping improvements along Dock Street between S. 21st Street and Pear Street

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for final approval as submitted, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

6. [UDC No. 2014-34](#) Conceptual Location, Character and Extent Review of a facility for the Richmond Police Department K-9 division, 500 Forest Lawn Drive

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)

*Mr. Green inquired about the recommendation for lengthening the windows and if was provided to the applicant in writing and Mr. Eastman stated that it is just a suggestion and stated that he went more general that they make the main entrance more prominent in the recommendations.*

*Mr. Arias stated that it doesn't seem like there are any sustainability or environmental functions that are happening in the building and there is an opportunity for sky lights and water retention for irrigation and things like that and inquired if it any of that has been addressed.*

*Mr. Dennis Craig with 3north Architects, stated that they are doing everything they can do to reduce the cost to get it to the targeted budget and stated that skylights are not in the budget but they are using some sustainable materials where they can within the budget.*

*Mr. Arias stated that it would seem to him that there would be an opportunity for offsets since introducing skylights into the roof might reduce operating cost over time.*

*Mr. Craig stated that in regards to the entrance they have a nice covered entrance there and this building is not for public use and as for the high windows those are in the handlers area and the reason they are high is because there are wall storage units above the work areas and they use those windows to get daylight in. Dropping them down will be difficult.*

*Mr. Cole stated that he don't know the footprint inside is but asked is it possible to move the door to the right side and Mr. Craig stated that it is exposed to where everybody can*

see it as they come onto the site and if they flip it that wouldn't be the case and then you would have to search for it.

Ms. Nolt stated that if you park and get out the car you would have a straight site line to the door and Mr. Craig stated yes.

Mr. Don Summers with the Department of Public Works stated that one of the things they have been wrestling with is the budget and there is no further funding other than the amount that was given by the Attorney General's office.

Mr. Cole stated that he also sits on the Planning Commission, and there the argument that it isn't in the budget does not go over well. Cost is never justification for not raising the bar on private development and they expect the same for the city.

Mr. Craig stated that they did use materials that will last a long time and are maintenance free.

Ms. Nolt stated that it will be helpful to see the renderings.

Mr. Green asked what the use of the building would be like on an average day.

Sgt. Mike Bohannon with the Richmond Police Department K-9 division, stated that there are multiple agencies that come here for training, some of it weekly and some lasting up to 18 weeks. During training there can be anywhere from 25 to 35 teams there training. On a normal day when there isn't training, there might be anywhere from 3 to 5 cars there.

Mr. Eastman asked Mr. Craig if he wanted to let the Committee know of alterations that have recently been made to the building in order to stay on budget. Mr. Craig stated that it doesn't change the architecture of the building much but they reduced the kennel portion of the building from 10 to 6 kennels, and they also altered some of the programmatic spaces in the administrative portion of the building.

Mr. Green stated that this is a vast improvement over the current building, and made a motion to approve with Staff recommendations.

Mr. Arias stated that he would like to add the consideration of skylights and rainwater runoff retention. He believes that these things would be small enough in cost that they could be squeezed into the budget or planned to be phased in an additional phase.

Mr. Green stated that he wanted to proceed with his motion as stated. That motion did not receive a second.

**This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for conceptual approval, with the following conditions, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014:**

- That the applicant receives approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals to locate on the site prior to final review.
- That the applicant modifies the building design to make the front entrance more prominent.
- That the applicant replaces the standard concrete block walls in the kennel portion of the building with split-faced block.
- That the applicant considers incorporating sustainability measures such as skylights and a rainwater retention system.
- That the final plans include color elevation renderings.
- That the final plans include building material samples, or pictures showing the proposed building materials.

- That the final plans provide a landscape plan, to include plant species, location, quantity, and size at the time of installation.
- That the final plans provide details on the proposed parking lot lighting, to include pole and fixture model, height, color, finish and light source.

**Aye:** 7 - Arias, Cole, Green, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

**Recused:** 1 - Almond

7. [UDC No. 2014-35](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of modifications to Monument Avenue at its intersection with N. Allen Avenue

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)  
[Staff Report to UDC](#)  
[Location Map](#)  
[Application & Plans](#)  
[CAR Advisory Statement to UDC and PC](#)

*Mr. Eastman stated that this project was reviewed by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) under the section of their authorizing legislation that allows them to provide advice to the Planning Commission.*

*Mr. Green read the recommendations from the CAR to the Committee members.*

*Mr. Cole inquired about the pedestrian access to the center island and inquired if that would entail painting white lines or brick pavers and Mr. Eastman stated that they had conversation with the applicants and most everything else here is going to be striped white and that would probably be the proper way to do it and the most consistent.*

*Mr. Smith inquired if there was anything the CAR would be against. Mr. Green stated their concern would be that they make sure it don't impact the overall design, so paint would probably be preferred because it is easily removed.*

*Mr. Arias asked if there were crosswalks will they have to add additional ramps in the circle and Mr. Eastman stated just two and but it should be full access.*

*Mr. Cole inquired if the drainage solution of leaving 18" between the curb and the island was aesthetically the best that they could come up with or can they can pipe it and Mr. Eastman stated that it is a fairly standard solution and to pipe it explodes the budget because they have to put in additional drop-inlets and tie into the storm water system. Mr. Eastman inquired if Mr. Cole wants it covered from end to end rather than where there is pedestrian access. Mr. Cole stated that an 18 inches separation looks more like a highway solution than a historical solution.*

*Ms. Almond stated that she has the same concern and stated that it doesn't seem like it fits in the historic district.*

*Mr. Smith inquired if the arrows are standard and is concerned with the arrows going east and west in the left lane before you get to the circle and stated that they seem premature.*

*Mr. Tom Flynn, Department of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Division and Mr. Brian Revel with RK&K came up to answer questions.*

*Mr. Revel stated that this marking is the standard setup but there is also an optional*

setup called the fish hook design that shows a dot and an arrow, indicating that you go around the island before turning left. The placement of the arrows before the circle is intended to allow drivers to get into the proper lanes before it is too late or too difficult to do so.

Ms. Nolt inquired how many signs are going to be removed and Mr. Revel stated about 16 signs.

Ms. Nolt inquired if the project was being reviewed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) and Mr. Flynn stated that they are reviewing the project but it is not physically impacting the island, which is the state-owned portion.

Ms. Nolt stated that if they recommended providing the pedestrian access to the circle and it changed the sidewalk would that trigger a full DHR review and Mr. Flynn stated that it probably would and they oppose providing that access to the central island.

Mr. Revel stated that most of the guidelines for roundabout design state that you shouldn't design access to the central island for safety reasons.

Mr. Green stated that the CAR understands the safety concern but there has always been use of the circle whether or not it was intended or planned. This isn't a roundabout, it is a monument.

Mr. Flynn stated that they don't have any data of accidents involving pedestrians seeking to get to the central island, and what that tells him is that pedestrians are being careful when they do go out there.

Mr. Arias stated that the key is getting east and west traffic to slow down.

Mr. Revel stated that the physical geometric alterations will force drivers to slow down.

Mr. Revel discussed the difficulty in trying to provide symmetry with all of the crosswalks.

Ms. Nolt asked if it was possible for the sidewalks to follow the concentric curve of the circle itself. Mr. Revel stated that in one of the earlier iterations of the project they did have a curvilinear sidewalk but after extensive review and working with the civic associations, they desired to see more of a straight line between the sidewalks.

Ms. Almond asked the applicant to respond to their earlier question about the 18" gap between the island and the existing curb. Mr. Revel stated that the islands are not going to be a continuous, wide open walking surface. It directs pedestrians to the crossing. It also mitigates the changes to the existing, historic configuration.

Ms. Melody Imburg, an administrator with the Orchard House School, stated her support for the project. She stated that they have seen many renditions of the plan and they have been sharing it with their families, and that everyone is pleased with the design. They do not support the crosswalks to the central island. They continuously discourage their students from going over to the central island.

Bill Gallash, President of the Monument Avenue Preservation Society, stated his group's support for the project and his opposition to providing access to the central island. He is pleased that the modifications are reversible if it turns out that they don't have the desired effect.

Ms. Alice Massie, who lives adjacent to the circle on Monument Avenue, stated that the City has tried everything from signs, striping, painting to more signs but that hasn't



*worked. She applauds the City for coming up with something elegant and simple. They did have neighborhood meetings about materials and the consensus was to keep it simple and elegant and let the history stay in place.*

*Mr. Joe Yates, a resident of Monument Avenue, stated that he has been playing a delicate balance between preserving the history of the circle and improving the safety and he has come to the conclusion that safety is a little more important. He appreciates that the curbs are being left in place to preserve the history.*

*Marianne Pitts, liaison to 2nd District Councilman Samuels, stated that Mr. Samuels fully supports the project.*

*The Committee further discussed the Staff recommendations and those from the CAR before forming a motion.*

**This Location, Character and Extent item was recommended for final approval, with the following conditions, and was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 20, 2014:**

- **That the Committee is not in favor, at the present time, of providing structured pedestrian access to the central island of the roundabout.**
- **That the innermost eastbound and westbound lanes on Monument Avenue are marked with the “fish hook” arrows on the approach to the roundabout.**
- **That the location and orientation of the proposed crosswalks respect the symmetry of the original plan and strong geometrical relationship to the central circle; specifically, that the applicant relocate the sidewalk in the northwestern curb extension island as far east as possible to provide symmetry.**

**Aye:** 8 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Green, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

*There was no other business.*

## **Adjournment**

*Ms. Nolt adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m.*