



City of Richmond

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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, December 16, 2019

1:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room

Call To Order

Mr. Poole called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 1:30 p.m.

Roll Call

- Present 8 - * Chair Rodney Poole, * Vice Chair Melvin Law, * Commissioner David Johannas, * Commissioner Ellen Robertson, * Commissioner Elizabeth Hancock Greenfield, * Commissioner Max Hepp-Buchanan, * Commissioner John Thompson, and * Commissioner Lenora Reid
- Absent 1 - * Commissioner Vivek G. Murthy

Chair's Comments

Mr. Poole welcomed all who were present.

- 2020 Officers

Election of Officers was deferred until the January 6, 2020 meeting.

Approval of Minutes

1. [PDRMIN 2019.024](#)

Attachments: [DRAFT CPC Minutes Oct 7, 2019 Meeting](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johannas, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, that the October 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye --** 5 - * Chair Rodney Poole, * Commissioner David Johannas, * Commissioner Max Hepp-Buchanan, * Commissioner John Thompson and * Commissioner Lenora Reid
- Excused --** 2 - * Vice Chair Melvin Law and * Commissioner Elizabeth Hancock Greenfield
- Abstain --** 1 - * Commissioner Ellen Robertson

Director's Report

- Council Action Update

Mr. Matthew Ebinger provided an update on the actions taken by City Council at its December 9, 2019 meeting.

- Richmond 300 Update

Mr. Mark Olinger provided an update on Richmond 300.

Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

**4. [CPCR.2019.1](#)
[19](#)**

- Attachments:** [Staff Report](#)
[Resolution](#)
[Map](#)
[Presentation](#)
[Letter of Support Scenic Virginia](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Robertson, seconded by Commissioner Johannas, that this City Planning Commission Resolution be continued to the 1/21/2020 Planning Commission Meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - * Chair Rodney Poole, * Vice Chair Melvin Law, * Commissioner David Johannas, * Commissioner Ellen Robertson, * Commissioner Elizabeth Hancock Greenfield, * Commissioner Max Hepp-Buchanan, * Commissioner John Thompson and * Commissioner Lenora Reid

Consent Agenda

Public Hearing: No one spoke.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellen Robertson, seconded by Commissioner John Thompson, that the Consent Agenda be approved. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - * Chair Rodney Poole, * Vice Chair Melvin Law, * Commissioner David Johannas, * Commissioner Ellen Robertson, * Commissioner Elizabeth Hancock Greenfield, * Commissioner Max Hepp-Buchanan, * Commissioner John Thompson and * Commissioner Lenora Reid

2. [UDC 2019-30](#)

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

This Location, Character and Extent Item was approved.

The consent agenda consists of items that appear relatively non-controversial in nature and for which there was no known opposition at the time this agenda was set. The Consent Agenda items will be considered by the Commission as a group, and there will be a single combined staff presentation and a single combined public hearing held for all items listed on the Consent Agenda.

Regular Agenda

3. [UDC 2019-29](#)

Attachments: [UDC Report to CPC](#)
[Staff Report to UDC](#)
[Location & Plans](#)
[Public Comment - Support](#)
[Letter of Opposition](#)
[Letters of Support](#)

Mr. Josh Son provided staff's presentation.

Ms. Andrea Almond provided the applicant's presentation.

Mr. Thompson asked the helipad is an existing structure, there is no money being spent on implementing or installing it?

Ms. Almond stated yes it is there now.

Mr. Thompson stated you talk about using the conceptual plan as a fundraising tool, do you have an idea of what percentage of the total cost would be.

Ms. Almond stated no.

Ms. Lucy Meade, Venture Richmond, stated we have not started fundraising because we need a plan to sell and need priorities, it is a big number. She stated it will take a lot of time to do. It will be a great project for foundations and private funders. She stated we do not have a percentage.

Mr. Thompson stated it looks like a good plan. Opening the canal to paddler traffic would be fantastic especially if more could be done to maintain a good level of water in the canal.

Mr. Thompson stated river access, there is no access there now, to minimize that, gaining access would be great from the paddlers standpoint, but also there is going to be safety concerns, as long as there is a way to close that off and lock it during certain events.

Mr. Poole asked what is the applicant's position on those conditions requested by the Urban Design Committee.

Ms. Almond stated the applicant is supportive.

Mr. Johannas asked how many people use Browns Island.

Ms. Mead stated about one million.

Mr. Law asked about the archway.

Ms. Almond stated they are bicycles, a piece of public art.

Ms. Greenfield asked when the water rises how will people know not to go near.

Ms. Almond stated in many cities that have terraces at their waterfront, they are open, when the water rises people can always walk away from the edges.

Public Hearing:

Cat Anthony, Virginia Capital Trail Foundation; Meg Turner, Capital Trees; Jon Lugbill, Sportsbackers and Lucy Meade spoke in favor of the item.

Todd Woodson, Oregon Hill Neighborhood Association, is not opposed to the item but expressed concerns.

Ms. Robertson asked is there anything in the conceptual plan that is not appropriate.

Mr. Woodson stated speaking from a personal standpoint, having the community in the conversation would perhaps add some reverence to the river. He stated he does not approve of putting concrete right up to the riverfront.

Ms. Robertson stated this is a conceptual plan that will be going out to the community, a lot of folk use this park. Most of the park is located in the sixth district. The conceptual plan and purposes of this conceptual plan to create some concepts and ideas will ultimately be a part of the final plan, will be taken back to the community. She stated what I am suggesting to you is that none of this is part of a final plan, it is just a conceptual idea and I would also say to the developers and to those in the presence making this plan that we are documenting that every community have been touched and invited and encouraged to provide their input and that we document that.

Mr. Woodson asked how will this compete with other projects.

Ms. Robertson stated when the City looks at grant opportunities, we are going to pursue as many and as much as we can possibly get, there are already some priorities where funding is needed for different reasons, but certainly I would hope this would be one of those priorities.

Mr. Johannas stated this is a huge facility for a city. One of the things that is happening in our city is that we are turning into a bigger city, we are making that transition now finally, we are not this small place anymore, we are not a tourist resort, we are actually turning into a bigger city. Part of the process is being managed incredibly well by our city and by our staff is this whole movement towards taking our downtown area, the whole central part of our city, not just downtown, but that whole downtown masterplan concept district, and our corridors and upgrading them. The level of work and the level of development in terms of just our planning and how we are going to manage growth, we have that growth so we have the opportunity to manage it, but we also have that growth and have to manage it if we are going to be a great city. He stated my vision is we are turning into a great city, we need to accomodate all activities, this plan provides that opportunity to continue the dialogue which was started for the Downtown Master Plan, going into the Riverfront Plan.

Mr. Thompson stated the James River is probably the single greatest asset in the City of Richmond. The access to the river is limited and restricted in so many places within city limits so those areas where the public does have access, it is our responsibility to make that access as great as possible. It is worth the investment, whether it is public or private, it is our responsibility to allow access for all generations and all people to be able to enjoy the river. He stated he supports the conceptual plan.

Mr. Law asked what would be the adverse impact if this item were delayed until more of the public could be involved.

Mr. Ebinger stated from staffs perspective, we see that public participation is planned for later in the coming year based on the conceptual approval, once it is granted. He stated he would defer to the applicant about how much of an adverse affect it would have on the overall schedule for the coming year.

Ms. Meade stated we have a strong plan for 1st and 2nd quarter for outreach to neighborhoods and to a broader group. It is helpful for people to see something to respond to and then you can tweek things based on peoples feedback and input.

Mr. Poole stated because it is a conceptual plan and because it does contain enough detail for people to become engaged and the promise that we will hold your feet to the fire with respect to the engagement with the community because you have to return to the Urban Design Committee and back to the Planning Commission, if that has not happened we will note that. That is part of the plan as you have presented and I plan to support this matter.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johannas, seconded by Commissioner Robertson, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be approved with the conditions of the Urban Design Committee. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - * Chair Rodney Poole, * Vice Chair Melvin Law, * Commissioner David Johannas, * Commissioner Ellen Robertson, * Commissioner Elizabeth Hancock Greenfield, * Commissioner John Thompson and * Commissioner Lenora Reid

Recused -- 1 - * Commissioner Max Hepp-Buchanan

Upcoming Items

Mr. Ebinger provided a list of items scheduled for the Planning Commission's January 6, 2020 meeting:

- 2820 West Cary
- 18 West Franklin
- 1000 West Franklin
- 1817 Floyd; 1812 West Main
- 806 West Clay
- 5612 Grove Avenue
- 1512 North 27th Street
- Armstrong CUP Amendment
- Citywide Short Term Rental Ordinance

- 1620 Park
- 1703 Maury
- 1900 Chamberlayne

Adjournment

Mr. Poole adjourned the meeting at 2:43 PM.

All persons attending the meeting are requested to register on the attendance sheets that have been placed on the chairs and are also available at the table by the conference room entrance. Once you have completed an attendance sheet, it should be provided to the Commission staff.

