



# City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
2nd Floor of City Hall  
Richmond, VA 23219  
www.richmondgov.com

## Meeting Minutes - Final Urban Design Committee

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Thursday, September 10, 2015

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

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### Call to Order

Ms. Almond called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

### Roll Call

**Present:** 9 - Chair Andrea Almond, Chris Arias, Doug Cole, Vaughn Garland, Andrew P. Gould, Giles Harnsberger, Vice Chair Andrea Levine, Jill Nolt and Robert Smith

**Absent:** 1 - Bryan Green

### Staff Present

Mr. Jeff Eastman, PDR  
Ms. Tara Ross, PDR

### Others Present

Mr. Norman Burns, Maymont Foundation  
Ms. Beth Kennan, EDC  
Mr. Sandy Bond, 3north  
Ms. Lisa Clark, 3north  
Dr. Norman Merrifield, DPRCF  
Mr. Keith van Inwegen, VCU  
Mr. Mike Sawyer, DPW  
Ms. Jennifer Mullen, Roth Doner Jackson PLC  
Mr. Barry Russell, DPRCF  
Mr. Heywood Harrison, DPRCF  
Mr. Dan Tilley, NB&C  
Ms. Celique Jones, NB&C  
Mr. Robert Easter, KEI Architects  
Ms. Monica Flippen, KEI Architects  
Ms. Diane Linderman, VHB  
Mr. Nicholas Smith

### Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

### Secretary's Report

Mr. Eastman stated that at their September 8 meeting the Planning Commission approved the GRTC Bus Rapid Transit plans on the regular agenda with the UDC recommendations and a few others, including that results of the connectivity study with the existing bus routes be presented at final review. The Commission continued the Maymont Horticulture building project for 60 days to allow the applicant to conduct additional public outreach.

## Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

There were no continuances or deletions.

## CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Ms. Levine, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the Consent Agenda items be recommended for approval. The motion carried unanimously, with Ms. Almond recused and Ms. Nolt and Mr. Gould excused.

1. [UDC No. 2015-12\(2\)](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a new Animal Care building, a new classroom building and associated site improvements in the vicinity of the Maymont Children's Farm, 800 Swan Lake Drive

**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 September 21, 2015.

## REGULAR AGENDA

2. [UDC No. 2015-20](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed road narrowing along N. 12th Street between E. Broad and E. Marshall Streets

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)

[Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location Map](#)

[Application & Plans](#)

Ms. Harnsberger inquired about the pedestrian crosswalk island and Mr. Michael Sawyer, City Transportation Engineer, stated that they want to narrow the width so that vehicles don't go northbound but still allow for the bike lane to continue northbound. Mr. Sawyer stated that the island ought to be raised up but the design as shown limits pedestrians and they agree with the staff recommendation to pull those out a little bit to allow the maximum width of the crosswalk to be used.

[Ms. Nolt arrived at 10:12]

Public Comment

Mr. Nicholas Smith stated that when he looks at something like this he ask who the users of this space are and he thinks they are the people that are going to and working at the MCV campus. Mr. Smith stated that what could be here is a pedestrian plaza and this space doesn't need cars driving through it. Mr. Smith inquired why they don't open the entire space to pedestrians and extend the campus like it has been done on so many other campuses.

Mr. Garland inquired if there is a need for traffic flow in the streets and Mr. Sawyer

stated that he thinks the options are limitless when they think about this layout but he approach VCU is taking is a good one and they are satisfied with the work that has been shown today.

Mr. Arias inquired why there are north and south-bound bike lanes and why not combine the two and have bike traffic going on one side of the street and have vehicle traffic on the other. Mr. Sawyer stated that the arrangement is more conducive to what most people would expect and sometimes when you do a side path there are additional conflicts where drivers are turning from right and not seeing the opposite flow because they are looking the wrong way. Mr. Sawyer stated that the arrangement there of having northbound and southbound lines up the vehicles better. Mr. Arias stated that he would be afraid of the people not being aware of the bike traffic coming from the left if they are going north or west and stated that since all the one way traffic is one direction you tend to just look right and continue on across. Mr. Sawyer stated that the other reason is that there will be signals over the bike lane and that will be additional work that needs to be done. Mr. Sawyer stated that signalization is very expensive and to move those signals over is work that they don't have to do.

Mr. Cole inquired if VCU ever looked at closing the entire street and making it a street plaza and Mr. Sawyer stated that it might be their desire to do that but the City was not interested in closing 12th Street.

Mr. Keith van Inwegen, with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) stated that this plan has evolved over the last 5 years and they went through a couple of different iterations that all showed the streets being completely closed and turned into a pedestrian way. Mr. van Inwegen stated that as this project came back to life in the last year in discussion with the City there was opposition to closing the street because it is a permanent thing to close it and transfer the land. Mr. van Inwegen stated that internally they don't know what the future holds for the medical campus and how the medical campus is going to grow. Right now the center of everything is around the entrance to Gateway and the Ambulatory Care Center and that could change in 10 or 15 years. Mr. van Inwegen stated that the reason they are keeping the street at 26' is because they want the flexibility so that it could be reversed to go northbound or back to two-way traffic.

Ms. Almond inquired if there could be a buffer for both bike lanes and then they could narrow the vehicle lane a couple of feet. Mr. van Inwegen stated that they could do a 2' protective strip on the other lane. Mr. van Inwegen stated that they chose southbound because in the 5 years that the streets have been closed the valet operations in the front of Gateway works better without the traffic coming in on 12th Street. Mr. van Inwegen stated that when traffic came in from 12th Street they had to have a certain amount of green light time which reduced the green light time on Marshall and backed up traffic. Mr. van Inwegen stated that they would not be doing one way southbound if one way northbound worked better for the valet and the hospital was very insistent that northbound traffic makes the valet more difficult and backs up traffic.

Mr. Cole stated that the lanes will be changed to 14' lanes and inquired if there are any reasons why it can't be 12' to make more room for pedestrians or bicycles. Mr. Sawyer stated that is a striping issue and can be changed at any time and they are comfortable with it the way it is now but if they need to put in a buffer there they will. Mr. Sawyer stated that it is definitely a traffic issue that they can address at any time and this plan provides them with enough flexibility to do all of those things that they are looking to do.

Mr. Garland stated that it would be good to knock it down and make it 12' with a 2' buffer for the bike lane instead of 14'.

Mr. Arias inquired if that would restrict the type of vehicles that could get through there.

Mr. Smith stated that 11' is standard.

Ms. Almond inquired if they did that where would they distribute the other 2' and inquired whether they would put in the protective bike lane to make it wider or 1' in each bike lane. Mr. Garland stated that they could make the lanes 6' instead of 5'.

Ms. Harnsberger stated that she wouldn't go that direction because she worries that emergency vehicles are going to be coming through and 5' for bike lanes are adequate. Ms. Harnsberger stated that the traffic engineers have looked at this and have done a really good job.

Ms. Levine stated that the way it is to her is fine the way it is and that it is a vast improvement.

[Mr. Gould arrived at 10:21}

**A motion was made by Ms. Levine, seconded by Ms. Harnsberger, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval with the following condition:**

- **That the concrete crosswalk islands be relocated so as not to constrict the flow of pedestrians along the crosswalk.**

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on October 19, 2015.**

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

**Excused:** 1 - Gould

3. [UDC No. 2015-18](#) Streetscape Encroachments into the public right-of-way along N. 12th Street between E. Broad and E. Marshall Streets

**Attachments:** [UDC recommendation to DPW](#)

[Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location Map](#)

[Application & Plans](#)

Ms. Almond inquired about the photometric plan and Mr. Eastman stated that the photometric plan was something that was provided by VCU at his request to see what it would look like without the cobrahead light fixtures. Mr. Eastman stated that he would like to add that to the recommendations as well so that they have something a little further to provide to DPU.

Ms. Harnsberger stated that this plan creates a plaza that is also accessible and connective and stated that it is a really nice middle of the road solution and feels that it will make it feel like a plaza.

Mr. Cole stated that it is truly a vast improvement.

**A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Levine, that this Encroachment Item be recommended for approval with the following conditions:**

- **That the applicant to work with the Department of Public Utilities to remove the existing cobra head-style lights in favor of the proposed pedestrian-scaled lights.**
- **That the applicant provides a photometric diagram showing the light levels that would be provided with only pedestrian-scaled lights on the block.**
- **That the pedestrian-scaled fixtures be installed to a centered depth of 18" from**

the face of curb to maximize the usable sidewalk space for pedestrians.

This item was forwarded to the Department of Public Works.

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

4. [UDC No. 2015-21](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed data node in Battery Park, 2408 The Terrace

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)

[Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location Map](#)

[Application & Plans](#)

Ms. Almond inquired if the new fence goes on all sides or does the pool fence acts as one. Mr. Eastman stated that the pool fence will act as one side of the fence. Ms. Almond inquired how tall the pool fence is and Mr. Eastman stated that it is 8' tall and the enclosure matches that. Mr. Eastman stated that the fence is 9' deep, 6' wide and 8' tall. Ms. Almond inquired if the existing tree stays and Mr. Eastman stated that he doesn't believe that it will be impacted other than them trimming back some branches on the side.

Ms. Levine inquired if there are any other locations looked at for this node. Ms. Jennifer Mullen, with Roth Doner Jackson on behalf of Verizon Wireless, stated that as they looked at the various sites they selected them based on the vicinity and this site was picked for its proximity to the pool as well as the other facilities that are used. Ms. Mullen stated that this was also picked because they can use the existing infrastructure and existing equipment. Ms. Levine stated that this in this particular case this is a historic building and attaching anything new to an older structure is a little jolting and wondered if there were any other possibilities to keep it away from the buildings in the park. Mr. Eastman inquired if the fence will be attached to the structure or will it stand alone. Ms. Mullen stated that it will stand alone.

Mr. Barry Russell with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities stated that it was the least intrusive area that they looked at. The walkway goes to the utility room but doesn't go anywhere and they liked the idea of having it there because there is no foot traffic and it is hidden away by the bushes there. Mr. Russell stated that it also doesn't interfere with their mechanical room.

Mr. Arias inquired if there was any concern about the sight line from the drive way back to the pool and Mr. Russell stated no because it is in the corner and there is no reason for anybody to be there.

Ms. Almond asked if the meter box that's existing will be in the enclosure and Mr. Russell stated no.

Mr. Arias inquired if there were any concerns about the low power lines coming to the meter and Mr. Russell stated that those power lines exist today.

Mr. Garland inquired about the distance that the signal is going to be sending off and stated that it might be interesting to look on the other side of the pool out towards the park itself and Ms. Mullen stated that these facilities are designed to reach between 500 and 1000' and are very narrowly tailored.

Mr. Dan Tilley, with Network Building and Consulting, stated that one thing to consider from a structural standpoint is that this is one of the few structures that is going to work

because the others don't have very deep foundations. Mr. Tilley stated that the poles aren't very thick and they custom designed the site to work with this pole because the other poles wouldn't be able to handle the extra load. Mr. Tilley stated that from a radio frequency perspective this site was designed to give the maximum amount of coverage and this is an ideal location.

Mr. Garland stated that there isn't a light pole like this on the other side and Mr. Tilley stated that there is one light pole on the back side but it didn't meet the structural needs.

Mr. Gould inquired how close to the light pole does the fence enclosure have to be and Mr. Tilley stated that they want to keep it close as possible because that provides the least amount of trenching and the least amount of signal loss from the equipment to there.

Ms. Almond inquired if there was trenching there that goes from the enclosure to the pole and also through the easement back to the street and Mr. Tilley stated that it is the easement back to the street which is a part of their fiber design and currently there is no fiber on that location. Ms. Almond inquired if that the existing tree will be impacted and Mr. Tilley stated not necessarily because they can go underneath it or they can route it to the pole underneath the concrete.

Ms. Levine stated that she goes back to the fact that anytime you start adding more stuff to a structure like this it impacts the aesthetics. Ms. Levine stated that in her opinion adding a chain link fence with black vinyl stripping is not a great choice. Mr. Tilley stated that the black vinyl stripping was chosen because the existing fence is made of black vinyl so they were trying to keep it within the character of the existing fence.

Mr. Cole inquired if Ms. Levine would feel better if the fence was wrought iron with brick columns and Ms. Levine stated that she would be happier with that. Mr. Russell stated that wrought iron doesn't fit with that area. They don't want to make it stand out, they want to make it as invisible as possible. Mr. Russell stated that they thought this was most unobtrusive opportunity for them to have that service available for the residences and users of the park and at the same time not having such a visual impact.

Mr. Cole stated that he thinks the chain link fence matches the chain link fence but it doesn't match the architectural features of the building.

Ms. Mullen stated that they can work with Parks to come up with some decorative columns if that works with their overall plans for safety, security and visibility.

Ms. Nolt stated that staff recommendation that there is a planting plan associated with this and that all of this will get screened and recede into the background and it wouldn't be as much as an issue. Ms. Nolt stated that she doesn't mind the location because this is the service side of the building and there is already a meter there and doors to a mechanical room. Ms. Nolt stated that as long as they are following staff's recommendations and ask to see a planting plan that could help to screen the chain-link fence. Ms. Mullen stated that they are agreeable to that as well.

Mr. Arias stated that right now the equipment is mounted on a frame that is perpendicular to the building and inquired if there is any reason they can't be rotated to be parallel to the building and reduce the profile from the road and Mr. Tilley stated that the reason why they chose to make it perpendicular to the building as opposed to parallel is because they wanted it to fit in the area and they need to have a 3' walk around in order to get to both sides of the frame and if they made it parallel it would be a bigger installation. Mr. Arias inquired if it could be rearranged or if they could condense it and Mr. Tilley stated that as it stands now this is the most condensed way

they have been able to get it with the equipment that has been proposed. Mr. Tilley stated that until the move the ball a little bit further down in the process they won't know 100% what equipment that Verizon is going to need but states this is the most likely option.

Ms. Almond inquired what side has the access and Mr. Tilley stated that the access is going to be in the front corner in the grass strip in front of the concrete sidewalk. Mr. Tilley stated that in terms of the plantings there is a little bit of an issue because one side of the fence is the pool which a concrete apron and the other side is the building and the third side is the existing tree that they are trying not to impact. Mr. Tilley stated that the grass strip is not very large and they have to maintain a clearance for the existing meter and be able to open the gate.

Ms. Nolt stated that there may be an opportunity to plant but the reality is they don't want the public to come to this side of the building anyway so they have opportunities for planting not just directly around the perimeter but they can come forward with their planting to the wall or to the street.

Mr. Garland inquired how many feet are from this particular site to the playground and Mr. Eastman stated that the closest structure to the pool house is the round house which is about 40 or 50' away. Mr. Russell stated that the playground is several hundred feet away from the pool. Mr. Garland stated that he is wondering if they can get all of the park to be covered by this node. Mr. Russell stated that he is not the expert on it but Verizon knows their range and the location they found is less intrusive in the park and will have less impact.

Ms. Mullen stated that to follow up on the original question both sites are lower so they would require additional nodes based on topography. Mr. Garland inquired if they could reach down there and Ms. Mullen stated that it can get to the fringe but states that most likely with all the vegetation and the drop it becomes challenging to get a signal.

Ms. Almond asked that what happens to these facilities in the future when the technology changes. Ms. Mullen stated that the private party is responsible and there is a provision in the ordinance that if the equipment is not used in 12 months that it has to be removed.

**A motion was made by Mr. Arias, seconded by Ms. Levine, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval with the following conditions:**

- **That the applicant works with staff from the Departments of Planning & Development Review and Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities prior to permitting to provide evergreen vegetative screening around the equipment enclosure, where appropriate.**
- **That the fenced equipment enclosure be made as small as possible.**

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.**

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

5. [UDC No. 2015-22](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed data node in Bryan Park, 4308 Hermitage Road

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

Mr. Cole inquired if the easement and trenching affects any of the trees or vegetation and Mr. Eastman stated no, that this is done by underground boring and they can actually bore up to a distance of 500' underground before they have to put in an access panel and then can bore another 500'.

Mr. Gould inquired about the existing fence and Mr. Eastman stated that the fencing will remain and this will be an addition onto that. The existing is 6' by 6' and the proposal is 10' by 10' by 6' tall. Mr. Eastman stated that he is not sure what is in the enclosure or who it belongs to right now.

Mr. Russell stated that the enclosure is for the irrigation for all of the fields and it is really in a very secluded area and they are contemplating a future comfort station and restroom that would be going in that corner.

Mr. Gould inquired if they could consolidate the fences or is it going to be two separate enclosures and Mr. Russell stated that they are keeping them separate because they use the irrigation all the time and the vegetation will take care of any visual impact.

**A motion was made by Mr. Arias, seconded by Mr. Garland, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval with the following conditions:**

- That the applicant works with staff from the Departments of Planning & Development Review and Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities prior to permitting to provide evergreen vegetative screening around the equipment enclosure, where appropriate.
- That the fenced equipment enclosure be made as small as possible.

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.**

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

6. [UDC No. 2015-23](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed data node in Forest Hill Park, 4001 Stonewall Avenue

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

Ms. Nolt inquired if the existing chimney is currently in use and Mr. Eastman stated that it is usable.

Mr. Cole inquired if the new chimney could be lined up and Mr. Eastman stated that he had the same question and the answer he got is that structurally it needs to be where it is to support the weight.

Mr. Tilley stated that the roof truss system has been eaten up by termites and in most cases there is only a couple of beams that they are tying directly into one of those



beams that runs from this wall to that wall and stated that the other trusses will not be able to support what they are doing.

Mr. Garland inquired if would be possible to line them up with the existing chimneys on the back side and Mr. Tilley stated no because it dips down and stated that they need to beef it up substantially.

Ms. Nolt stated that she know that they are trying to be pretty clever by encasing it in the brick but it is not really working with the architecture of the pavilion. Mr. Nolt inquired if they considered putting a pole up in this location rather than saving the effort of load bearing brick on existing trusses. Mr. Tilley stated that it was discussed as an option but there preference is to blend it as much as possible.

Ms. Almond asked if they could put in a pole at the edge of the parking lot. Ms. Mullen stated yes that a pole would work but when they talked to Parks and Rec they discussed doing some kind of concealment with this structure.

Ms. Nolt stated that there is a pole just to the right of the image where the cobra head light is that they barely see and if they are trying to make is aesthetically pleasing she fears that a third chimney that doesn't go down to a fireplace is going to look funny. Ms. Nolt asked if they could abandon one of the fire places and restructure the chimneys to work for this. Mr. Russell stated that they aren't interested in abandoning one of the fireplaces and they would prefer to not have any more utility poles in their parks that is why they are using existing structures.

Mr. Arias stated that he might suggest a redesign that will abandon the idea of a fake chimney and center something on that roof structure and reduce the load by removing the brick to a simple wooden box that would be in the center.

Mr. Tilley stated that the stealth chimney is not going to be made out of brick it is going to made out RF-friendly material sculpted by an artist that is made to match the existing brick and mortar that is there that would have a wood frame on the inside of it.

Ms. Nolt inquired about the pole to the right of the structure and Mr. Tilley stated that it is a wooden utility pole by a different owner.

Ms. Celica Jones with Network Building and Consulting stated that the problem is that wooden utility pole is being shielded and so is the other one by trees.

Mr. Garland stated that with the signal obviously being a circle they are cutting out a lot of the signal because the forest is right behind them. Mr. Garland inquired if there were other poles next to the parking lot as you go up because it seems like you would want to have the pole signal closer to the middle of the park. Ms. Jones stated that they have been to this site many times and they were racking their brains trying to a place to put it that would provide the coverage objective and have it blend in so that it wasn't obtrusive. Ms. Jones stated that after multiple site visits that is what they came up with what would meet their RF coverage objective and what was buildable and also what they thought would get passed. Mr. Garland inquired that the signal down there will reach all the way to the top of the parking lot towards 42nd Street and Ms. Jones stated probably not but it will reach the people down there enjoying the market. Mr. Garland inquired if there was a middle point where they can reach both and Ms. Mullen stated that she don't think that there is anything in between that would reach.

Mr. Tilley stated that anything out there that has a light on it they are not allowed by internal regulations to go on and stated that he think it's because the poles are designated only for that purpose.

Mr. Cole inquired if this was the only location that works and Mr. Tilley stated that he was only talking about the utility poles. Mr. Cole stated that if the UDC and Planning Commission says no if they had another option. Mr. Tilley stated that the whole team would have to consider that.

Mr. Russell stated that the 5 locations that they have here today are out of 12 that they submitted and he walked every site and looked at every location and rejected 7 because they didn't meet the aesthetics. Mr. Russell stated that the 5 that they could get around they thought they could mask them, blend them in but he wants the Committee to know that there are 7 out there that they rejected because they just didn't meet the criteria that they wanted.

Mr. Garland stated that these are very specific locations with a small range of use and inquired if there was a plan or consideration of putting multiple of these in the parks so that the whole park is able to have that service. Mr. Russell stated that they haven't seen a request yet and it would have to blend and if there are any opportunities that they could sit down and discuss with the director and staff. Mr. Russell stated that they haven't been approached with it and haven't had any reason to look at it that way. Mr. Russell stated that they are looking at the opportunity of what kind of service that they are bringing to people whether it is intermittent or long term and it seemed like a good idea because they know how many people show up there.

Ms. Mullen stated that they can take the chimney off it and paint it a dark green if that would work aesthetically if that would be amenable to Parks.

Ms. Nolt stated that she don't think that anyone is denying the need for it here but there is no way she can approve a fake chimney made out of fake brick over an open pavilion just doesn't make sense. Ms. Nolt stated that people would notice it and that it would be less intrusive to paint it dark green and let people see that they have cell phone coverage.

**A motion was made by Ms. Nolt, seconded by Mr. Garland, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval with the following conditions:**

- **That the applicant works with staff from the Departments of Planning & Development Review and Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities prior to permitting to provide evergreen vegetative screening around the equipment enclosure, where appropriate.**
- **That the applicant does not pursue the brick faux chimney and leaves the antenna exposed and painted a dark green to blend with the surrounding vegetation.**

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.**

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

7. [UDC No. 2015-24](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed data node in Byrd Park, 1401 Pump House Drive

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

Ms. Nolt inquired why they can mount the equipment on a light pole at this location but

not at the other park. Mr. Eastman stated that this light pole is illuminating the amphitheater and a lot of the other poles are owned by Dominion and stated that they had issues with mounting to poles that were owned by others.

Ms. Almond inquired about the existing shelf and inquired why it was put in and what it is used for and Mr. Eastman stated that he believed that they mount additional lights to that when needed for production.

Mr. Cole inquired if the only thing was new is the stuff inside and Mr. Eastman stated that the equipment is on the inside and the antenna is mounted on the back and then rises above where the existing pole ends.

Mr. Garland inquired if they were going to be going under the road and Mr. Eastman stated correct but it won't disturb the road or cobblestones.

Ms. Harnsberger inquired if this would cover the Carillon and Ms. Mullen stated that it won't get that far. Ms. Harnsberger stated that she understand the purpose of the technology and is excited about the data in the park and stated that in each one of these instances there have been tradeoffs on location about who you can service and who they are still missing in the park. Ms. Harnsberger stated that in each one they are not hitting places where they are civic meetings and stated that there are huge meetings at the Carillon and at Forest Hill Park in the stone house. Mr. Russell stated that there is a cell tower on the top of the Carillon. Ms. Mullen stated that they would like to be in all and any number of places and stated that they will be back in front of the Committee for sure.

**A motion was made by Ms. Nolt, seconded by Ms. Levine, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval as submitted.**

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.**

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

8. [UDC No. 2015-25](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a proposed data node in Powhatan Park, 1006 Williamsburg Road

**Attachments:** [UDC Report to CPC](#)

[Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location Map](#)

[Application & Plans](#)

**A motion was made by Ms. Harnsberger, seconded by Mr. Smith, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommended for final approval as submitted.**

**This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.**

**Aye:** 9 - Almond, Arias, Cole, Garland, Gould, Harnsberger, Levine, Nolt and Smith

9. [UDC No. 2015-03\(4\)](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of the stage canopy and sun shelters at Kanawha Plaza, 701 E. Canal Street

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

Ms. Nolt inquired if they could explain how this spray foam is applied and whether it will be visible and Mr. Easter from Kei Architects stated that it will not be visible and the recommendation from the engineer is that it be blown-in insulation.

Mr. Garland stated that the reason for that is the insulation is to reduce the tin sound and Mr. Easter stated that the consultant did not find that it would be a problem but addressed it because they knew the Committee had concern about it. Mr. Garland stated that the consultants said that if you were to point the speakers out away from the stage that they will not hear that but they didn't address the sound bouncing off the other buildings, coming back or even monitors that are a part of the band's system. Mr. Garland stated that they said that there would be some sort of reverberation from the tin and stated that the reason for the spray foam is to fill those boxes.

Mr. Easter stated that in their discussion with the consultants the concern of the sound was described and they offered the option to use foam. Mr. Garland stated that they felt it was an issue and the way to address it was to point the speakers away from the tin structure. Mr. Garland stated that they didn't say anything the sound bouncing off of other buildings or the speakers that are going to be pointed back into the stage onto that structure. Mr. Easter stated that the speakers that are bouncing back will not be bouncing at that wall they will be bouncing toward the open area behind it. Mr. Garland stated that he doesn't see how that is possible.

Ms. Nolt stated that there is going to be a lot of sound bouncing around and it is going to be used for a variety of performances and they really don't know and inquired how they are going to take the best precaution possible to make sure that they are minimizing the tin.

Mr. Garland stated say for example that they have a flute performance and they are fluting into a microphone and all of sudden they have the reverb coming off of the building around and with that tin structure it's like a Caribbean drum. Mr. Garland stated that what you will have is the fluting going into the system and hits the tin and comes back to the system and then you have a circulation there between the tin and the flute. Mr. Garland stated that becomes a really big problem for someone that spends most of their life performing and the performers he knows would be upset about the actions that are going on even though the tin is filled with insulation. Mr. Garland stated that this is just not an appropriate place for tin to be used beside a stage.

Mr. Cole inquired if Mr. Garland was satisfied with the report of the foam. Mr. Garland stated that it will still have that tin reaction and still have that tin sound coming off and the thing is they were very smart to arrange the way they presented their report to say all they have to do is point the speakers out. Mr. Garland stated that would take care of it if were in the middle of the forest or an open field but because they have these buildings right around the area those sounds are going to be bouncing off those buildings. Mr. Garland stated that it doesn't seem like a place for a professional performer.

Mr. Smith inquired what would be ideal and Mr. Garland stated that they could use a different material and wood would be better. Mr. Garland stated that he doesn't think the logo is right for the structure. Mr. Smith stated that he doesn't feel it will be an issue as Mr. Garland has been saying because there are openings and it is insulated and the material is not tin it is steel. Mr. Smith stated that he thinks there is some depth to and

some stability to it and he is not sharing the same concerns.

Mr. Arias stated that the design falls short of what it could be and stated that RVA is a brand and he doesn't think they need to reiterate the brand. Mr. Arias stated that when people think of RVA they think about our museums, our culture, the river and their unique approach to architectural design. Mr. Arias stated that this is a nice opportunity to express that and turning this pavilion into a giant sign doesn't express that. Mr. Arias stated that he appreciates some of the changes that have been made like the truss system that went across the front of the pavilion is now gone and that helps with overall design. Mr. Arias stated that he likes some of the materials but he doesn't think the rain chain is going to do anything given the amount of water that is going to come off of that roof. Mr. Arias stated that he thinks the other 2 outdoor pavilions could all have a relationship and tie in together and have a unified expression about Richmond that doesn't say RVA.

Ms. Almond inquired if the applicant could speak to the rain chain and inquired if there was a spec on those being that this is the final review and Mr. Easter stated that they don't have them yet.

Ms. Nolt inquired if they could explain what the rain chain is made of and Mr. Easter stated that it is steel chain. Ms. Nolt inquired what size it is and Mr. Easter stated that the diameter of the steel is a quarter of an inch and that it is a very large chain.

Ms. Almond inquired if it was anchored at the ground and Mr. Easter stated yes.

Mr. Cole stated that if the rain chain can't take the volume does a gutter exist and Mr. Easter stated that the water will continue to come down into the gravel bed at the bottom.

Ms. Nolt stated that they when they reviewed the rest of the project was there a storm drain or rain garden there and Mr. Eastman stated that there is landscaping there and in a previous iteration that was to approved back in August it showed the rain chain coming down and there was no mention of a storm drain. Mr. Eastman stated that he believes in this iteration it will go directly into the storm drain and the inference earlier was that rain would come down and actually pond into the landscaped area. Mr. Eastman stated that now they are putting it directly in the storm drain and Ms. Nolt stated without any stormwater management.

Ms. Nolt inquired if there was any stormwater management that is happening and Mr. Easter stated that the drain has been approved by the City. Ms. Nolt inquired if there was any stormwater management system on that drain like a bio-swale or a rain garden or something to slow the quantity or improve the quality of the water before it goes into the storm system. Ms. Nolt stated that there is a great opportunity there.

Mr. Smith stated that the lighting levels seems higher in the shelters and he wants to make sure that the lighting levels are equal to the stage. Mr. Smith stated that he would recommend lowering the lighting levels there.

Ms. Nolt stated that she feels that the size of the pipe columns on the shelters are a little bit bulky for having 6 of them. The columns on the main structure are 10" and for the shelters they are 8". Ms. Nolt inquired if the structural engineer can take another look at those and get them down to 6". Mr. Easter stated that they were done by the structural engineer. Ms. Nolt stated that visually they seem a bit bulky.

Mr. Arias stated that the scale of the columns on each structure doesn't have a relationship and the pavilion is so much larger but has a thin line that holds up the canopy. Mr. Arias stated that they have these small structures that are much larger in scale and proportion to the other and stated there is a disconnect between the two.

Ms. Nolt stated that this is shown in isolation and she hopes that it would be studied in context so you will know the relationship of that column to the edge of the wall and maybe it would take some modification of where it's positioned but it will be doable.

Mr. Garland stated that if there is a need to have the feet maybe they can pull in the seating structure that would extend from the base of those feet.

Ms. Almond inquired how wide the feet at the bottom of the seat wall are and Mr. Easter stated 16".

Ms. Harnsberger stated that Mr. Arias' points were really well said and she tends to agree with him that the RVA on the wall is a brand and they would have benefited by having public input on this. Ms. Harnsberger stated that it almost functions as public art that it is a part of the structure and she feels that it is a huge statement to make at that location without talking to residents or people who frequent downtown. Ms. Harnsberger stated that she does think that the employees may have been spoken to but she doesn't know anything about the community engagement that happened and that is something she cares about. Ms. Harnsberger stated that she wishes that she knew about the engagement that may or may not have happened for this.

Mr. Cole stated that he agrees with Ms. Harnsberger but he likes the RVA and thinks it will be fun there. He doesn't like the wavy thing going through it but he likes the RVA.

Ms. Harnsberger stated that she was fundamentally bothered by the fact that the public wasn't engaged.

Mr. Garland stated that if you are looking from the actual plaza Dominion is going to be behind you. Mr. Eastman showed photos of where Dominion and the other buildings are in respect to the stage. Mr. Garland stated that if you were taking a photo of the RVA what is going to be behind it and Mr. Eastman stated that depending on where you stand it going to be the interstate and the rest of it is open. Mr. Garland stated that they could draw the RVA out into the park like VCU has theirs where people can take pictures around it and stated that it is much smaller and quaint and there isn't going to be much behind you if you're taking a picture by the RVA.

Mr. Cole stated that he always thought the RVA was cool and when you watching the concert there is this big RVA but that is the front side. What will the back side look like?

Ms. Harnsberger stated that there is a traveling RVA that goes to festivals that people take pictures with and think that it could be pulled into the lawn in an impermanent way.

Ms. Levine stated that there still needs to be a way to cover the electrical boxes creatively.

Mr. Smith stated that he likes what's going on there except that it's RVA however he really likes the idea that it doesn't become a part of the park. Mr. Smith stated that to him it's a little trendy and cheesy to put RVA and it is too easy and if they are going for that moment when people want to take photos he could totally go with that.

Ms. Almond inquired about the rear elevation of the RVA and inquired if the panel doors are to match the RVA material. Ms. Almond inquired if there are railings on the ramp that goes up to the stage and the details of the railings. Mr. Easter stated that the railings were submitted and approved in the previous presentation.

Ms. Nolt stated that it is CMU platform base with granite veneer.

Mr. Gould inquired if this was the final phase of development of the park and stated that the fountain hasn't been addressed yet and hopes that at some point it is in the park's future. Mr. Easter stated that the fountain is an item that still needs to be addressed to the extent that it needs to be repaired. Mr. Gould stated that so much traffic comes to that park and the fountain has so much potential to be a great iconic feature for our city and thinks it is a missed opportunity.

Mr. Cole stated that they thought of the fountain as being the focal point and stated that it was labeled as a future element.

Mr. Gould stated that he likes the concept of the RVA and he sees it as one of those things that once it's constructed they are going to see it over and over again in terms of continuing to brand the City. Mr. Gould stated that he also likes the newly constructed Richmond sign as you are headed down I-95 and it has the full Richmond with the blue wave through it and stated that the two kind of tie together with the blue wave going through it.

Mr. Garland stated that they can figure out a way to incorporate the RVA logo into design of the actual plaza structure either in the ceiling by engraving it into the wood or putting it in the cobblestone instead of having it become such a visual object and letting art become the object that people are drawn to. Mr. Garland stated that he doesn't know if the Public Art Commission has been pulled into this project.

Mr. Arias stated that they have not designated 1% and it was not a part of the Public Art budget.

Ms. Almond stated that ramp layout on the side of the stage is a little different and she was curious as to what the back of the RVA ramp parking lot elevation looks like. Mr. Easter stated that they don't have an elevation that they brought of the rear. Ms. Almond stated that it looks fatter to her which means that it is going to have repercussions further into that parking area.

Ms. Nolt inquired if there had been opportunity for public comments for this project and Ms. Almond stated just at these meetings.

Ms. Nolt stated that she knows the City has a great task before them to get compliance and meet obligations for stormwater management and she feels this is a missed opportunity to have the water from the significant roof to just go in the storm drain. Ms. Nolt stated that if there is an opportunity to model this at a newly renovated public park of how they handle stormwater it will be all the better to showcase what Richmond can do. Ms. Nolt stated that maybe that is an item that slipped through the cracks between double submissions and the plants in that area would not be able to handle any significant water on them and there is no grading opportunity for ponding. Ms. Nolt stated that she don't think this is the best solution and she knows this is not before them right now but it is connected.

Mr. Arias stated that one first proposals had a cistern system in it and it got eliminated because of the depth of the ground that it is covering the highway but that doesn't mean that there is not an opportunity.

Mr. Gould stated that there are other options instead of cistern like bio-retention and he agrees that in such a public space being so visible that it would be nice to demonstrate something.

Mr. Easter stated that several systems were considered and VHB the civil engineer did cost evaluation on them and they found them to be cost prohibitive based on the budget for the project. Mr. Easter stated that one of the reasons that they had this challenge is

because is that it is still emptying in the combined sewer.

Ms. Nolt stated that she knows that budget is a consideration but she has to remind herself that they are reviewing location, character and extent and if they feel strongly about the design issue then they need to present it and moving forward it should be a priority and there should be a way to find money to implement it. Ms. Nolt stated that it is important City wide and important regionally.

Mr. Gould stated that he doesn't think it's a big ticket item and should be in the \$10,000-15,000 range. Mr. Easter stated that if that was the number they would have had it but the number they had was over \$250,000. Mr. Gould stated that he think they could come up with a relatively small treatment device that would certainly be less than \$250,000.

Ms. Nolt made a motion to recommend approval of the application with the following conditions:

- That the light levels in the sun shelters be reduced to be consistent with the light levels under the stage canopy.
- That the applicant reconsiders the scale of the columns used to support the sun shelters.
- That the applicant considers removing the granite seat walls at the base of the sun shelter columns.
- That the applicant returns to the Urban Design Committee with a proposal for some sort of demonstrative storm water management solution for the stage canopy.
- That the "RVA" logo is removed from the stage canopy design due to acoustic and iconographic concerns, and that the applicant proceeds with a symmetrical design of the stage canopy.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

The Committee had questions about how their recommendations are relayed to the Planning Commission and Mr. Eastman explained how the staff report is modified to include major points from the UDC discussion and then the vote of the UDC.

Mr. Garland expressed concerns about how previous reviews of this project have been received by the Commission and how the recommendations of the UDC have been passed over. Mr. Garland inquired if they should vote on what is presented to them or do they try to make the conditions in their initial vote. Ms. Almond stated that they talked about that in the past that if there is a point that they feel like they are putting so many conditions or asking for redesign that they shouldn't be recommending approval. Ms. Almond stated that it is reasonable for there to be small tweaks or concessions.

[Mr. Smith exited the meeting]

After further discussion from the Committee Ms. Nolt withdrew her motion.

**A motion was made by Mr. Arias, seconded by Ms. Levine, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be recommend for denial. The Committee expressed a willingness to continue to work with the applicants on the design of the stage canopy and sun shelters and provided the following recommendations:**

- **That the light levels in the sun shelters be reduced to be consistent with the light levels under the stage canopy.**
- **That the applicant reconsiders the scale of the columns used to support the sun shelters.**
- **That the applicant considers removing the granite seat walls at the base of the sun shelter columns.**
- **That the applicant returns to the Urban Design Committee with a proposal for**



some sort of demonstrative stormwater management solution for the stage canopy.

- That the “RVA” logo is removed from the stage canopy design due to acoustic and iconographic concerns, and that the applicant proceeds with a symmetrical design of the stage canopy.

This item was forwarded to the City Planning Commission for their meeting on September 21, 2015.

**Aye:** 6 - Almond, Arias, Garland, Harnsberger, Levine and Nolt

**No:** 2 - Cole and Gould

**Excused:** 1 - Smith

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

## **Adjournment**

Ms. Almond adjourned the meeting at 12:31 p.m.