



# Annual Report

2015

City of Richmond Planning Commission

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## To City Council and the Citizens of Richmond, Virginia

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In accordance with Section 17.09 of the City Charter, which requires the City Planning Commission to make an annual report to City Council concerning its activities, I am pleased to forward the City Planning Commission's 2015 Annual Report.

The Commission's workload has increased to the highest point since 2008. The Commission reviewed a total of 191 items in 2015. The workload included special use permits; location, character and extent review for City projects; and sale and acquisition of City-owned property. The number of items reviewed have increased slightly from 2014, due mostly to an increase in applications driven by City projects and City-initiated amendments to the Zoning Map and Ordinance.

Important legislation reviewed by the Commission in 2015 includes amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to bicycle parking and amendments to the Zoning Map to make redevelopment of several commercial corridors easier in the City. In keeping with the continued interest in development in the city, the Commission reviewed a variety of development projects in fulfillment of its duties related to zoning. As has been typical, the projects reviewed varied greatly in character. This variation can be seen in the review of such proposals as the approval of the plan for the Old Armstrong High School site to allow for the development of 300 new homes, to the rezoning of the Hofheimer building on West Broad Street for commercial uses, to the approval of a special use permit on West Main Street in the Fan District authorizing two new duplexes.

In accordance with the requirements of the City Charter, the Commission also reviewed and approved a variety of significant public projects in 2015. These projects range in scale from the design of the proposed Pulse Bus Rapid Transit System to the implementation of a Bike Boulevard on Floyd Avenue to the improvements to Deepwater Terminal Road to provide better access to the Port of Richmond.

Finally, the Commission is looking forward to working with the City Council to build on last year's efforts. It is the Commission's hope that the City Council will support our efforts in 2016 to emphasize those projects that offer a proactive and far-reaching response to the planning needs of our city. The Commission trusts, therefore, that the City Council will be open to further dialogue as the year progresses to discuss both opportunities and priorities. Of specific interest to the Commission for the coming year is the possibility of beginning an update to the Citywide Master Plan, which was last reviewed comprehensively in 2000.

The Commission offers its appreciation for the opportunity to serve City Council, particularly at a time when there are so many positive opportunities to address the City's challenges and redevelopment potential, and wishes much success for City Council in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Rodney M. Poole, Esquire  
Chair, City of Richmond Planning Commission

# Commissioners in 2015

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## Membership

City Charter Section 17.02 specifies that the Commission shall consist of nine members. One member shall be a member of the City Council who shall be appointed by the City Council; one member shall be a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals appointed by the Board of Zoning Appeals; one member shall be the Chief Administrative Officer or her designee; six citizen members shall be qualified voters of the city who hold no office of profit under the city government, appointed for terms of three years, one of whom shall be appointed by the mayor, five of whom shall be appointed by the City Council. Three new members joined the Commission in 2015; Ms. Ellen Robertson, Ms. Selena Cuffee-Glenn and Mr. Vivek Murthy.



*\*Amy Howard not pictured*

## Meetings and Attendance in 2015

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### Membership

Mr. Rodney M. Poole, Board of Zoning Appeals Representative, Chair

Mr. Melvin Law, Vice Chair (reappointed by Mayor on December 14, 2012)

Mr. Doug Cole (reappointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> term on March 11, 2013)

Ms. Selena Cuffee-Glenn, Chief Administrative Officer (appointed May 11, 2015)

Ms. Jane Ferrara, Chief Administrative Officer Representative (appointed February 2, 2009)

Ms. Amy Howard (reappointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> term on April 23, 2012)

Mr. Dave Johannas (reappointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> term on July 23, 2015)

Ms. Lynn McAteer (reappointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> term on January 28, 2013)

Mr. Vivek Murthy (appointed to 1<sup>st</sup> term on September 14, 2015)

Ms. Ellen Robertson, City Council Representative (appointed on January 6, 2015)

Mr. Jeffrey Sadler (appointed to 1<sup>st</sup> term on July 8, 2013)

### Meetings

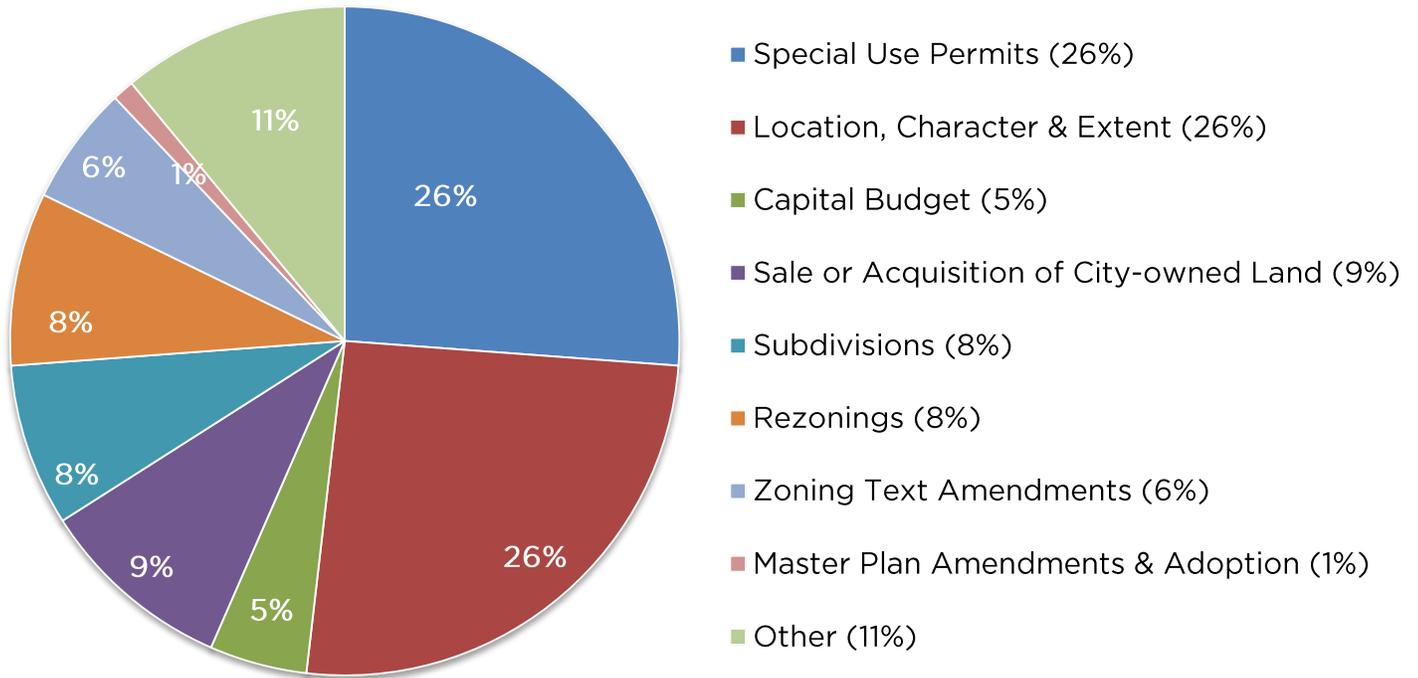
The Planning Commission's regular meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at 1:30 p.m. in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room of City Hall. The Planning Commission held **22 regular meetings** in 2015, having cancelled their regularly scheduled meetings in August. The Mayor's Capital Improvement Plan Budget and a mural project for the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) World Championships on Belvidere Street were considered by the Commission at **2 special meetings** in 2015.

### Attendance

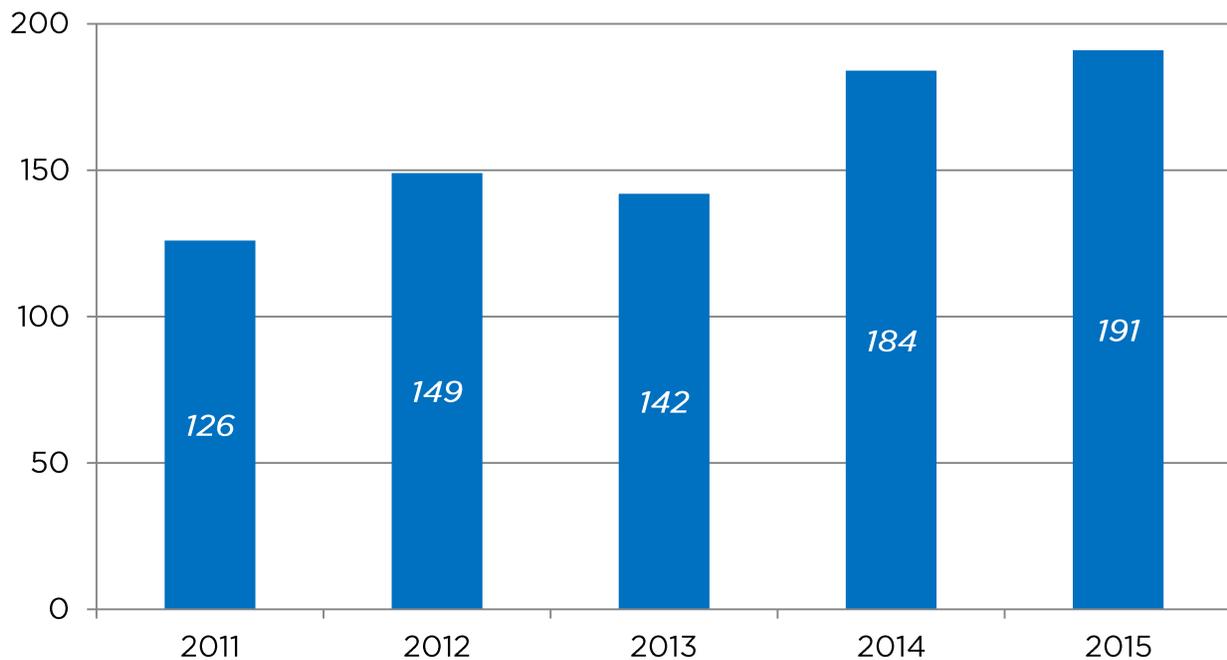
	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Mr. Rodney M. Poole	24	0
Mr. Melvin Law	24	0
Mr. Doug Cole	21	3
Ms. Selena Cuffee-Glenn	12	2
Ms. Jane Ferrara	9	1
Ms. Ellen Robertson	16	8
Ms. Amy Howard	9	8
Mr. Dave Johannas	21	3
Ms. Lynn McAteer	20	4
Mr. Vivek Murthy	7	0
Mr. Jeffrey Sadler	23	1

## Agenda Items in 2015

### 2015 Agenda Items



### Agenda Items over last 5 years



## Number of Agenda Items by Type

Agenda Items:	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2014-2015 Change
Special Use Permits:	31	33	43	69	50	-19
Conditional Use Permits	0	0	0	0	1	1
Conditional Rezoning:	4	7	4	4	4	0
Rezoning:	1	0	0	4	4	0
Community Unit Plans:						
Preliminary:	2	0	0	1	1	0
Preliminary Amendments:	0	2	3	1	1	0
Final Plan:	0	0	0	0	3	3
Zoning Text Amendments:	4	4	4	1	4	3
Motions of Intent to Amend Zoning Ordinance:	2	2	1	0	7	7
Zoning Map Amendments:	0	0	0	0	4	4
Motions of Intent to Amend Zoning Map:	1	0	0	0	4	4
Institutional Master Site Plan Amendments:	0	2	0	1	0	-1
City Master Plan Amendments and Adoption:	3	6	1	6	2	-4
Conservation & Redevelopment Plans:	2	0	0	0	0	0
Street Closings:	3	2	2	3	3	0
Alley Closings:	0	0	1	1	0	-1
Sale of City-owned land:	1	5	2	5	10	5
Land Acquisitions:	2	10	8	10	8	-2
Encroachments:	1	1	0	1	0	-1
Council Resolutions:	1	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Budget Amendments/Presentations:	8	18	11	18	9	-9
Location, Character & Extent:	35	40	46	36	49	13
Subdivisions:	8	4	5	11	15	4
Public Art Approvals/Appointments:	0	6	4	4	2	-2
Informal Briefings on Planning Issues:	7	4	5	3	6	3
Ches. Bay Map Amendments/Exceptions:	0	0	2	1	0	-1
Spot Blight:	1	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Items:	9	3	0	4	4	0
<b>Total Agenda Items:</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>7</b>

In 2015, the Planning Commission made recommendations on 83 agenda items related to zoning and their duties under City Charter Sections 17.10 through 17.14. These reviews and recommendation included the following projects of note:

- Recommended approval of **special use permits** for (reviewed 50 agenda items in 2015, a decrease of 19 from 2014):
  - The new construction of a multi-family development with up to 50 dwelling units at 3500 Kensington Avenue in the Museum District
  - The new construction of up to 78 dwelling units and commercial uses on East Main Street and South 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Shockoe Bottom
  - Several new mixed-use developments with neighborhood commercial spaces in Union Hill and Church Hill
- Recommended **zoning text amendments** for (reviewed 4 agenda items in 2015, an increase of 3 from 2014):
  - Implemented bicycle parking requirements and expanded shared parking and on-street parking provisions
  - Amended the requirements for the posting of signs to notify the public of hearings on pending zoning cases
  - Amended the parking overlay requirements along Brookland Park Boulevard and West Cary/West Main Street
  - Amended the fees for special use permits so they are based on the proposed use
- Recommended **rezonings** for (reviewed 16 agenda items in 2015, an increase of 12 from 2014):
  - Rezoning from B-3 to B-7 of the Hofheimer building at 2816 West Broad Street allowed for the establishment of a brewery and reduced the parking requirement for restaurant uses
  - Three City-initiated rezonings, including the commercial areas along Brookland Park Boulevard, Meadowbridge/Six-Points and West Cary/West Main Street
- Recommended **community unit plans** for (reviewed 2 agenda items in 2014, the same number as in 2014):
  - Redevelopment of the old Armstrong High School site in North Church Hill for new residential development with up to 300 dwelling units

## Zoning Case Review in 2015



*A special use permit approval authorized a mixed-use development on this vacant property at 718 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in Union Hill.*



*Approval of a special use permit for the Symbol Mattress facility in Scott's Addition authorized the construction of a new mixed-use development.*



*Rezoning the Hofheimer building at 2816 West Broad Street from B-3 to B-7 allows for a brewery and other commercial uses.*



*This special use permit at 202 Rear South Robinson Street authorized the construction of six single-family homes in the middle of the block.*



*Approval of a special use permit at 8 & 10 West Cary Street authorized the new construction of an office building in an existing surface parking lot.*



*The new construction of 78 dwelling units on East Main Street and South 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Shockoe Bottom was approved this year.*

## Zoning Case Review in 2015 – Before & After



*A special use permit approval allowed Mrs. Babs' Nursery School to expand at 2319 Grove Avenue in the Fan District.*



*The approval of a special use permit allowed for the new construction of two duplexes at 2816 West Main Street.*



*Final Community Unit Plan approval authorized the construction of a new grocery store on Forest Hill Avenue.*



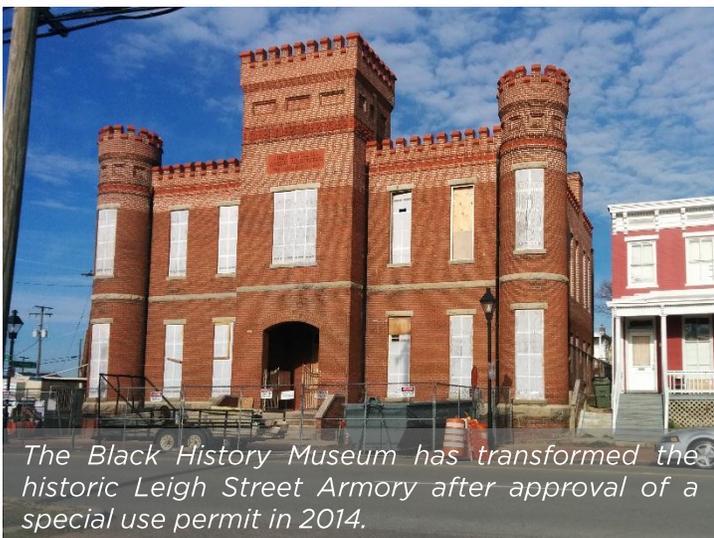
## Zoning Cases – Constructed in 2015 – Before & After



*The 2014 conditional rezoning from M-1 to B-5(C) allowed for the construction of a new residential development at the corner of South 1<sup>st</sup> and East Canal Streets.*



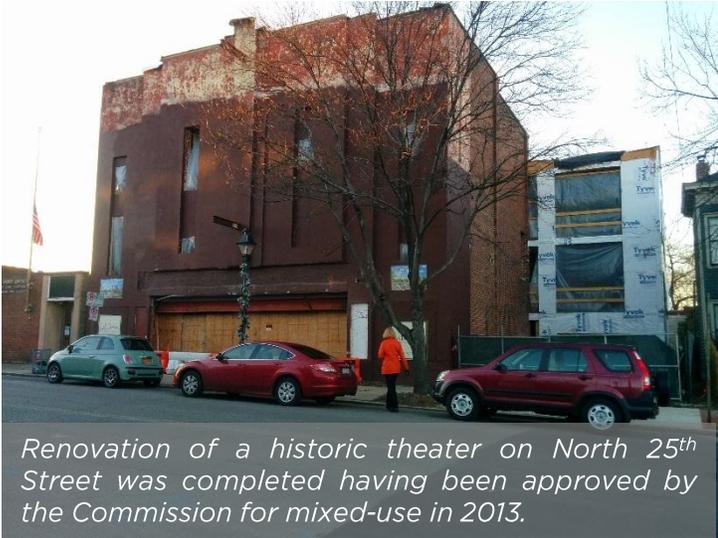
*The 2013 approval of a special use permit on Libbie Avenue authorized a new hospitality house for Bon Secours Hospital.*



*The Black History Museum has transformed the historic Leigh Street Armory after approval of a special use permit in 2014.*



# Zoning Cases – Constructed in 2015 – Before & After



*Renovation of a historic theater on North 25th Street was completed having been approved by the Commission for mixed-use in 2013.*



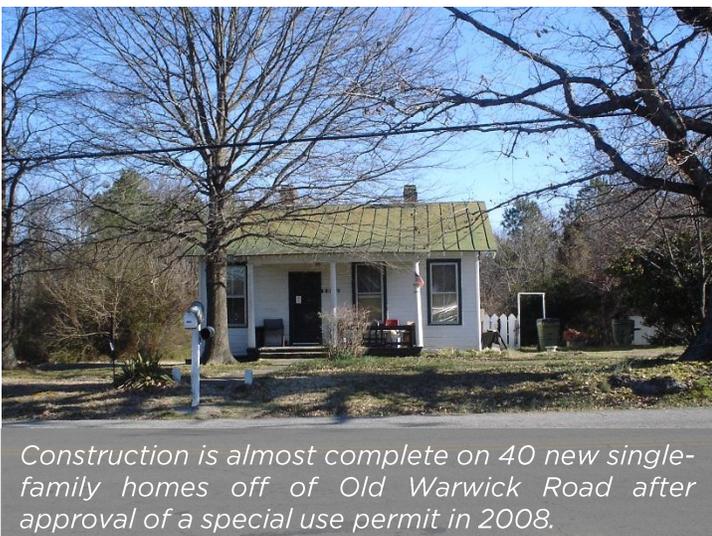
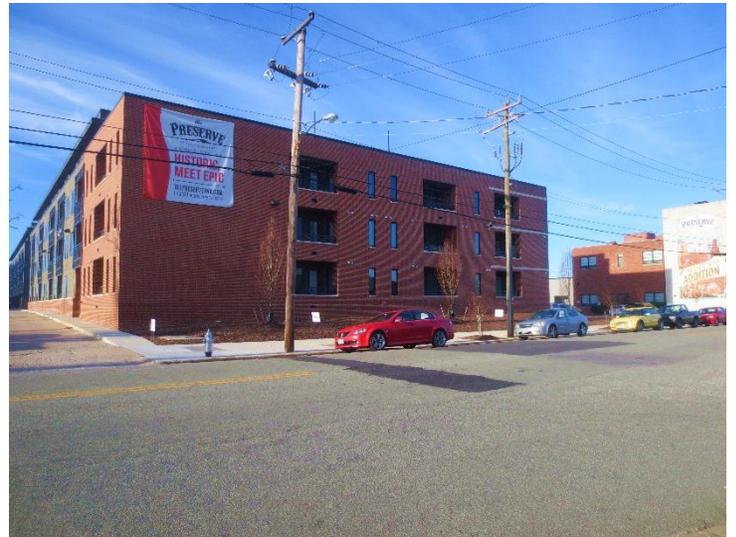
*A 103-unit student housing development at 2007 Brook Road was completed this year after a 2013 special use permit approval.*



*The 2014 approval of two special use permits in the Greater Fulton Area authorized Stone Brewing Company to locate its East Coast headquarters in the city.*



## Zoning Cases – Constructed in 2015 – Before & After



## Public Project Review in 2015

Highlighting the Commission's approval of public projects in 2015, the Commission approved **Location, Character, and Extent and Section 17.05 Items** for 49 agenda items in 2015, an increase of 13 from 2014:

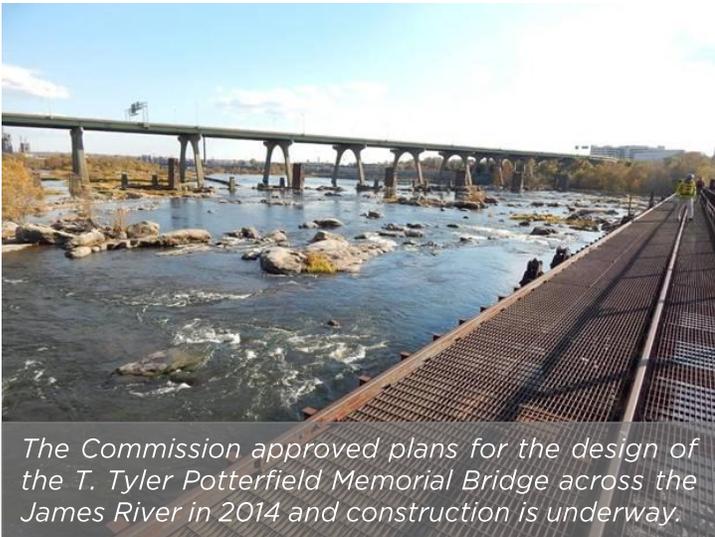
- Floyd Avenue Bike Boulevard connecting Monroe Park to Carytown
- Bus Rapid Transit along the Broad and East Main Street corridors
- Deepwater Terminal Road extension for the operation and expansion of the Port of Richmond
- Virginia Street and Canal Street improvements to add historic character
- Maymont Children's Farm projects
- Emergency 911 Building addition
- Belmont and West Belmont Road Roundabout



## Public Project Review in 2015



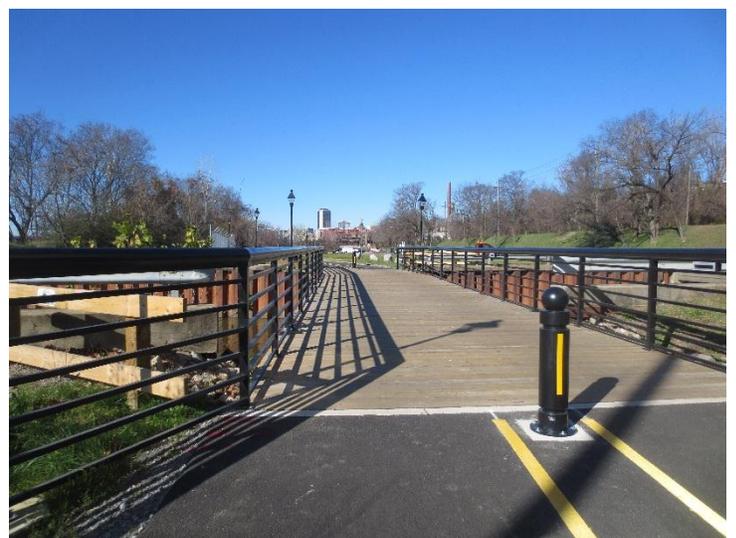
*A bike boulevard is being installed on Floyd Avenue after having received approval from the Commission.*



*The Commission approved plans for the design of the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge across the James River in 2014 and construction is underway.*



*Construction of phase 3 of the Virginia Capital Trail was completed this year after having been approved by the Commission in 2013.*



## Subdivision Review in 2015

In 2015, the Planning Commission tentatively approved **15 subdivisions** for a total of 187 new lots created, which is an increase in 21 lots from 2014.

The largest subdivision approved in 2015 was for the Church Hill North Redevelopment, which consisted of 82 lots for a mix of single-family, two-family and multi-family housing on 31<sup>st</sup> Street. The 81-lot Adam's Park subdivision was approved off of Iron Bridge Road to allow for a single-family detached development previously approved through a rezoning by the Commission.

The Commission reviewed several smaller subdivision in 2015 that allowed for infill development of single-family houses. Some of these approvals included a 9-lot subdivision on Kensington Avenue in the Fan District, a 6-lot subdivision on McDonough Street in Manchester and a 7-lot subdivision on North 28<sup>th</sup> Street in North Church Hill.



