



City of Richmond

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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, April 20, 2015

1:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room

Call To Order

Mr. Poole called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Present 9 - Mr. Rodney Poole
Mr. Melvin Law
Ms. Amy Howard
Mr. David Johannas
Ms. Jane Ferrara
Ms. Lynn McAteer
Mr. Jeffrey Sadler
Mr. Doug Cole
Ms. Ellen Robertson

Chair's Comments

Mr. Poole welcomed everyone who was present.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Sadler, seconded by Commissioner Johannas, that this be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Mr. Poole, Mr. Law, Mr. Johannas, Ms. Ferrara and Mr. Sadler

Abstain: 4 - Ms. Howard, Ms. McAteer, Mr. Cole and Ms. Robertson

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Attachments: [Draft April 6, 2015 Meeting Minutes](#)

Director's Report

There was no Director's Report.

- Council Action Update

Mr. Ebinger informed the Commission that two items were continued and no items were approved or denied by City Council that were forwarded by the Planning Commission at its previous meeting.

Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

None.

Consent Agenda

A public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on the Consent Agenda.

Nicholas Smith spoke in favor of Item 3, Ord. 2015-085.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Law, seconded by Commissioner Johannas, that this be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 9 - Mr. Poole, Mr. Law, Ms. Howard, Mr. Johannas, Ms. Ferrara, Ms. McAteer, Mr. Sadler, Mr. Cole and Ms. Robertson

1. [ORD. 2015-083](#) To declare that a public necessity exists and to authorize the Chief Administrative Officer or the designee thereof, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to acquire, at a tax delinquent judicial sale, the property located at 1418 North 27th Street and to authorize the conveyance of such property for nominal consideration to Bon Secours – Richmond Community Hospital, Incorporated for the purpose of developing medical and related facilities.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[ORD. 2015-083](#)
[Location Map](#)

This Ordinance was recommended for approval on the Consent Agenda.

2. [ORD. 2015-084](#) To declare surplus and to direct the conveyance of City-owned real estate located at 2534 Nine Mile Road for nominal consideration to Bon Secours – Richmond Community Hospital, Incorporated for the purpose of developing the property as a medical facility and mixed-use development.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[ORD. 2015-084](#)
[Location Map](#)

This Ordinance was recommended for approval on the Consent Agenda.

3. [ORD. 2015-085](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept funds in the amount of \$1,064,000 from the Virginia Department of Transportation; to transfer \$280,000 in matching funds from the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Capital Budget, Bike Sharrows / Lanes project in the Transportation category; to amend the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Capital Budget by establishing a new project in the Transportation category called the City of Richmond Bike Share System project; and to appropriate the total amount of \$1,344,000 to the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Capital Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the new City of Richmond Bike Share System project by \$1,344,000 for the purpose of implementing a public bike sharing system.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)[ORD. 2015-085](#)

This Ordinance was recommended for approval on the Consent Agenda.

4. [UDC No. 2015-08\(2\)](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of the construction of two new buildings and associated site improvements at 1638, 1650 and 1700 Commerce Road

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

This Location, Character and Extent Item was approved on the Consent Agenda.

5. [UDC No. 2015-09\(2\)](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of the construction of two new buildings and associated site improvements at 3502 N. Hopkins Road

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

This Location, Character and Extent Item was approved on the Consent Agenda.

6. [Subd. No. 2015-007](#) Preliminary approval of the Grace Place Subdivision at 1734 North 28th Street, 1736 North 28th Street, and a portion of 1738 North 28th Street (6 lots & 1 remainder).

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)[Application Form](#)[Preliminary Subdivision Plat](#)[Location Map](#)

This preliminary subdivision approval was granted on the Consent Agenda.

7. [PCR 2015-003](#) To approve a temporary public art installation known as Find Art Doors 2015 at various city-owned locations, as reviewed by the Public Art Commission.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)[Applicant's Report](#)[Beloit, WI Brochure](#)[Resolution](#)

This resolution was approved on the Consent Agenda.

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

8. [UDC No. 2015-03\(2\)](#) Final Location, Character and Extent Review of Phase 1A of the renovations to Kanawha Plaza, 701 E. Canal Street

Attachments: [UDC Report to CPC](#)
[Staff Report to UDC](#)
[Location Map](#)
[UDC Subcommittee Report to CPC on Revised Plans](#)
[Revised Plans for 4-20-15 CPC Meeting](#)
[Application & Plans](#)
[Public Comment](#)

A presentation was made by Jeff Eastman, Secretary to the Urban Design Committee, on the final plans that were considered by the Urban Design Committee at its April 9, 2015 meeting and the recommendations that were made by the Urban Design Committee. He informed the Planning Commission that the final plans were revised based on the Urban Design Committee's recommendations. The revised plans were then considered by a subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee after the April 9, 2015 meeting, but were not considered by the full Urban Design Committee. A presentation by the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee would be provided later today.

Mr. Sadler asked if a motion to continue could be made before the public hearing.

Mr. Poole stated the Commission can continue the item at any time.

Ms. Ferrara stated the applicant should be allowed to give a presentation.

Mr. Cole asked if the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee will be giving a presentation.

Mr. Eastman suggested that the applicant make a presentation first, followed by a presentation by the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Poole agreed.

Mr. Grant Neely, Chief of Staff for the Office of the Mayor, gave a presentation on behalf of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, the applicant.

Mr. Neely stated a meeting was held between representatives of the applicant and the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee and he thought they came to a general agreement.

Ms. Deborah Gardner, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services, stated that historically, funding has been dedicated to work on the fountain. Much of the funding for the proposed improvements shown on the plans is not city money.

Ms. Diane Linderman, Managing Director of VHB, gave a presentation on how the plans were revised to address the April 9 recommendations of the Urban Design Committee. Revisions include: shifting the walkway from S. 8th Street, reducing the number of pavement types and amount of pavement, removing the dumpster from the site, including more details on landscaping and breaking up planting beds, providing additional lighting and landscaping at portable restroom area, and modifying pavement in the food truck area. The exercise area was also removed, street trees along Byrd Street are to remain, and changes to grading, accessible entrances, and retaining wall have also been made.

Ms. Ferrara asked Ms. Linderman about the timeline.

Ms. Linderman stated demolition followed quickly by construction so that the park is ready for use by September 1, 2015.

Mr. Johannas stated he has concerns with circulation of the site, how people will be drawn into the park, and what the theme of the park is. Ms. Howard asked about what public input there was.

Dr. Norman Merrifield, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, stated green space is the programming of the space. There will be multiple activities taking place including music, art, and theater. He also stated there were contests to gather public input and representatives from area corporations were contacted.

Ms. Howard asked how the wider public was asked for input.

Dr. Merrifield stated there was publicity about the park improvements and the opportunity to participate in public hearings with the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Johannas stated this is replacing a failed program with the same program; he raised concerns about lack of shading and protection from the elements.

Dr. Merrifield stated past programming was successful.

Mr. Cole asked if construction will go through the procurement process.

Dr. Merrifield stated they are looking at all options.

Mr. Sadler questions why portable rather than permanent bathroom facilities are proposed.

Ms. Linderman stated the trend is going towards portable facilities, they are low maintenance and lower cost.

Ms. Robertson asked about the splash pad and lighting.

Ms. Linderman stated the splash pad is being considered for Phase 1B and that lighting will be throughout the site.

Ms. McAteer questioned about the food truck area.

Ms. Linderman stated the food truck area will be in Phase 1A with portable seating.

Ms. Andrea Almond provided a presentation on behalf of the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee regarding the revised plans.

Ms. Almond stated the recommendation of the subcommittee is that the revised plans

are not ready to be granted final approval and provided a summary of the April 20, 2015 letter that was prepared by the subcommittee: The fountain is an integral component of the park, the furnishing palette is improving, but the planting palette needs more work. Some existing trees are being saved, but more creative grading and commitment could save more internal trees. More permanent seating is needed and strong design concepts are missing. Paving patterns have been removed that should have been retained. Logistics of the layout, including lines for food trucks conflicting with seating, need to be worked out. More efforts are needed in the public design process, particularly with Downtown residents.

Ms. Almond stated the subcommittee believes this is an unprecedented opportunity and that the revised final plan is not ready to be approved.

Ms. Howard asked if Ms. Almond is in favor of approving Phase 1A of the plans to allow demolition and grading.

Ms. Almond stated no.

Ms. McAteer asked if the subcommittee has reported back to the full Urban Design Committee.

Ms. Almond stated no.

Mr. Cole stated he believes the Urban Design Committee would like a complete presentation of the revised plans.

Mr. Poole closed the public hearing.

Mr. Johannas stated he is considering making a motion to continue this item. The design needs to be developed further, programming needs to be reconsidered particularly with the fountain, use of the deep soil areas should be reconsidered, connectivity is weak, and schematic concepts are needed for future phases.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johannas, seconded by Commissioner McAteer, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be continued to the May 18, 2015 Planning Commission meeting so that the revised final plans can be considered at the May 7, 2015 meeting of the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Neely asked if he was able to speak.

Mr. Poole stated no, the public hearing has been closed.

Ms. Robertson asked what impact would a delay in approval have on the project and its partners.

Mr. Neely stated it would have a significant effect on the project. The funding would be in jeopardy.

Ms. Robertson stated Kanawha Plaza was discussed during the public-private partnership pertaining to the Gateway project. Dominion is concerned about the pedestrian bridge staying in place. The city is in the midst of a tremendous opportunity for redevelopment.

Ms. Robertson asked what can be done to clean up the site without redevelopment design.

Ms. Gardner stated grass seed can be put down, the fountain can be turned on,

sidewalks can be fixed and planter beds can be cleaned out. However, the redevelopment project is at risk if construction approval does not move forward.

Mr. Law asked who created the subcommittee of the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Olinger stated the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Law asked if the Urban Design Committee has repealed its recommendation.

Mr. Olinger stated no. The revised plans have not gone back to the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Neely stated the revised plans today have been drawn up to address the recommendations of the Urban Design Committee.

Mr. Sadler stated this project is being rushed for the 2015 cycling championship event. Not all concerns of the Urban Design Committee have been addressed. There are concerns that adequate access is still not provided. He hopes that financing would hold on for better plans.

Ms. McAteer stated she feels as if the Planning Commission is often held hostage by the threat of losing funding. The plan can be improved but it has good elements.

Ms. Howard stated she understands the situation the city is in, but the design is potentially shortsighted and more collaboration with the public is needed.

Mr. Poole called the Commission to vote on the motion to continue made by Mr. Johannas.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johannas, seconded by Commissioner McAteer, that this Location, Character and Extent Item be continued. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Ms. Howard, Mr. Johannas, Ms. McAteer, Mr. Sadler and Mr. Cole

No: 4 - Mr. Poole, Mr. Law, Ms. Ferrara and Ms. Robertson

Upcoming Items

- Special use permit and rezoning of 1031 Fourquaren Lane for elderly housing.
- Special use permit for residential mixed-use at 1817 East Main Street.

Adjournment

Mr. Poole adjourned the meeting at 3:37 p.m.

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.