

Dear Planning Commission Board Members,

The Randolph Neighborhood Association is providing this letter in advance of the November 18, 2025 meeting regarding Consent Agenda ORD.2025-244. **We fully support this ordinance and strongly encourage the Planning Commission to vote to approve the ordinance for the purpose of creating a permanent green space.**

In 2021, our association developed the Randolph Neighborhood Green Space Proposal and submitted it to RRHA and the city Parks Department. We subsequently met with RRHA to discuss the proposal and answer questions. This proposal outlines the justification and basis for the ordinance and we are pleased to include a copy for your review. **Importantly, there is overwhelming neighborhood support for the green space proposal from over 70 Randolph homeowners and residents.**

The Randolph Neighborhood Association and its residents are also supportive of responsible and thoughtful home development in our community, but we believe that the property referenced in the proposal is best suited for a permanent green space.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important ordinance. Unfortunately, due to a scheduling conflict, we will not be able to attend the meeting but we are available to answer any questions and provide any information to ensure that this initiative is successful.

Sincerely,

/s/ Latasha Wyche

Latasha Wyche

President, Randolph Neighborhood Association

/s/ David Wright

David Wright

Vice President, Randolph Neighborhood Association

Attachment

Randolph Neighborhood Green Space Proposal



Prepared for: Stacey Daniels-Fayson, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Desi L. Wynter, Deputy Chief Real Estate Officer, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Christopher (Chris) Frelke, Director, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, City of Richmond

Prepared by: LaTasha Wyche, President and David Wright, Vice President, Randolph Neighborhood Association

August 30, 2021

RANDOLPH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Purpose

The Randolph neighborhood is an established and well-developed residential community just west of the Richmond downtown area. The neighborhood primarily consists of modern, single-family detached homes and places of interest including several churches, Randolph Community Center and cemeteries. Many of the neighborhood residents, which include families, senior citizens, young professionals and students, enjoy the unique appeal of this safe residential setting.

In order to improve the neighborhood environment and preserve and enhance residential quality of life, the Randolph Neighborhood Association and its residents are submitting a proposal to designate a parcel of vacant property at the entrance to the neighborhood as a green space. This proposal will bring positive results for the neighborhood and the City of Richmond overall. **Most importantly, there is overwhelming support for this proposal by over 70 Randolph homeowners and residents.** This is evidenced by their signatures and information included in an attachment to this document. We look forward to discussing our proposal on the following pages.

BACKGROUND

Location

The area proposed to be designated as a green space is a triangular-shaped property comprised of three parcels bordered by Grayland Avenue, Idlewood Avenue and South Harrison Street. This property has a rolling topography with mature trees, crepe myrtles and grass. The property also contains a brick entranceway to Randolph along with an adjacent sidewalk. Further, there is a GRTC bus stop with a bench used by waiting passengers.

The northern side of the property abuts Grayland Avenue which is directly alongside the Downtown Expressway and Belvidere Street off-ramp. The eastern end of the property extends to the recently constructed roundabout at the Belvidere Street exit. Across the street from the western end of the property are single-family detached homes along South Harrison Street. Across the street from the southern end of the property are townhomes and the boundary to Richmond's historic Hollywood Cemetery.

Ownership

City records indicate that the tract of land contains the following three parcels. A city map, which does not show the recently constructed roundabout, is included below.

1. 313 S Harrison St - Parcel ID W0000331036 - RRHA
2. 1112 Idlewood Ave - Parcel ID W0000331026 - RRHA
3. 1100 Idlewood Ave - Parcel ID W0000331016 - City of Richmond Recreation and Parks



Current Use

These undeveloped parcels together serve a number of important purposes. First, the property serves as the entrance to the Randolph neighborhood with its twin brick entrance walls and Randolph marker. Second, since the property is bordered by busy streets and a roundabout, it provides a critical buffer for the neighborhood from the extensive amount of traffic and noise that is generated nearby. Specifically, the property helps to absorb sound from traffic along the adjacent Downtown Expressway, off-ramp and roundabout. Third, the property contains mature trees and crepe myrtles which provide shade and reduce heat in an area which has little greenery. Finally, the property provides an open space apart from a fully developed city environment.

The three streets surrounding this area have very high traffic usage from sources external to the neighborhood, as well as from the residents that live nearby. For example, South Harrison Street is a primary vehicular thoroughfare with heavy pedestrian, bicycle and city bus use. Additionally, there is significant traffic on Idlewood Avenue due to its recent configuration as a two-way street. Finally, since Grayland Avenue dead-ends at the roundabout, this street stays busy with parking used by the VCU community. As a result of the above, there is a strong need to ensure the tranquility of the area.

Green Space – Background

Green space is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as an area of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreation or aesthetic purposes in an otherwise urban environment. Types of green spaces can vary from natural landscapes to highly maintained parks and gardens. Uses of green spaces also vary from showcasing the natural environment to places for recreation, relaxation and exercise by residents and community members. According to a November 27, 2020 article in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, only 6% of Richmond city land is dedicated to green space, compared to a national average of 15%.

Benefits of green space can be separated into four categories: recreation, ecology, aesthetic value and positive health impacts. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing these types of benefits helps reduce the mental distress caused by health problems and social issues. Recent articles published by the CDC, for example, Preventing Chronic Disease – July 9, 2020 have recommended that localities “ensure that quality parks and green spaces are located in close proximity to people, regardless of where they live.” In addition, a 2015 study by the University of Pennsylvania found that residents’ well-being may be partially related to the amount of green space available in their communities.

Green Space – Alignment with Richmond Priorities

According to information from the City of Richmond Office of Sustainability website, open, natural spaces ‘contribute significantly to the achievement of sustainability goals by reducing the overall energy use of residents, promoting a healthy lifestyle, and offering a greater choice of housing options.’ Additionally, as documented on the city website, it has set a goal to increase the number of residents living within one-quarter mile of a city park or open space.

Also, Richmond’s Master Plan, “Richmond 300 – A Guide for Growth,” was adopted by City Council in November 2020 and includes the following two goals to improve green spaces within the city.

- Objective 17.1 – Increase the percentage of Richmonders within a 10-minute walk of quality open space to 100% (page # 168)
 - Engage residents (particularly traditionally under-represented communities), developers, government, technical experts, and other stakeholders in defining and encouraging excellence in design of public open and green space.
- Objective 17.3 – Reduce urban heat (page # 171)
 - Increase the tree canopy and overall green spaces throughout the city

Proposal

Our proposal is to designate the property described above as an official green space. We are requesting that this proposal be considered by the owners of the property and other appropriate stakeholders. We are also requesting support for the proposal and assistance in determining the best way forward to have the proposal considered and approved.

We would greatly appreciate a response to our proposal and your suggestions about how to begin a dialogue on this matter. If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, please email us at randolphrva@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Support for Proposal

National Support

1. National Newspaper Identifies Inequalities in Green Spaces Available to Richmond Neighborhoods
 - Plumer, Brad, et al. "How Decades of Racist Housing Policy Left Neighborhoods Sweltering." The New York Times, The New York Times, 24 Aug. 2020, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html
2. CDC Provides Recommendations to Encourage Access to Green Space for People While Allowing for Physical Distancing
 - Slater SJ, Christiana RW, Gustat J. Recommendations for Keeping Parks and Green Space Accessible for Mental and Physical Health During COVID-19 and Other Pandemics. Prev Chronic Dis 2020;17:200204. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd17.200204>

Local and Regional Support

1. Signed Statements of Support for RNA Green Space Proposal from over 70 Randolph homeowners and residents (attached)
2. State of the City 2020 - Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney - City Initiative to Expand Urban Parks and Increase Green Space in the City
 - <https://richmondmagazine.com/news/news/state-of-the-city-2020/>
 - <https://www.wric.com/news/local-news/richmond/watch-live-mayor-stoney-to-make-announcement-in-relation-to-green-spaces/>
3. City of Richmond RVAgreen 2050 – Equitable Climate Action for a Healthy and Resilient Richmond
 - <https://www.rvagreen2050.com/>
4. Capital Trees – Working to Create a Greener, More Livable Richmond Through the Thoughtful Planning, Planting, and Maintenance of Public Green Spaces
 - <https://capitaltrees.org/>

Randolph Neighborhood Association

Statement of Support for RNA Green Space Proposal

By signing below, I indicate my SUPPORT for the Randolph Neighborhood Association green space proposal to designate a parcel of vacant property bounded by Grayland Avenue, Idlewood Avenue and South Harrison Street as a green space.

In addition, I strongly OPPOSE any development of the vacant parcel for residential, commercial or any other use that doesn't align with the purpose of the proposal or wishes of neighborhood residents.

These positions are endorsed by the Randolph Neighborhood Association.

Date	Print Full Name	Resident's Signature	Print Street Address	Phone Number / Email Address
7/29/21	Margot S. Fuller	Margot S. Fuller	1209 Grayland Ave ²³²²⁰	(804)426-6175 msf0804@yahoo.com
7/29/21	Ashley Tankesky		1211 Grayland Ave ²³²²⁰	804-338-9213 tankesac@gmail.com
7/29/21	Kasra Haghghi		1201 Grayland Ave	703-424-1762
7/29/21	Samuel Cox	Samuel Cox	1205 Grayland Ave	804-363-0656
7/29/21	Taiyean Coleman		1205 Grayland Ave	804-895-8410
7/29/21	DICKSON ADONZO	Adonzo	1317 GrayLAND AVE	804 353 1989
7/29/21	Hunter Vay	Hunter Vay	1313 Grayland Ave	804 468 0551
7/29	Ashley Corvin	Ashley Corvin	1311 Grayland Ave	407-710-4813
7/29	Kellien Corvin	Kellien Corvin	1311 Grayland	540 710 4813
8/04	Perry S. Fuller	Perry S. Fuller	1209 Grayland Ave	804-516-4608
8/4	Chris Chapman	Chris Chapman	1151 Grayland Ave	703-919-4663
8/4	Taylor Desimone	Taylor Desimone	1151 Grayland Ave	571-333-1993

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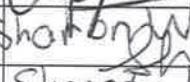
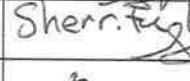
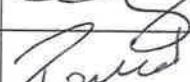
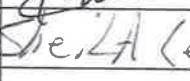
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Date	Print Full Name	Resident's Signature	Print Street Address	Phone Number / Email Address
7/16	Quinton Brown		1200 Idlewood Ave	Quintonb92@aol.com
7-17	Shaon Watson		1310 Idlewood Ave	
7-17	Sherita Roberts		1310 Idlewood Ave	
7-17	Brian Bjorkman		1321 Idlewood Ave	Bjorkmanb@gmail.com
7-17	IAN EDSON		1213 Idlewood Ave	
7/17	Steven Dow		1211 Idlewood Ave	
7/18	Alexis Martin		1205 Idlewood Ave	alexisakm04@gmail.com
7/19	Kathleen M Brady		1203 Idlewood Ave	Katya628@hotmail.com
7/20	Robert Ward		1203 Idlewood Ave.	itswheelie@comcast.net
7/29/2021	Hala Leies	He. LA Lewis	1211 Idlewood Ave	804(253-2930)

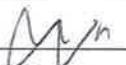
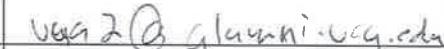
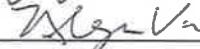
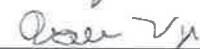
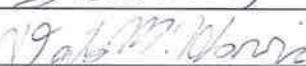
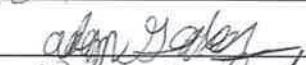
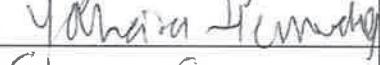
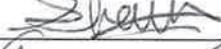
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Date	Print Full Name	Resident's Signature	Print Street Address	Phone Number / Email Address
7/10	Aaron Vu		400 S. Harrison St.	
7/10	megan Vu		400 S. Harrison St	
7/10	Andrew Vu		400 S. Harrison St	
7/10	Hallie Robinson		412 S. Harrison St	571-377-9871
7/10			414 S. Harrison St	804-920-4426
7/10	Adam Goetzinger		405 S. Harrison St	703-261-3399
7/10	David Jackson		409 S. Harrison St.	257-613-3174
7/10			409 S. Harrison St.	843-601-8984
7/10			411 S. Harrison	757-737-5170
7/10	Shawn Soares		415 S. Harrison St	571-420-7629
7/10	Allison Conley		415 S. Harrison St	412-719-3262
7/10	R. Burr Aco		406 S. Harrison St.	717-32-8891
7/10	Page Shingler		4010 S. Harrison St.	717-855-6486

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7/10	Hunter Freeman	<i>Hunter Freeman</i>	406 Dobson St.	757-654-2678
7/10	Eric Foster	<i>Eric Foster</i>	402 Dobson St.	<i>mfoster@comcast.net</i>
7/10	Chris Johnson	<i>Chris Johnson</i>	400 Dobson St.	<i>cjohnson48@yahoo.com</i>
7/10	Katelyn Neighbors	<i>Katelyn Neighbors</i>	408 Dobson St A	5404805269
7/10	ENZA MARCY	<i>Enza Marcy</i>	408 DOBSON ST. APT C	804-955-5446
7/10	Rachel Martinell	<i>Rachel Martinell</i>	408 Dobson St. Apt C	540-841-2282
7/10	Chloe Foss	<i>Chloe Foss</i>	410 Dobson Apt A	218 716 3915

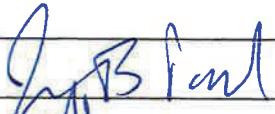
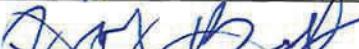
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6/30/21	Joseph B Powell		1209 Wallace StaptD	352-328-8845
6/30/21	Ahmed Sharma		1210 Wallace St.	571-524-5935
6/30/21	Victoria Beaton		1309 Wallace St	804 512 3022
6/30/21	Ronald Dennis		1309 Wallace St	353-8331
6/30/21	Wyatt Venable		1311 Wallace St ^{aptD}	804-971-9127
6/30/21	Kathy Mender		1311 Wallace St.	703-789-1149
6/30/21	Levi Lira		1317 Wallace St.	703-543-0364
6/30/21	Jacob Baker		1319 Wallace St.	703-347-3583
7/7/21	Robert Davis		1319 Wallace St.	804-592-9866
7/11/21	Lynn Burns		1212 Wallace St	804-439-2657
7/11/21	Imran Afridi		1201 Wallace St	804-346-7526
7/11/21	Courtney Jackson		1203 Wallace St.	804 921 4405
	Brandy Sturmy		1204 Wallace St	510 977 8646

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