



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
2nd Floor of City Hall
Richmond, VA 23219
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Meeting Minutes - Draft Urban Design Committee

Thursday, May 4, 2017

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

Ms. Almond called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Present -- 5 - * Chair Andrea Almond, * Vice Chair Andrea Levine, * Andrew P. Gould, * Giles Harnsberger and * Committee Member Dawn Hicks

Absent -- 5 - * Chris Arias, * Bryan Green, * Committee Member David Johannas, * Jill Nolt and * Robert Smith

Roll Call

Present -- 5 - * Chair Andrea Almond, * Vice Chair Andrea Levine, * Andrew P. Gould, * Giles Harnsberger and * Committee Member Dawn Hicks

Absent -- 5 - * Chris Arias, * Bryan Green, * Committee Member David Johannas, * Jill Nolt and * Robert Smith

Approval of Minutes

The minutes will be approved at the next UDC meeting.

This was approved

1. [UDC MIN 2017-04](#) Minutes of the April 6, 2017 Meeting of the UDC to be Approved

Attachments: [UDC MIN 2017-04](#)

Secretary's Report

Mr. Son stated that there were approvals from the Planning Commission on their meeting on April 17th item UDC 2017-06 be the final, location and character extent review of 17th Street Farmer's Market Plaza renovation modification passed on the consent agenda and UDC number 2017-12 conceptual location, character and extent review of the Laurel Street Event Venue was approved with considerations from the UDC for final review after their initial motion was to refer the plan back to UDC for the May UDC meeting failed. Mr. Son stated that they approved some banners for the John Bryant event at the Altria Theater.

Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

CONSENT AGENDA

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [UDC 2017-13](#) Pilot Encroachment associated with festoon lighting, 2043 W. Broad St.

Attachments: [Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location & Plans](#)

Mr. Mark Olinger, Director of Planning and Development Review, stated that this is strictly a pilot to see what this looks like and how it functions and stated that they will take a look at it down the road to see if they want to create some sort of standards to use. Mr. Olinger stated that they met with DPW and DPU out there on one or more occasions to discuss the idea and to see if this would meet the national electrical code for festoon lighting. Mr. Olinger stated that they discussed the round surface mounted 4 inch pole probably 12 feet high and stated that they are open to what the final color selection would be and stated that Savory Grain would be responsible for all the necessary permits and encroachments. Mr. Olinger stated that he wanted to bring it to the Committee first and get approval and get it up and Ms. Grain will make the applications and follow through.

Mr. Gould inquired if they would be responsible for the purchase and installation of the poles and Mr. Olinger stated no and stated that DPU is going to buy and install these first two poles only just to see what it looks like and stated that subsequent would be the responsibilities of the owners. Mr. Olinger stated that there are other things they can do like the streetscape improvements on Broad and stated that this is a way to start the discussion on what this may look like. Mr. Gould stated that he thinks the festoon lighting looks great and stated that his only concern would be is consolidation of poles wherever possible so that it won't clutter up the streetscape. Mr. Gould stated that as far as the pole he generally likes black because it fades away being that they are not trying to draw attention to our infrastructures and streetscapes.

Ms. Harnsberger inquired what if you get a situation where they have a high density of people that wants to do this and they are trying to minimize the amount of poles and stated that if it is each property owner's responsibility to apply and stated that it doesn't leave flexibility if another owner wants to use someone else's pole.

Ms. Almond inquired if Mr. Olinger was talking longer term about looking at Broad Street or Grace Street like the city might have festoon lighting installed consistently as a project to make the streetscape more interesting and Mr. Olinger stated correct. Ms. Almond inquired if they were there yet and Mr. Olinger stated no and stated that it would be nice to create poles that can be multifunctional as part of the overall design and not just hanging something on an existing aluminum pole that may or may not support the load over time. Mr. Olinger stated that they need to take a more integrated approach to that in some of those areas and stated that West Broad will certainly be that as they move ahead with the BRT stuff and stated that in long term Grace Street. Mr. Olinger stated that the Commission of Architectural approved it stringing it from building to building on Virginia Avenue and stated that he doesn't know why it hasn't occurred yet.

Ms. Harnsberger made a motion to approve this item with staff recommendations and made a further recommendation to utilize black poles.

The staff recommendations were:

-That the applicant consider the installation of the least visually and physically intrusive poles such as the round surface-mounted straight steel pole with a 4" diameter

Ms. Levine seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by a 5-0 vote.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 5 - Almond, Levine, Gould, Harnsberger and Hicks

Excused -- 2 - Arias and Green

3. [UDC 2017-14](#) Final Location, Character, and Extent review of an amendment to the approved Maggie Walker Plaza, 98 W. Broad St.

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

Mr. Olinger stated that they have gone to the site multiple times and looked at it and stated that his greatest concern is the design of the plaza. Mr. Olinger briefly discussed the decisions on why they chose to move the benches from the plaza. Mr. Olinger stated that his recommendation is to move those 3 bench locations and once BRT is done and once the statue is in and the plaza is complete they can look at the flow through the area and take a look at what's happening and if they want to put benches back in they can put them back somewhere else in the plaza. Mr. Olinger cleared up some miscommunications about the trash cans and stated that there are no trash cans in the plans proposed along Brook Road in the front of the store rooms and showed the Committee where the trash cans are going to be located.

Ms. Harnsberger inquired if Max's Restaurant was going to have outdoor seating and Mr. Olinger stated that they have submitted some preliminary thoughts about how an outdoor dining area will work and stated that they have sent them back some comments on some concerns because they are taking more than half the sidewalk. Mr. Olinger stated that they are going to have to revise their drawings and stated that they will be coming back for an encroachment but states that there are some things that they want to work on before they reapply. Mr. Olinger stated that they have enough room on Adams but states that if you put it up against the wall on that building it will still create some maintenance issues and stated that as he looks down that road it's nice to see a wide open path for people to walk and don't think they need to clutter up things. Mr. Olinger stated that if it is needed they will figure out where to put them and come back to the Committee for that.

Ms. Levine inquired if they could revisit the issue on the trash cans and Mr. Olinger stated yes.

Mr. Gould inquired if it was only Max's that was opposed to the benches and Mr. Olinger stated no and stated that Mr. Peacock was also opposed to having them in the front of their storefront. Mr. Gould stated that he understands why Max's was opposed to it because of them wanting outdoor dining but was wondering why the others were opposed to it. Mr. Gould stated that the recommendation is fine with him and stated that it makes sense to wait and see and make some adjustments and stated that he doesn't understand why an owner wouldn't want a bench in the front their business. Mr. Olinger stated that they are concerned that with the bench being right against the building that it will be a maintenance issue and stated that there were some safety concerns with broken windows and all of that. Mr. Gould stated that he does like the idea of the benches facing the plaza as opposed to them being in the plaza. Mr. Gould stated that the other concern he had with the benches being in the plaza is that there is not going to be a lot of shade in the beginning. Mr. Olinger stated that they have been out there a couple of times to check on some things and stated that it can get a bit toasty out there and the granite can get a bit warm.

Public Comment

Ms. Jennie Dotts, speaking on behalf of Mr. Ruben Peacock, stated that it has been his home for over 25 years and stated that it will block visibility of the plate glass windows into his gallery. Ms. Dotts stated that they were concerned with the safety and security

issues.

Mr. Craig Bieber, liaison for Councilwoman Kim Grey, stated that she supports the proposal that eliminates the 3 benches and stated that feel strongly that Mr. Peacock and Max's who extensively discussed this with and was adamantly opposed to the benches. Mr. Bieber stated that Ms. Grey concurs with Mr. Olinger presentation about the trash cans that they should not be on Brook Road in front of the businesses and residences. Mr. Bieber stated that Ms. Grey wants to convey her thanks to Mr. Olinger and the Planning Department staff for all of their hard work on this issue and hope that the Committee will move this forward.

A motion was made by Ms. Harnsberger that this Location, Character and Extent Item be approved with staff recommendations and with the condition that the applicant revisit the trash receptacle location and quantity when the benches are revisited.

The staff recommendations were:

-That the applicant review and study the use of the space within the plaza for six months to a year following the completion of the plaza to consider the feasibility of programming some, or all, of the benches back into the plaza.

Mr. Gould seconded and the motion carried unanimously by a 5-0 vote

Aye -- 5 - Almond, Levine, Gould, Harnsberger and Hicks

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Son stated that he would like the Committee to check to see what their summer schedules are like moving forward.

Mr. Olinger stated that there is something lurking out there that may come before the Committee in July or August but states it is not confirmed yet but states that it might requires the Committee vote once they find out more.

Ms. Almond stated that Monroe Park is coming back to the Committee next month.

Mr. Olinger briefly discussed sidewalk encroachments.

Ms. Levine inquired about the study Broad Street corridor and Mr. Olinger stated that the money for that should start around July 1st and stated that he will get with DPW to see what the process is from there and stated that he will report back to the Committee at the next meeting. Mr. Olinger stated that the Pulse Corridor plan is scheduled to go back to the Planning Commission on the 15th. Mr. Olinger stated that he will come back to the Committee to discuss the Pulse to give them an idea of what is going on with it.

Adjournment

Ms. Almond adjourned the meeting.