



# City of Richmond

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

## Meeting Minutes Urban Design Committee

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Thursday, January 6, 2022

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

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**This meeting will be held through electronic communication means.**

[PDRPRES](#) Public Access and Participation Instructions - Urban Design Committee  
[2021.180](#)

**Attachments:** [02\\_2022 Public Access and Participation Instructions - Urban Design Committee](#)

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

### Roll Call

**Present --** 8 - \* Charles Woodson, \* Andrea Quilici, \* Justin Doyle, \* Eva Clarke, \* Amelia Wehunt, \* Jessie Gemmer, \* Damon Pearson and \* Max Hepp-Buchanan  
**Absent --** 1 - \* Mitchell Danese

### Approval of Minutes

December 2021

**A motion was made by Committee Member Doyle, seconded by Committee Member Woodson, to approve the December 2021 meeting minutes.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 9 - Andrea Almond, Charles Woodson, Andrea Quilici, Justin Doyle, Eva Clarke, Amelia Wehunt, Jessie Gemmer, Damon Pearson and Max Hepp-Buchanan

### Secretary's Report

Mr. Dandridge said that it appears virtual meetings will continue.

For the Urban Design Guidelines, Mr. Dandridge said they were planning on adopting them but other departments sent more revisions to incorporate. He is currently working on the Urban Forestry revisions. It will be pushed to February for adoption.

Almond asked if Urban Forestry had major revisions. Mr. Dandridge said that the big topic was native species. Urban Forestry's biggest concern was that some areas are not suited for native species.

Quilici said that there might be new species that might be suitable here but aren't native, such as water- or climate-resistant species. Mr. Dandridge said Urban Forestry revises their approved species list every 2 years. He said that he requested the City Arborist

comes to speak to UDC at least once a year to talk about approved species; and that someone from Urban Forestry comes to speak to UDC multiple times a year to speak about topics like this and any other Urban Forestry issues.

## Elections

Committee Chair Andrea Almond stated that the Committee will need to carryout elections of a new chair and possibly a vice chair since this will be her last meeting.

Quilici said he is interested in moving from Vice Chair to Chair unless anyone else is interested.

Pearson said he was interested in Quilici being Chair.

A motion was made by Pearson, seconded by Wehunt, to move Quilici as Chair.

Vote:

Yes – Almond, Clarke, Doyle, Gemmer, Hepp-Buchanan, Pearson, Wehunt, Woodson

Abstain – Quilici

Absent – 1- Danese

A motion was made by Gemmer, seconded by Woodson, to nominate Eva Clarke for Vice Chair.

Vote:

Yes – Almond, Doyle, Gemmer, Hepp-Buchanan, Quilici, Pearson, Wehunt, Woodson

Abstain – Clarke

Absent– 1 – Danese

## CONSENT AGENDA

None

## REGULAR AGENDA

1. [UDC 2022-01](#) Final location, character, and extent review of North Avenue Public Library Site Improvements.

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

Alex Dandridge, UDC Secretary, presented the application.

Almond asked if the Committee had questions for Mr. Dandridge or the applicant. Pearson asked what their purview was since it's a resubmission.

Pearson asked the applicant about the logic behind the layout, since the sidewalk is blocked a little.

The applicant, Drew Harrigan, said that they did some public charrettes, and they really wanted to do something unique and eye-catching at the corner of the property. It also gave space for street trees and bioretention basin, and a public utility pole. It was largely aesthetic.

Gemmer asked if there were any worries about mulch washing away in the retention areas between the sidewalk and Essex Street. Mr. Harrigan said that the space would be turf with street trees planted into it. Grass clippings won't get into it. Gemmer asked about Bio Basin A – Harrigan said that would be heavily planted with trees, shrubs, and dense perennials.

Quilici asked if there is an opportunity to add seating areas. Harrigan said unfortunately not because the branch manager said that they don't want to encourage any loitering or congregating, which is a pretty serious problem the library deals with. Almond added that this particular block has a lot of problems with prostitution and other types of loitering at this library.

Clarke said that volunteers would do the maintenance and planting. She wanted to know why this isn't the City's responsibility. Harrigan said that it would only be for the plantings only, but that it would be maintained by a private contractor.

Hepp-Buchanan asked where the bike share will be located. Harrigan showed it would be to the north of the building.

Woodson said bees would be negatively affected by herbicides. Harrigan said that they wanted to make one part of the property for herbaceous perennials and pollinators – explicit bee zones where there herbicides will not be used.

Clarke said she agrees with Woodson, since pesticides drift. It would be sad to invite bees and then spray around them with pesticides. She said there are bee-friendly pesticides. Moving forward we should request these things. Harrigan said that maintenance manuals provided to contracts could have these requests stated.

Woodson asked if they could change the language in the narrative to say organic or bee-friendly herbicides.

Almond opened the floor to public comment.

Emily Yeatts said that she's thrilled to see this project and excited about it as a member of the neighborhood.

Jennifer Clarke, DPU, said that the bike share will be a really interesting addition and will be added to the Ginter Park Library too.

Woodson said he wanted to thank Mr. Harrigan for his good work on this project.

Almond closed public comment and opened the floor for Committee discussion.

**A motion was made by Committee Member Hepp-Buchanan, seconded by Committee Member Woodson, to approve UDC 2022-01 final location, character, and extent review of north avenue branch public library site improvements with the following conditions:**

**-The maintenance manual for the site be revised to specify that only organic, chemical-free pesticides and weed control be utilized on the entire site, and not just the Bee Zones.**

**Aye --** 8 - Andrea Almond, Charles Woodson, Andrea Quilici, Eva Clarke, Amelia Wehunt, Jessie Gemmer, Damon Pearson and Max Hepp-Buchanan

**Abstain --** 1 - Justin Doyle

2. [UDC 2022-02](#) Final location, character, and extent review of Broad Rock Public Library Site Improvements.

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

Alex Dandridge presented the application.

Quilici asked why the new bike share location is so far from the entrance. Mr. Harrigan, the applicant, said that the bike share stations function best when they're in a highly visible location from public rights-of-way. Brandon King reiterated the fact.

Quilici asked if it could be moved closer to the entrance, still on Warwick Road. Mr. Harrigan said there is some elevation change around the area; the location they chose is perfectly flat. Clarke asked if it has to be put somewhere flat; Mr. Harrigan said no, but there would be extra costs. Quilici asked if there is a bike path or routes that connects where the racks are. Mr. King said there is a planned bike lane going to Warwick Road. Quilici said his preference would be to make the bike share closer to the library if it can be done in a cost effective way. Mr. Harrigan said that the intersection of Broad Rock and Warwick is very busy, and that riders can immediately and easily get off the road with the location of the bike share.

Woodson added that the bee-friendly herbicide should be added in this application as well.

Almond opened the floor to public comment.

Jennifer Clarke, DPU, said that they're very excited for this. 9th District doesn't have a library, so this is pretty essential. And this will be one of the first bike share stations in Southside and 8th District.

Almond opened the floor for Committee discussion.

Clarke said she wasn't at the initial meeting, but this library seems to have a lot of greenspace and could provide an opportunity for education, so they should have a native plant demonstration garden. Mr. Harrigan said they're trying to work towards that. The interpretive sign will be the first thing you see when you come in, and it will be densely planted with natives; 3 different native species will be featured on each interpretive sign.

**A motion was made by Committee Member Hepp-Buchanan, seconded by Committee Member Woodson, to approve UDC 2022-02 final location, character, and extent review of broad rock branch public library site improvements with the following conditions:**

**-The maintenance manual for the site be revised to specify that only organic, chemical-free pesticides and weed control be utilized on the entire site, and not just the Bee Zones.**

**Aye --** 7 - Andrea Almond, Charles Woodson, Andrea Quilici, Eva Clarke, Jessie Gemmer, Damon Pearson and Max Hepp-Buchanan

**Excused --** 1 - Amelia Wehunt

**Abstain --** 1 - Justin Doyle

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Hepp-Buchanan said he wanted to thank Almond for her service on UDC for the past 9 years.

Almond said Luigi Minardi will be taking her place, and Justin Doyle will be taking the UDC role on the Public Art Commission.

[UDC  
Guidelines  
2022](#)

Update to the City of Richmond's Urban Design Guidelines

**Attachments:** [UDC Guidelines Edits Review 2022](#)

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00AM.