



## City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
www.rva.gov/office-city-clerk

### Minutes

#### Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee

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Tuesday, March 16, 2021

12:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall  
(Virtual Meeting)

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#### Committee Members and Others in Attendance

The Honorable Andreas Addison – Chair  
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Vice Chair (late arrival)  
The Honorable Michael Jones – Committee member  
The Honorable Katherine Jordan – Alternate Committee member (late arrival and early departure)  
Bonnie Ashley, Deputy City Attorney  
Samson Anderson, Council Budget Analyst  
Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk  
Candice Reid, City Clerk  
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst  
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

#### Call to Order

Chair Andreas Addison called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m., and presided.

#### Electronic Participation

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols, in accordance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020, as most recently amended by Ordinance No. 2020-232, adopted December 14, 2020, announced the meeting would be held through electronic communication means. Senior Assistant City Clerk Nichols stated notice of the meeting was provided to the public through a public information advisory issued on March 9, 2021, and through Legistar on the city website in accordance with usual practice. She also stated members of the public were encouraged to provide comments in writing prior to the meeting and all comments received prior to 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, were provided to committee members. Mrs. Nichols indicated that members of the public who signed up to speak and provide comment would be called to speak at the appropriate time.

#### Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Senior Assistant City Clerk Pamela Nichols provided citizen speaker guidelines.

*Alternate member Katherine Jordan joined the meeting at 12:04 p.m.*

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson joined the meeting at 12:05 p.m.*

#### Public Comment Period

There were no public comment speakers.

## **Approval of Minutes**

There were no corrections or amendments to the meeting minutes of Tuesday, February 16, 2021, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

## **Board Vacancies**

There were no board vacancies for review.

## **Presentation(s)**

### **Overview of Office of Equitable Development**

Maritza Pechin, deputy director with the Office of Equitable Development, provided an overview of the newly established Office of Equitable Development. Ms. Pechin reported the office will coordinate and collaborate with staff citywide to realize the vision detailed in the city's Master Plan, Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth. Ms. Pechin highlighted the steps of implementation and additional goals, objectives and strategies. She noted one of the implementation steps was a re-write of the zoning ordinance, which would require the hiring of a consultant. She further noted the office will be preparing a one-year annual report of summaries of actions in the implementation of the city's Master Plan.

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson expressed concern that a city department was created without the approval of City Council. Vice Chair Robertson stated city administration along with the mayor and City Council need to hold work sessions to discuss the priorities and goals for the city.*

*Member Michael Jones expressed concern about a lack of economic development on the city's Southside and unequal equity in transportation. Member Jones stated he would like to see equity included in communities of color. Member Jones noted zoning standards for areas of the city's Southside were lower than the requirement for other areas in the city, and that he would like to begin discussions on restoring corridors on the city's Southside.*

*Vice Chair Robertson noted her proposed amendment to the Master Plan was to include priority growth nodes around the public housing communities. Vice Chair Robertson stated that low-income neighborhoods cannot continue to be neglected, and she reiterated her support for city administration and the mayor to hold a work session with members of City Council to discuss equity for the entire city.*

*Chair Andreas Addison expressed support for a work session with city administration and the mayor. Chair Addison advised the committee of his plans to introduce legislation to rezone a portion of the 1st Council District to promote affordability.*

Ms. Pechin advised the committee that the cost for the re-write of the city's zoning ordinance, was approximately one million dollars over a three year process.

*Chair Addison advised Ms. Pechin that the committee would like a framework for the re-write of the city's zoning ordinance.*

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

### **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Annual Report**

Michelle Peters, Department of Housing and Community Development deputy director, acknowledged Nacole Mason, Department of Housing and Community Development management

analyst senior, would be assisting with the presentation. Ms. Peters presented information on the creation and responsibilities of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Oversight Board. Ms. Peters noted the composition of the board included representation from the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority; however, such membership creates a conflict of interest, and the board would like to work with the committee to revise the board's composition to replace the board seat. Ms. Peters reported that an application for a loan or grant from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund must show direct relationship to one or more specific criteria. She stated those criteria include the provision of housing to low and moderate income households that earn 80% area median income (AMI) or less. Ms. Peters reviewed the 2.9 million dollars in allocated funds and reported that city staff was in the process of addressing matters identified in a recent audit of the Department of Housing and Community Development.

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson advised the committee that over a period of time, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Oversight Board discovered language in the ordinance which established the board that needed to be corrected.*

*Member Michael Jones stated he would like to explore ways the city could increase its affordable housing units and the leverage of city-owned surplus properties for the development of affordable housing units.*

*Chair Andreas Addison stated he would like to explore options to assess housing affordability.*

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

### **Delinquent Real Estate Tax Sale Audit**

Lou Lassiter, city auditor, presented information on the objective, scope and background of the audit of the city's delinquent real estate tax sale process.

Lily Hernandez, deputy city auditor, informed the committee that the City Attorney's Office tax sale process was in compliance with state and city regulations. Ms. Hernandez noted that improvements were needed in certain areas of the program to include the Department of Finance's policy for payment arrangements for delinquent accounts. Ms. Hernandez further noted the city's current policy requires a \$3000 minimum outstanding balance for individuals to qualify for a payment arrangement, the city's payment arrangements were more stringent than the state, and the city's current payment system does not allow for online or automated payment options.

*Councilor Katherine Jordan expressed concern about the \$3000 minimum requirement for tax delinquent accounts and inquired about efforts to inform citizens of the city's tax amnesty program.*

Mr. Lassiter reported that the Department of Finance has indicated plans to revise its payment arrangement policy by July 31, 2021.

*Member Michael Jones stated that he would like the committee to collaborate on new legislation to address disparities in certain neighborhoods and to ensure property owners are afforded opportunities to maintain their homes. Member Jones requested the committee be updated on the implementation of changes to the city's payment arrangement policy.*

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson advised the committee that numerous complaints by city residents regarding the city's delinquent real estate tax sale program prompted her request for an audit. Vice Chair Robertson noted the city has written off over \$1 million dollars in uncollected tax balances; however, she stated she was concerned that current policies were targeting homeowners in certain neighborhoods. Vice Chair Robertson requested that the Land Use, Housing and Transportation, and the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committees join efforts in creating a citywide tax reform policy.*

*Chair Andreas Addison expressed support of a work session to discuss the protection of neighborhoods from gentrification and the impact some current policies have on the city.*

*Councilor Jordan stated she would like the city to be more aggressive in its efforts to notify residents of the tax amnesty program.*

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief administrative officer for Economic and Community Development, informed the committee that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund cannot give direct funds to individuals.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

## **Paper(s) for Consideration**

### **The following ordinance was considered:**

#### **ORD. 2021-039**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a City of Richmond Grant Contract between the City of Richmond and the James River Association to provide funding for the implementation of a green street, installation of green infrastructure, and performance of related activities along a section of Minefee Street between its intersection with Harwood Street and its intersection with Gunn Street in the city of Richmond.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

Grace LeRose, Department of Public Utilities program manager, introduced ORD. 2021-039 and explained the proposed project will create a safe route for area residents in the Bellemeade community. Ms. LeRose further explained the proposed project will improve stormwater runoff, reduce impervious surfaces and add planter beds.

*Councilor Katherine Jordan exited the meeting.*

*Vice Chair Robertson, Member Jones and Chair Addison asked to be added as co-patrons to ORD. 2021-039.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2021-039, to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

### **The following ordinances were considered:**

#### **ORD. 2021-069**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for resurfacing the eastbound lanes of Bells Road from their intersection with East Belt Boulevard proceeding west to 300 feet past the first set of railroad tracks.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

#### **ORD. 2021-070**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for resurfacing and installation of Americans with Disabilities Act improvements on the northbound lanes of Belt Boulevard from their intersection with Twyman Road to their intersection with Angela Drive.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

**ORD. 2021-071**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for resurfacing and installation of Americans with Disabilities Act improvements on the westbound lanes of Bells Road from their intersection with Twyman Road to their intersection with CSX Transportation, Inc.'s railroad tracks.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

**ORD. 2021-072**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Standard Project Administration Agreement between the City of Richmond and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide funding for resurfacing and Americans with Disabilities Act improvements on the westbound lanes of Bells Road from their intersection with Lynhaven Avenue proceeding east to 100 feet past the first set of railroad tracks.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

Kenny Horak, Department of Public Works senior capital project manager, introduced ORD. 2021-069, ORD. 2021-070, ORD. 2021-071 and ORD. 2021-072.

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2021-069, ORD. 2021-070, ORD. 2021-071 and ORD. 2021-072 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

**ORD. 2021-073**

To designate the 2700 block of Berry Road in honor of the late Lt. Ashley Nicole Berry.

**Patron: Ms. Trammell**

Fire Chief Melvin Carter introduced ORD. 2021-073 and explained that Lieutenant Ashley Nicole Berry was a former member of the Richmond Fire Department who lost her life while protecting her son from unintended gun fire.

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson, Chair Andreas Addison, Member Michael Jones and Acting Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders, on behalf of Mayor Levar Stoney, asked to be added as co-patrons to ORD. 2021-073.*

*Member Jones asked that other members of Council be contacted about the possibility of being added as co-patrons to ORD. 2021-073.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2021-073 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**The following ordinance was considered:**

**ORD. 2021-068**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Fourth Amendment to Controlled Public Access Lease Agreement between the City of Richmond and Venture Richmond, Inc. for the purpose of excluding from the "Demised Premises" certain real property, and to repeal section 1 of Ord. No. 2019-278, adopted Nov. 12, 2019.

**Patron:** Mayor Stoney

Sharon Ebert, deputy chief administrative officer for Economic and Community Development, introduced ORD. 2021-068 and explained a portion of the property will be deeded to the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument.

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson, Member Michael Jones and Chair Andreas Addison asked to be added as co-patrons to ORD. 2021-068.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2021-068 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**The following resolution was considered:**

**RES. 2021-R017**

To declare a public necessity to amend ch. 30 of the City Code and to initiate an amendment to the City's zoning ordinance to rezone the properties currently zoned for uses and areas within the B-3 General Business District that are situated north and south of West Broad Street from Interstate Route I-195 west to the City's corporate boundary with Henrico County to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

**Patron: Mr. Addison**

*Chair Andreas Addison introduced RES. 2021-R017 and explained the proposed legislation creates continuity along the Pulse corridor and will encourage future Transit Oriented Nodal District type infill along the corridor.*

Kevin Vonck, Department of Planning and Development Review acting director, expressed support of the proposed legislation.

*Vice Chair Robertson expressed support of RES. 2021-R017 but stated she was cautious about the preselection of zoning for areas in the city in advance of the city's execution of the Master Plan. Vice Chair Robertson asked to be added as a co-patron to RES. 2021-R017.*

There were no further comments or discussions and **Member Michael Jones moved to forward RES. 2021-R017 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.**

**Discussion Item(s)**

Chair Andreas Addison provided the committee with documentation for consideration regarding the use of city-owned surplus properties to build community wealth through mixed-use developments. Mr. Addison explained three ways the city wins on the strategic sale of city-owned land. Chair Addison stated it is time for the city to self-direct its own development goals.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

**Staff Report**

Steve Taylor, council policy analyst, and Samson Anderson, council budget analyst, provided the committee with the March staff report.

*A copy of the material provided has been filed.*

*Vice Chair Ellen Robertson asked the committee to consider moving the staff report up on the agenda so that information included in the report could be considered before the end of the meeting.*

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.