



City of Richmond

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Meeting Minutes - Draft Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

1:30 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee Members

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 (early departure)
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert – Council Member (late arrival) (early departure)

Others in Attendance

Bonnie Ashley, Deputy City Attorney
Pamela Nichols, Senior Assistant City Clerk
Rachael Paul, 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 1:33 p.m., and presided.

Chamber Emergency Evacuation Plan Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Assistant City Clerk Rachael Paul provided information on the appropriate manner in which the Council Chamber is to be evacuated in the event of an emergency along with citizen speaker guidelines.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert joined the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Public Comment Period

Lee Williams, representative of Green New Deal Virginia and Sierra Club Falls of the James Group, addressed the committee regarding the impact of climate change. Ms. Williams urged the city to support initiatives and conservation efforts to protect the public from environmental hazards.

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments or corrections to the meeting minutes of Tuesday, July 19, 2022, and the committee approved the minutes as presented.

[CD.2022.311](#) July 19, 2022 Land Use, Housing and Transportation Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [20220719 LUHT_Minutes - DRAFT](#)

Presentation(s)

Tax Assessment of Affordable Properties

Jovan Burton, Partnership for Housing Affordability Executive Director, presented an overview of the assessments of affordable housing properties. Mr. Burton reported that the city's current assessment practices of affordable housing properties have a negative impact on affordable housing providers. Mr. Burton discussed proposed local and state changes to reduce financial burdens for affordable housing properties.

Alternate Member Katherine Jordan exited the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

Member Michael Jones inquired about what steps were needed to ensure that the city's affordable housing goals were met.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson arrived at 1:52 p.m., and was seated.

Chair Andreas Addison commented that the focus of the presentation was to explore ways to reduce the financial burden affordable housing providers were facing as a result of increased property value assessments.

A copy of the material provided has been filed and can be accessed below.

[CD.2022.316](#) Tax Assessment of Affordable Properties

Attachments: [20220920 LUHT - Assessed Value of Affordable Properties](#)

Assessments of Affordable Housing Properties

Shane Smith, Williams Mullen Attorney, provided an overview of Virginia law governing assessments of affordable housing properties. Mr. Smith stated that assessments of affordable housing properties using mass appraisal techniques inflates assessments of such properties, and that mass appraisals did not conform with Virginia law. Mr. Smith stated that assessments of affordable housing properties should not be based on fair market value.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson asked the City Assessor Richie McKeithen to provide comments on the information that was presented to the committee.

City Assessor Richie McKeithen explained that rental rates have increased nationally; however, his office has been in collaboration with the Housing and Community Development Department to identify affordable housing properties. Mr. McKeithen explained the assessment approach utilized by the city and stated that his office has been working with the Office of the City Attorney for its interpretation of state code. Mr. McKeithen responded to questions regarding the capitalization rates.

Justin Stanley, Office of the City Assessor Appraiser IV and Multifamily Assessment Supervisor, explained the city's assessments of affordable housing units and market rate properties.

Mr. McKeithen commented that the Office of the City Assessor is open to discuss assessment concerns with interested parties.

Chair Andreas Addison stated that homeowners are being challenged with higher assessments based on the market value evaluations and asked about options available to homeowners to reduce the fiscal impacts of increased property values.

Mr. McKeithen reported that changes in the assessment of properties would require action by the Virginia General Assembly.

Mr. Smith explained some options to be considered to reduce financial impacts on property owners.

Chair Addison stated that he would like to explore options to keep low-income tax credit (LIHTC) properties affordable.

Member Michael Jones expressed a need for Council to adopt policies to ensure all Richmond residents can afford to live in the city.

Vice Chair Robertson commented on a lack of commitment from the city to fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and recommended a future work session with Council and city administration to discuss funding and solutions needed to achieve the city's affordable housing initiatives.

A copy of the material provided has been filed and can be accessed below.

[CD.2022.321](#) Affordable Housing Assessment

Attachments: [20220920 LUHT - Assessments of Affordable Housing Properties](#)

Staff Report

Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst, provided the committee with the September staff report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed and can be accessed below.

[CD.2022.317](#) Land Use, Housing and Transportation Staff Report

Attachments: [20220920 LUHT - StaffReport](#)

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

1. [ORD. 2022-239](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute the deeds and other documents necessary to effect the vacation of certain permanent easements approved by Ord. No. 2015-93-76, adopted May 11, 2015, on the parcel of real property located at 5005 Riverside Drive, for the purpose of establishing a portion of the parcel of real property located at 5005 Riverside Drive as a permanent part of the James River Park System. (4th District)

Patrons: Mayor Stoney

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-239](#)

Nissa Dean, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Deputy Director for Capital Projects, introduced ORD. 2022-239.

Public Hearing

Parker Agelasto, Capital Region Land Conservancy Executive Director, expressed appreciation to the property owners for its donation of the easements.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2022-239 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

2. [ORD. 2022-240](#) To name the baseball field associated with the Calhoun Community Center and located at 300 Calhoun Street in the city of Richmond as "William 'Bo' Jiggetts Field."

Patrons: Ms. Lambert and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-240](#)

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert introduced ORD. 2022-240.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2022-240 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

3. [ORD. 2022-242](#) To designate and establish certain City-owned properties along Idlewood Avenue, South Belvidere Street, Albemarle Avenue, Spring Street, and China Street as an official City park named "Samuel Pleasants Parsons Linear Park," and to repeal Res. No. 2003-R37-32, adopted Feb. 24, 2003, which named a portion of the property known as Linear Park as "Samuel P. Parsons Park."

Patrons: Ms. Lynch and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-242](#)

Amy Robins, 5th District Council Liaison, introduced ORD. 2022-242.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward ORD. 2022-242 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

4. [ORD. 2022-241](#) To designate the 1100 block of Front Street in honor of Kirby David Carmichael.

Patrons: City Council

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-241](#)

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson introduced ORD. 2022-241.

Public Hearing

James JJ Minor, Richmond Chapter of the NAACP President, spoke in support of ORD. 2022-241, and stated that the city has greatly benefited from Mr. Carmichael's contributions.

There were no further comments or discussions and Chair Andreas Addison moved to forward ORD. 2022-241 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following ordinance was considered:

5. [ORD. 2022-259](#) To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Virginia Transit Association Cooperation Agreement between the Virginia Transit Association and the City of Richmond, for the purpose of funding the City's proposed Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Van-Share project to provide eligible Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority residents with flexible transportation for employment and associated childcare.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney and Ms. Lambert

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-259](#)

Kelli Rowan, Department of Public Works Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility Transit, Planning and Mobility Program Management Consultant, introduced ORD. 2022-259. Ms. Rowan reported that the pilot project will service eligible Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) residents needing additional connectivity to employment destination and associated child-care trips.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Michael Jones moved to forward ORD. 2022-259 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert requested to be added as a co-patron of ORD. 2022-259 and ORD. 2022-241.

The following ordinance was considered:

6. [ORD. 2022-260](#) 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 the Richmond Signal System -Phase IV project for the purpose of completing upgrades to the City's traffic signal communication network to improve traffic flow and safety.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Ord. No. 2022-260](#)

M. Khara, Department of Public Works Deputy Director/City Engineer, introduced ORD. 2022-260 and explained that the project would expand the traffic signal communication network, replace older portions of the communications system and upgrade old traffic signal controllers.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no comments or discussions and Member Michael Jones moved to forward ORD. 2022-260 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

7. [RES. 2022-R052](#) To request that the Chief Administrative Officer cause the preparation of an analysis for public review of the existing infrastructure along the proposed "North/South BRT" corridors for the purpose of ensuring that residents residing south of the James River have safe and serviceable access to existing and future public transit networks.

Patrons: Mr. Addison, Ms. Lynch, Vice President Robertson, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lambert and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R052](#)

Chair Andreas Addison introduced RES. 2022-R052.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson stated that she wanted to ensure the analysis of the corridors included neighborhood friendly business and affordable housing developments. Vice Chair Robertson asked to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2022-R052.

Member Michael Jones asked to be added as a co-patron of RES. 2022-R052.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2022-R052 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

8. [RES. 2022-R060](#) To amend Res. No. 2022-R010, adopted Feb. 28, 2022, which expressed the City Council's support for and request that the Commonwealth Transportation Board provide funding for the City's

SMART SCALE candidate projects for 2022, to expand the City's SMART SCALE candidate projects for 2022 to include projects for which joint applications have been submitted on behalf of the City by the County of Henrico and the County of Chesterfield.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lambert and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R060](#)

M. Khara, Department of Public Works Deputy Director/City Engineer, introduced RES. 2022-R060.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2022-R060 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

9. [RES. 2022-R051](#) To reverse the decision of the Commission of Architectural Review striking from its docket and denying an application for a certificate of appropriateness to install new lights on the Vann Memorial Tower, located at 1500 North Lombardy Street in the city of Richmond, in the shape of the Virginia Union University emblem by fully approving such application.
(3rd District)

Patrons: Ms. Lambert, Vice President Robertson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Addison and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R051](#)
[20220622 Commission of Architectural Review Response to VUU Appeal](#)

Alex Dandridge, Planning and Development Review Planner and Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR), provided an overview of CAR's decision for the initial and subsequent applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Dandridge stated that CAR's review and denial of the applications were consistent with Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert stated that the lights installed on the tower of the historically black Virginia Union University (VUU), were an emblem of the university and visible across numerous neighborhoods in the city.

Public Hearing

Dale Mullen, Whiteford, Taylor and Preston Attorney on behalf of VUU, spoke in support of RES. 2022-R051 and stated that VUU has long lacked any prominent signage for numerous years and that the new lighted sign was architecturally compatible with the Belgian Building and the old and historic district. Mr. Mullen further stated that VUU has been working with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources on a mitigation agreement for the signage and that CAR's denial of the application did not consider the merits of the application.

Felicia Cosby, VUU Director of Government and Community Relations, spoke in support of RES. 2022-R051 and stated that the sign illuminates the hope, aspiration and history of a people.

Kevin Vonck, Planning and Development Review Director, explained the three levels of approval needed for VUU to keep the lighted sign.

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

A copy of the material provided has been filed and can be accessed below.

[CD.2022.339](#) After Item - 20220920 - RES. 2022-R051

Attachments: [After Item - 20220920 Land Use - RES. 2022-R051](#)

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Michael Jones moved to forward RES. 2022-R051 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Member Michael Jones expressed his intention to provide the City Planning Commission with a letter of support for RES. 2022-R051.

Councilor Ann-Frances Lambert exited the meeting at 3:36 p.m.

The following resolution was considered:

10. [RES. 2022-R058](#) To declare the City's commitment to ensuring equitable access to extracurricular programming, recreational opportunities, and public spaces for the children, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond; honoring the legacy of Arthur Ashe, Jr. as an element of the overall design of the proposed Diamond District redevelopment; pursuing opportunities for providing the recreational and organizational opportunities previously served by the Arthur Ashe, Jr. Athletic Center on sites in the general proximity of the proposed Diamond District redevelopment prior to the transfer and demolition of the Center; and intending to prioritize the appropriation of funds to support and expand recreational and extracurricular opportunities for the youth, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond through the development and maintenance of community centers, athletic fields, public parks, and other facilities that provide safe and healthy enrichment opportunities.

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, President Newbille, Vice President Robertson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Addison, Ms. Jordan, Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R058](#)

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2022-R058 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

11. [RES. 2022-R059](#) To express the City Council's support for the City's participation in the United States Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program to aid the restoration of communities hindered from economic progress by transportation infrastructure for the purpose of funding the City's "Reconnect Jackson Ward project."

Patrons: Mayor Stoney, Vice President Robertson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Addison, Ms. Lambert and Ms. Jordan

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R059](#)

Maritza Pechin, Office of Equitable Development Deputy Director, introduced RES. 2022-R059 and explained that if approved, the program would dedicate funds to support planning grants and capital construction grants to restore communities that were cut off from economic progress by transportation infrastructure.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

Member Michael Jones asked to be added as a co-patron and stated that the city needed to be intentional in the restoration of the communities that were impacted by transportation infrastructure.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson commented on what she explained as the devaluing of properties of Black property owners, and stated that she was concerned that the history of Jackson Ward could be lost in the reconnect project.

Chair Andreas Addison asked to be added as a co-patron.

There were no further comments or discussions and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson moved to forward RES. 2022-R059 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The following resolution was considered:

12. [RES. 2022-R057](#) To provide for the nomination of Andreas D. Addison, Ellen F. Robertson, and J. E. Lincoln Saunders as the City of Richmond's three Directors and the election of the Board of Directors of the Greater Richmond Transit Company for the period commencing upon election and qualification of these nominees as Directors and terminating on the date of the 2023 annual meeting of shareholders upon the election and qualification of the successors to these Directors.

Patrons: President Newbille

Attachments: [Res. No. 2022-R057](#)

Chair Andreas Addison and Vice Chair Ellen Robertson provided comments regarding their nomination to the Board of Directors of the Greater Richmond Transit Company.

Public Hearing

There were no public hearing speakers.

There were no further comments or discussions and Member Michael Jones moved to forward RES. 2022-R057 to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Board Vacancies

There were no board vacancies for review.

Discussion Item(s)

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Fall Line Trail

Bridges for Infrastructure Bill Funding

Chair Andreas Addison asked that the committee discuss the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Fall Line Trail and Bridges and Infrastructure Bill Funding items at its next committee meeting.

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson expressed her support for the committee to categorize certain agenda items in an effort to reduce the duration of the committee meetings.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Dedicated Source of Funding

Vice Chair Ellen Robertson expressed her concern that the city had failed to identify a dedicated revenue source for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Vice Chair Robertson stated that she would like this subject matter to be on the present committee's or the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee's agenda, until such time that city administration identifies a funding source.

Sherrill Hampton, Housing and Community Development Director, reported on the city's contribution of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds to support affordable housing. Ms. Hampton stated that city administration has been evaluating options to address housing related services which no longer will be covered under the affordable housing trust fund.

Member Michael Jones challenged Council and city administration to rename the Lee Circle, the location where the Robert E. Lee confederate statue once stood.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:38:p.m.