



City of Richmond

Minutes

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.richmondgov.com/cityclerk

Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

3:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee Members and Staff in Attendance

The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Chair
The Honorable Jonathan Baliles – Vice Chair
The Honorable Kathy Graziano – Member
Jean V. Capel, City Clerk
William Echelberger Jr., Council Budget Analyst
Vincent Jones, Deputy Council Chief of Staff
Pamela Nichols, Assistant City Clerk
Alexander Rawles, Boards and Commissions Administrator
Candice Reid, Deputy City Clerk
Steve Taylor, Council Policy Analyst
Matthew Welch, Assistant City Attorney

Call to Order

Chair Ellen Robertson called the meeting to order at 3:17 p.m.

Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Upon the Chair's request, Pamela Nichols, Assistant City Clerk, 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 and conduct during the meeting.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Friday, September 11, 2015 and the Tuesday, September 22, 2015 meetings were approved ~ Motioned by Committee member Kathy Graziano and seconded ~ Vote 3/0.

Board Vacancies

Alexander Rawles, Boards and Commissions Administrator, reviewed board applications for consideration by the committee.

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the recommendations of the following board applicants, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 3/0:

Board of Building Code Appeals, General Division

- Thomas K. Davis – Reappointment
- C. Nelson Williams – Reappointment

Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee

- William Steele – Reappointment

Highway Safety Commission

- Fatima Yousofi – Reappointment

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

- Samuel Young – Reappointment

Urban Design Committee

- Andrea Almond – Reappointment
- Kathryn Harnsberger – Reappointment

It was the consensus of the committee to conduct interviews of City Planning Commission applicants and to forward its recommendation to the November 2nd, Organizational Development Standing Committee meeting and continue consideration of the Commission of Architectural Review, citizen of the city appointed at large appointment recommendation, to the November 17th Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee meeting.

Presentation(s)

Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Semi-Final Design Project

Amy Inman, Planning and Mobility Programs Administrator – Economic and Community Development, presented an update on the BRT project description, current status, key dates, project funding and economic impact analysis. Ms. Inman reported that the BRT project and policy initiatives can help influence the nature and pace of development and attract those seeking a less auto-dependent environment. She stated that the benefits of the project included reduced travel time, increased property values, improved safety, stimulated retail sales, reduced infrastructure burdens and improved accessibility to jobs and services.

Chair Ellen Robertson stated that she would like, as a follow-up, the projections of the economic impact regarding the project to determine thresholds which were met or not met. Chair Robertson also asked Ms. Inman to consider working with the anti-poverty initiatives to link people in poverty to sustainable living-wage jobs.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)

Brian Koziol, Director of Research and HOME Consulting Services, presented findings based on HOME's research on the impact of subprime lending and the foreclosure crisis on the city's neighborhoods. Mr. Koziol reported that research showed that, for a span of approximately ten years, a vast majority of subprime loans were made to African American borrowers, and

by the year 2009, eighty percent of African American homeownership accounted for forty-eight percent of foreclosures in the city. Mr. Koziol also provided data on origination and denial rates by income, origination rates by race, percentage of originations by neighborhoods and origination and denial rates by neighborhood for borrowers by race/ethnicity. Mr. Koziol explained that solutions to the disparities included down payment assistance, housing trust funds, and making fair and affordable housing a priority for the city.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Code Enforcement

Mark Olinger, Director – Planning and Development Review, provided a brief overview of the order of the presentation regarding the Environmental Report: Efforts and Challenges.

John Walsh, Operation Manager/Property Maintenance Code Enforcement - Planning and Development Review, explained that enforcement of unlawful dumping, as defined in the City Code, was primarily a function of the city's police department and not the division of Property Maintenance Code Enforcement. Mr. Walsh also provided an overview of sections of the City Code enforced by his division, explained how some of the sections in the City Code were confusing and/or contradictory and provided statistical information regarding the efforts of the division.

Mark Bridgman, Property Maintenance Inspection III – Planning and Development Review, provided an overview of the case work flow for notice of violations. Mr. Bridgman emphasized that the Property Maintenance Code Enforcement division tries to provide violators adequate time to abate violation.

Mr. Walsh provided before and after pictures of typical grass complaints, unusual grass and trash requests and illegal dumping. Mr. Walsh stated that the division has implemented changes to become more efficient and was seeking ways to become more efficient with hiring additional staff and amending the ordinance to eliminate conflicts.

Bobby Vincent, Deputy Director of Operations – Department of Public Works, provided an overview of the times and places of bulk collection as defined in the City Code and reported that one of the goals for the department was to close all bulk request with fourteen calendar days. Mr. Vincent stated that the department was seeking ways to streamline the process; however, the department currently lacks the necessary resources to achieve its goals.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Chair Ellen Robertson expressed interest in meeting with the Department of Public Works to discuss timelines and cost. Chair Robertson asked Mr. Vincent to send a copy of the presentation to City Council and asked that City Council forward its questions to members of the committee.

Paper(s) for Consideration

**Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following papers to Council with the recommendation to continue to the November 17th Land Use, Housing & Transportation Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved ~
Vote 3/0:**

ORD. 2015-191 - To amend City Code §§ 38-154, concerning weeds and other vegetation, 38-155, concerning violations and notice, and 38-156, concerning abatement by the City, and to amend Appendix A of the City Code by adding therein a new fee for City Code § 38-156(b) for the purpose of imposing one notice per growing season, designating the amount of administrative charges for abatement by the City, imposing civil penalties for violation of such sections, and requiring the Director of Planning and Development Review to prepare and deliver to the City Council and the Chief Administrative Officer a report concerning the costs incurred, charged to property owners and paid to the City associated with the City's efforts to abate violations of such sections.

Patron: Mr. Agelasto

ORD. 2015-208 - To amend City Code § 38-152, concerning unlawful accumulation, for the purpose of making it unlawful to permit the accumulation of certain furniture manufactured primarily for indoor use on any property or on any alley, sidewalk, public right-of-way, grass strips, or street abutting such property.

Patron: Mr. Agelasto

ORD. 2015-199 - To amend City Code §§ 38-156, concerning the abatement of certain refuse, litter and weed control violations, and 86-44, concerning the times and places of collection for bulk items, brush and loose leaves, for the purposes of requiring the Chief Administrative Officer to waive certain fees for the abatement of certain violations, requiring the Director of Public Works to provide written notification of the date on which bulk items are scheduled for collection, and prohibiting the placement of bulk items for collection on or near a public right-of-way more than 48 hours before the date scheduled for collection.

Patrons: Ms. Robertson and Mr. Agelasto

ORD. 2015-194 - To erect all-way stop signs at the intersection of Richmond-Henrico Turnpike and Dove Street. **(withdrawn)**

Patron: Ms. Robertson

Chair Ellen Robertson advised the committee of her decision to withdraw ORD. 2015-194.

The committee acknowledged the withdrawal of ORD. 2015-194.

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following paper to Council with the recommendation to continue to the November 17th Land Use, Housing & Transportation Standing Committee meeting, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 3/0:

ORD. 2014-208 - To amend and reordain ch. 2, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 7.2 (§§ 2-1035-2-1037) for the purpose of establishing a Richmond Archaeological Commission.

Patron: Vice President Robertson

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following paper to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 3/0:

ORD. 2015-217 - To amend City Code § 110-136, concerning bus fares, for the purpose of authorizing an expansion of the fare pass program to provide an unlimited use pass for seniors, valid Medicare recipients, and minors between six and 18 years old and a “One Ride Plus” pass for patrons that require two different buses to arrive at their final destinations.

Patron: Mayor Jones

Garland Williams, Planning and Scheduling – Greater Richmond Transit Company, (GRTC), introduced ORD. 2015-217.

Chair Ellen Robertson asked Mr. Williams about what methods was GRTC utilizing to inform citizens of the amendments to the new GRTC pass program and asked Mr. Williams to provide City Council with information regarding the proposed changes.

Vice Chair Jonathan Baliles exited the meeting.

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following paper to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 2/0:

ORD. 2015-218 - To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Lease between the East District Family Resource Center and the City of Richmond for the purpose of leasing the property known as 2405 Jefferson Avenue for use by the East District Family Resource Center as a community-based resource center.

Patron: Mayor Jones

Paul McClellan, Program Administrator/Real Estate Strategies – Economic and Community Development, introduced ORD. 2015-218.

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following paper to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 3/0:

RES. 2015-R061 - To request the Commonwealth Transportation Board to fund the James River Branch Trail project to provide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements on the proposed James River Branch Trail between its intersections with Basset Avenue and North Hopkins Road.

Patron: Mayor Jones

Vice Chair Jonathan Baliles reentered the meeting.

David McNeel, Senior Policy Advisor – Department of Public Works, introduced RES. 2015-R061.

Committee member Kathy Graziano moved to forward the following paper to Council with the recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved ~ Vote 3/0:

RES. 2015-R060 - To designate certain parcels of City property as parcels that may be made available for annual use as community garden sites for periods not to exceed one year at a time.

Patron: Mayor Jones

Dr. Norman Merrifield, Director – Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, introduced RES. 2015-R060.

Staff Report

Steve Taylor and Bill Echelberger, Council Budget Analysts, provided the committee with the October staff report.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:51p.m.

Next Meeting: November 17, 2015 at 3:00 p.m., Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall
Staff Contact: Pamela Nichols, 804-646-7931, pamela.nichols@richmondgov.com