



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

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

Roll Call

- Present** -- 5 - * Chair Andrea Almond, * David Johannas, * Jill Nolt, * Andrea Quilici and * James W. Klaus
- Excused** -- 3 - * Chris Arias, * Vice Chair Giles Harnsberger and * Andrew P. Gould
- Vacant** -- 1 - * Robert Smith

Approval of Minutes

[UDC MIN 2018-06](#) Minutes of the regular meeting on June 7, 2018

Attachments: [UDC MIN 2018-06](#)

A motion was made by Committee Member Johannas, seconded by Committee Member Nolt, that these Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye** -- 4 - Chair Andrea Almond, David Johannas, Jill Nolt and James W. Klaus
- Excused** -- 3 - Chris Arias, Vice Chair Giles Harnsberger and Andrew P. Gould
- Abstain** -- 1 - Andrea Quilici

Secretary's Report

Secretary Son announced the approval of the Altria Theater banners for the 4-U A Symphonic Celebration of Prince with the Richmond Symphony from July 9th, 2018 to September 14, 2018.

Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

CONSENT AGENDA

REGULAR AGENDA

[UDC 2018-28](#) Final Location, Character, and Extent review of Hull St. Streetscape improvements, Chippenham Pkwy to Arizona Dr.

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

Mr. Son: This project involves modifications to Hull Street from Chippenham Parkway to Arizona Drive, including provision of a 7' wide green space and 5' wide sidewalk along the eastbound side and a 9' wide green space and 10' wide shared-use-path along the westbound side to provide pedestrian and bicycle safety and route continuity along the entire corridor. The plans also separate the vehicular through lanes from turning lanes, reducing the number of conflict points along the corridor. Proposed installations of Curb and gutter and a drainage system will accommodate stormwater runoff.

The project will be designed as an Urban Major Arterial with a design speed of 40 MPH and is to be posted at a speed limit of 35 MPH. The existing traffic counts indicate approximately 25,000 vehicles per day use the Hull Street Road corridor within the project limits. This number is expected to increase to approximately 35,000 vehicles per day by the Design Year 2040.

This project will enhance capacity and improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists by separating the through lanes from turning lanes and by reducing the number of conflict points along the corridor. The proposed improvements will provide a consistent 4 lane typical section (11' wide lanes) with two lanes each direction and a 15' wide median with left turn lanes and adequate storage length at intersections, major traffic generators, and median crossovers.

The combined effect of the improved typical section, the addition of turn lanes and storage lanes within the median and on approaching roadways, stormwater management, the separated provisions for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the addition of street and pedestrian lighting, project landscaping and a reduction in conflict points.

The Hull Street Road Improvement Project will utilize a combination of City of Richmond Local Funds, Federal, and State Transportation Funds. The City has secured Smart Scale funding through VDOT for Phase 1 of the Project from Hey Rd to Warwick Rd which is 1.25 miles long. The City is actively seeking additional transportation participation from Federal and State funding sources to complete the overall project.

The construction of this project will conform to the nationwide best management practices, Federal Highway Administration and City of Richmond specifications and special provisions, and the Virginia Department of Soil and Water conservation regulations. During construction, every reasonable effort will be made to protect the environment with respect to dust and erosion control. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. The project cost estimate is \$35,940,000.

Staff is supportive of the provision of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along this section of Hull Street with modifications to the vehicular roadway. Staff finds that this corridor will be aesthetically enhanced by the proposed improvements, which will help to provide a much more formalized appearance, consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan designation of Hull Street as an image corridor.

Furthermore, Staff finds the proposal to be consistent with the recommendations contained in the 2013 Hull Street Corridor Revitalization Plan and that the improvements are generally consistent with the recommendations of the Urban Design Guidelines.

Therefore, the Urban Design Committee recommends that the Planning Commission

grant final approval with the following conditions:

- That details on the proposed retaining walls be reviewed administratively prior to approval
- That details of the tree planting plan be reviewed administratively prior to approval
- That the applicant consider the connectivity to the proposed Pocosham Greenway and the proposed James River Branch Trail

Ms. Nolt: Is there landscaping aside from street trees?

Mr. Son: There is. Between the streets and the multi-use path trail, there is proposed grass.

David Malinowski, with JMT: Primarily, the landscape planting is located in the median. There is some planting in the buffer area, but it's not as extensive as it is in the median.

Ms. Almond: So, do we have any landscape plans?

Mr. Son: They were online in the comprehensive plans

Ms. Nolt: So, all of the proposed planting is in the median and around the bus stops?

Rodney Hazelet: One thing to remember is that the overhead utility lines on this corridor switch from side to side. We are kind of limited to what we can do. So, that is why you would see landscaping on one side and not the other.

Ms. Nolt: What do you have scheduled to plant under the trees, again? Is it grass that will be mowed and maintained?

Mr. Hazelet: Yes. The whole area of what we call the buffer strip will be planted with grass.

Mr. Quilici: Does the bicycle lane continue all the way through the improvement, or does it stop at one point?

Mr. Hazelet: This applies to Warwick Road. Currently, there is no shared use path. There is just sidewalk.

Ms. Nolt: So, the first section is continuous for the length of the project, except for where you have left turn lanes?

Mr. Hazelet: Correct.

Mr. Quilici: Is the shared path only one way for bicycles or a two way?

Mr. Hazelet: It's a two way facility.

Ms. Nolt: Josh, I have a question about the shared bike path. Has the city's bicycle coordinator reviewed this, and is this road part of the bicycle master plan?

Mr. Son: So, this falls in line with the Richmond Connects Master Bicycle Plan, and I did send this out to DPW. They didn't respond back, but, also, keep in mind that this did come for Conceptual Review in 2015. So, at that point, it would have been reviewed by other city agencies.

Mr. Nolt: The bicycle coordinator did review it?

Mr. Son: I can confirm that.

Edward Adel: Yes, I believe so.

Ms. Nolt: Thank you.

Mr. Johannas: Before you step down, I am always going to have the same concern when it comes to any environmental improvements in the city. I am really thrilled that this is happening. I am thrilled that we are condensing the scale of the road and putting in a median. All of this is going to be great. My concern is always in terms of being a pedestrian. Anything that we can do to increase the continuity of shade is good, more importantly on the north side than the south side, because we need more protection from the sun coming in from the south to the north.

Mr. Nolt: To be specific, you mean shade trees along the pedestrian pathways?

Mr. Johannas: Yes. For instance, it is brutal out there today. There is an increase of temperatures compared to being in the shade.

Mr. Adel: I agree. What I can tell you is that the landscape that you are going to provide here will help in providing shade. We, also, have GRTC bus stops scattered around the north side of the corridor. Most, if not all, of those bus stops will provide shaded shelters. We cannot provide shade for the whole corridor, but that will increase the shade.

Mr. Johannas: I can tell you as a pedestrian, even though I don't walk long distances but walk about fifteen to twenty miles a week, I am aiming for shade. It really controls the life of a walking person.

Ms. Nolt: Furthermore, your cross section shows those trees providing shade at the pedestrian pathways and as a buffer between the drive lane and the sidewalk, but it's not consistently provided for the length of the walkway.

Mr. Johannas: So, is that something that we can just add as a recommendation?

Mr. Quilici: On the same subject, I saw some images of existing trees. Are these going to stay in place, or will they have to be removed to provide a new layout?

Mr. Hazelet: There is a good probability that some of these trees will be impacted with the construction and the utility relocations going further out. That's why we have a really robust landscaping plan. I know that there are some concerns about the continuity, and I just wanted to make sure that I noted, again, that the overhead utilities impact how big of a tree we can plant around there.

Ms. Nolt: There are lots of options within the city's recommendations that you can use for under power lines.

Mr. Adel: If there is a chance that we can preserve some of the trees, we will preserve.

Ms. Nolt: I have just one more question back to the location of the bike lane. I know that this was a long time ago when it came before us for Conceptual Review. Was the shared bike lane or a dedicated bike lane in the road way ever considered as a part of this project, or has it always been shared with pedestrians?

Mr. Hazelet: I think that it was determined that the impacts and the cost provided was too much to absorb in the project. Adding another four or five feet to the road way would really have some significant impacts on the right of way.

Ms. Nolt: I don't know how much bicycle traffic this area is getting currently or where it can connect to on either end.

Mr. Son: The Hull Street Corridor Revitalization Plan does call for a separated bicycle lane on each side of the corridor, but when that is not able to be accommodated, a multiuse path trail was suggested.

Mr. Quilici: As for lighting, will there be specific lighting for pedestrians?

Mr. Adel: We are providing LED lighting. The lighting that we are providing now should be enough for the pedestrians.

Mr. Hazelet: By illuminating the roadway, we are effectively illuminating the shared use paths and the sidewalks. We are not illuminating it to pedestrian lighting requirements. To do that would require additional fixtures. We feel confident with the lighting that we have.

Ms. Nolt: Josh, I have a question for you about the bus shelter. We have very recently seen a very different bus shelter come before us for a city bus stop, and my understanding was that this one, with the round benches, was being eliminated or obsolete. Can you clarify that?

Mr. Son: So, the bus shelters with the transfer stations were, specifically, for the transfer stations, because they were to accommodate a larger group of people and were specific to that location. The ones that are the city standard would be the ones that this project would use. The larger bus shelters at the transfer stations were not approved by Section 17.05, which would be any new appurtenances for the city. The applicant said that if they were to come in for a more citywide use, they would come back for a different type of review at the time.

Ms. Nolt: You can confirm that this is the standard that's been adopted?

Mr. Son: Yes.

Ms. Nolt: Anyone from the public that wants to speak to this project?

Teresa Slaten, from the Greater Woodstock Subdivision: I am very excited about this project. I did have a concern. I am hearing everyone talk about North Side and the shade trees. Let's be mindful that residents are coming in town, and there are going to be people at bus stops on the east bound. Additionally, the mid-block cross walks need to be adequate.

Mr. Hazelet: I want to clarify that we have flashing light signals to show that there are pedestrians crossing mid-block.

Ms. Nolt: So, those have pedestrian buttons? Is there a traffic light?

Mr. Hazelet: Yes.

Ms. Nolt: Can you just answer the question about the east west crossing?

Mr. Hazelet: We are providing pedestrian crossings going east west on all the side road connections. On some of the intersections, we are providing one crossing, and on others, we are providing two. It depends on the size of the intersections.

Ms. Nolt: I think that the only comment that I want to put on the table is the amount of grass planted, in general. I know that there is a nice palette of trees, shrubs, and some perennials, but it seems like there is a lot of grass that will have to be maintained. I know that it's the lower budget way to get that area replanted, but, maybe, there is a different type of planting that has less maintenance, provides a little bit of shade, and can help with the heat index.

A motion was made by Committee Member Johannas that this item be approved with Staff recommendations and additional conditions:

Staff recommendations were:

- That details on the proposed retaining walls be reviewed administratively prior to approval
- That details of the tree planting plan be reviewed administratively prior to approval
- Consider the connectivity to the proposed Pocosham Greenway and the proposed James River Branch Trail

Additional conditions are:

- Preserve as many existing trees as possible
- Provide shade for pedestrians with the use of plantings, trees or otherwise, on either side of the corridor, whenever possible
- Utilize 3000k for the color of the proposed lighting if possible
- Minimize the planting of grass through the utilization of low-maintenance, drought-resistant plants where possible

Committee Member Nolt seconded the motion and it carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 5 - Chair Andrea Almond, David Johannas, Jill Nolt, Andrea Quilici and James W. Klaus

Excused -- 3 - Chris Arias, Vice Chair Giles Harnsberger and Andrew P. Gould

OTHER BUSINESS

Adjournment