



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
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Minutes

Organizational Development Standing Committee

Monday, December 3, 2018

5:00 PM

Council Chamber, 2nd Floor - City Hall

Committee Members and Others in Attendance

The Honorable Chris Hilbert – Chair (*Late arrival*)
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille – Vice Chair
The Honorable Andreas Addison – Member
The Honorable Parker Agelasto – Member
The Honorable Kim Gray – Member
The Honorable Michael Jones – Member (*Late arrival*)
The Honorable Kristen Larson – Member
The Honorable Ellen Robertson – Member
The Honorable Reva Trammell – Member
Lou Brown Ali, Council Chief of Staff
Debra Bowles, Assistant City Clerk
Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney
Allen Jackson, City Attorney
Candice Reid, City Clerk

Call to Order

Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Evacuation Announcement and Citizen Speaker Guidelines

Assistant City Clerk Debra Bowles 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.

Approval of the Minutes

Member Parker Agelasto moved to approve the meeting minutes of November 5, 2018, which was seconded and unanimously approved. (Hilbert and Jones not yet arrived)

Reports from City Administration, Council Staff and Other Parties

There were no reports.

Reports of Standing Committees

There were no reports.

Consideration of Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Similar Entities

There were no appointments for consideration.

Paper(s) for Consideration

The following ordinance was considered:

ORD. 2018-297

To create the Navy Hill Development Advisory Commission and announce the Council's intent to hold public hearings, all for the purpose of providing for the Council's consideration of a development proposal in the area generally bounded on the west by N. 5th St., on the north by E. Leigh St., on the east by N. 10th St., and on the south by E. Marshall St. (As Amended)

*Member Kim Gray introduced **ORD. 2018-297** stating that the intent of the proposed legislation is for an independent third party to review the Navy Hill development proposal and to offer Council recommendations prior to Council making decisions regarding the development proposal.*

Opposition

Felicia Coles stated that she was in support of the Navy Hill development but was in opposition to the development of a commission that would review the proposed project.

Freddie Robertson expressed opposition to the proposed legislation stating that the plans for the development have already been reviewed by administration and the creation of a commission would delay the opportunities for employment that are needed.

Dante Holton expressed opposition to the proposed legislation stating that employment for citizens is needed now and the Navy Hill project would allow immediate employment for many.

Tom Katosich stated that he agrees with transparency and having citizens understand the total impact of this project; however, employment is needed and Council needs to move forward with the Navy Hill development.

Duke Dodson expressed opposition to the proposed legislation stating the creation of a commission could be well intended; however, a three to six month delay of the Navy Hill project could end all real estate deals that are currently in place. Mr. Dodson also stated that with a project of this magnitude, an increase of expenses could be added due to the delay; therefore, the proposed cost would not be valid.

Al Bowers spoke on behalf of Unanimity Alliance, stating that there have been many projects within the city in which diverse individuals and/or businesses were not contracted; however, planners of this project have been inclusive in the conception and planning of the project, allowing various individuals to provide input. Mr. Bowers also stated that the administration has protocols in place to evaluate the project and Council will have an opportunity to evaluate it once it is formally introduced.

Kenneth Jones, Prestige Construction Group, Inc. president, stated that the investors of Navy Hill invited businesses and individuals to provide input in the development project, and he believes they will guarantee diversity throughout the development process. Mr. Jones further stated that the project does not need to be delayed an additional five to six months to allow a new commission time to vet the project. Mr. Jones also stated that the city has paid employees to review and evaluate proposals.

Member Michael Jones arrived at 5:15 p.m. and was seated.

Chief Administrative Officer Selena Cuffee-Glenn informed the committee that administration will

assist Council with its evaluation of the project.

Chair Chris Hilbert arrived at 5:21 p.m. and was seated.

Member Kim Gray asked how much money administration spent to review the proposed Navy Hill development project and asked when administration received the proposal.

Ms. Cuffee-Glenn stated that administration received a response to the request for proposal (RFP) this February and administration met with Council in June to provide a timeline of the review process. Ms. Cuffee-Glenn informed the committee that a thorough review was completed in July and August with updates to the RFP reviewed in September. Ms. Cuffee-Glenn noted that the RFP specifically included terms addressing affordable housing, employment availability, the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) transit center and Minority Business Development (MBD) participation. Ms. Cuffee-Glenn also stated that administration reviewed additional information with Council in October, and conversations with Council members have occurred as negotiations continue. Ms. Cuffee-Glenn further stated that administration will not make a recommendation to Council unless the city's assets are protected and administration can be assured that what is promised by investors will be delivered.

Member Gray stated that she has provided committee members with information regarding the purpose of an advisory committee, as provided in the City Code and a copy of an article that references a Downtown Project Advisory Committee to a council in California. Ms. Gray noted that Council does not have a budget that will allow for an independent advisor; however, Council does have a citizenry that has expertise, which could review the project proposals and advise Council of particulars within the proposals.

*Vice Chair Cynthia Newbille thanked Ms. Gray for the introduction of **ORD. 2018-297**, but stated that she is not in support of a commission. Ms. Newbille also stated that Council has a responsibility to citizens to fully and properly vet the proposal, to engage citizens in the discussion of the proposal, and to make a confident decision regarding the proposal. Ms. Newbille voiced the desire for a comprehensive review of the Navy Hill proposal, community engagement and conversation, and Council's ability to make an educated decision regarding the development project.*

Member Ellen Robertson noted that Council is the body that will make the final decision regarding the Navy Hill development, verifying that all financial components are met and that all requirements of the development agreement have been delivered. Ms. Robertson stated that she is confident that administration will present the development project to Council after all issues have been resolved; however, she believes that Council needs professionals to review the project and advise Council of possible risks that may have been overlooked initially. Member Robertson also stated although professional consultation is necessary for Council, a commission is not.

Member Kristen Larson thanked the constituents that made statements regarding the advisory commission and noted that many constituents not present at the meeting have voiced support of the commission. Ms. Larson stated that now is the opportunity for Council to engage in discussion with the public, and having an independent review with the incorporation of a commission can all be done. Ms. Larson also stated that many of the mistakes that have occurred with prior project deals are the result of insufficient vetting and discussion. Ms. Larson further stated that Council needs to use all the tools at its disposal to thoroughly review the Navy Hill project without rushing.

Member Andreas Addison stated that Council has the resources needed to review the project and the ability to request additional resources to engage in the discussion of the development deal. Mr. Addison also stated that open discussions among members of Council allow for transparency throughout the entire vetting process. Mr. Addison requested that the ninety days be given to

Council, not a commission, as the discussion needs to be transparent on all aspects of the project, and he would prefer receiving advice directly and not through a commission.

Member Reva Trammell questioned why there are concerns regarding the creation of a commission and why there is a rush to begin the Navy Hill development project without vetting all areas of the project prior to any construction. Ms. Trammell stated that the commission will serve as a good resource to Council for information and advice, and the body should appreciate a commission that is willing to take on the challenge. Ms. Trammell requested to be added as a co-patron to the proposed legislation.

Member Michael Jones stated that he will not sign off on or agree to anything that he does not completely understand. Mr. Jones also stated that as soon as legislation regarding the project is introduced, he will hold and attend informational meetings on the Navy Hill project. Mr. Jones stressed the importance that both Council and administration be transparent throughout the entire process.

Chair Chris Hilbert expressed disappointment that some of his Council colleagues were against the creation of a commission, and stated that he is surprised there were no constituents present to speak in support of the commission.

Member Gray reiterated that the commission would be established for the purpose of obtaining advice and recommendations for Council, as it is Council's fiduciary responsibility to protect the citizens' best interest in all decisions made for the city.

Member Parker Agelasto questioned the city attorney regarding the advertising requirements for legislation regarding the Navy Hill project. Mr. Agelasto asked if there is a summary or a complete list of all necessary legislation forthcoming.

City Attorney Allen Jackson responded that there is no summary or listing of required legislation; however, he stated that Council previously adopted an ordinance requiring that all relevant legislation pertaining to economic development projects, be introduced prior to Council consideration. Mr. Jackson also stated that due to the size and complexity of the Navy Hill development, he anticipates providing Council with legal analysis of the forthcoming legislation.

*Following further discussion, **Member Kim Gray moved to end debate concerning ORD. 2018-297, which was seconded and approved:** Ayes 8, Jones, Larson, Agelasto, Gray, Trammell, Addison, Newbille and Hilbert. Noes 1, Robertson.*

Member Kristen Larson moved to forward ORD. 2018-297 to the December 10, 2018 Council meeting with recommendation to approve, which was seconded and approved: Ayes 5, Larson, Agelasto, Gray, Trammell, and Hilbert. Noes 4, Jones, Robertson, Addison and Newbille.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

Discussion Item(s)

There were no discussion items for consideration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.