

Advisory Council Meeting Notes

Date: March 14, 2018, 4 P.M.
Location: Storefront for Community Design
205 E. Broad St, Richmond, VA 23219



Call to Order

Roll Call – all here

Chair's Comments

Review of Notes

- Notes from the January 11, 2018 Meeting
Approved by all.

Director's Report

- Richmond 300 Binders
Binders will be arriving next meeting
- Future Meeting Schedule
Schedule provided at meeting. Meetings will be the 2nd Wednesday of the month.
- Engagement Consultant
Don Edwards has managed engagement processes for master planning, small area plans, and site plans all over the country. Justice and Sustainability Associates is about promoting more just and sustainable communities. Don is a mediator – helping people reach agreement and lower conflict levels. Projects move forward with consensus and agreement. JSA wants to be the people who help elevate planning in the City of Richmond. JSA wants people to see their fingerprints on the plan – that's how plans get implemented. JSA will have a 15 minute introductory call with each member of the Advisory Council.

Public Comment

Open time for the general public to comment on items not on the agenda.

Omari Al'Qadaffi has concerns about the make up the council and how long members of the council have been in the city and any conflict of interest the members may have. Glad to see Burt Pinnock here who worked on a plan for East View – which was a good plan because it created land use recommendations that are inclusive. He hopes that the members of this group incorporate recommendations from the Office of Community Wealth Building and the Analysis on the Impediments of Fair Housing Choice. He wants to make sure we don't further displace black residents of the city who have been placed in pockets of poverty.

Damian Pitt responded asking for the names of the reports.

Mr. Ukrop asked for copies of the reports.

Mr. Poole asked if we can provide the reports on line

Mr. Olinger said yes.

Nicholas Smith asked about the implementation of existing small area plans - specifically re-zoning for VUU/Chamberlayne.

Mr. Olinger said that PDR is filling many positions in the department and he hopes to have people in those positions - drafting rezonings is one of the positions - in middle-to-late spring.

Greg Lucyk questions why there is no traffic study as part of the Master Plan - there's a chaotic situation at Libbie/Grove/Patterson.

Mr. Olinger said there was a multi-modal plan in the past - Richmond Connects (2012). He has heard more about parking than traffic. So that's why PDR is developing a Parking Study. DPW may attend future meetings when we decide to focus on specific topic areas.

Mr. Poole mentioned that the Insights Report mentions traffic and transportation. It's good to have public comment to remind us of these topics.

Ryan Rinn gave an overview of Storefront - a legal aid of design. Can ask Mr. Pinnock or me for more questions.

Jer'Mykeal McCoy asked Mr. Al'Qadaffi "what are your qualms about the council?"

Mr. Al'Qadaffi said that he doesn't want to talk about it in person.

Mr. Poole said that we wanted diversity in thought, race, thought, location of living, time in Richmond, and we thought about the top issues of poverty and affordable housing all the while. And we welcome to attend all of these meetings.

Mr. Al'Qadaffi said a lot of the city was surprised that he wasn't accepted to be a member of the Advisory Council.

Mr. Poole told Mr. Al'Qadaffi that all meetings are open to the public and he is welcome to attend every meeting.

Mr. Edwards introduced Tasha Chambers, a lifelong resident of Richmond, who is his colleague.

A community member asked how long the process is. Two years? When will the next meetings be in 2019?

Mr. Poole said that those meetings will be determined later in 2018.

Presentations & Discussion

I. *Parking Study*

Presentation on the *Parking Study* being developed by DESMAN, a parking management firm. This same presentation was given to the City Planning Commission on February 20, 2018.

Mark Olinger gave an overview of the Parking Study and mentioned that there is also a circulation study for Scott's Addition.

Louise Lockett asked how the seven areas were chosen. She pointed out that all of the areas, except Manchester, are north of the river.

Mr. Olinger said that parking isn't quite the issue that is hindering developing in most of the Southside. Most of the areas included in the Parking Study were built before we had strip commercial zoning in the city. The parking issue that we may have in the Southside might be that we have too many parking spots.

Gray O'Dwyer can we circle back to DESMAN and have more work from them?

Mr. Olinger said we could potentially amend the contract.

Mr. Pitt you mentioned that some areas may have an excess of parking - wouldn't we want to look at those areas too?

Mr. Olinger said - yes that's true - but that's a question for the Master Plan - what's the development we'd like to see in that area to right-size parking to the use.

Mr. Poole said as we proceed in this process we want to imagine what some areas of the city can be come - for example Scott's Addition and Manchester have changed so dramatically even without a major change to the Master Plan.

Mr. Olinger said that we have made some changes in the zoning that reduce the parking requiremenst.

II. *Insights Report*

Break into three groups to discuss the draft *Insights Report* in a smaller format with facilitation by Planning Staff.

- Knowing the purpose of this document, are we fulfilling the purpose?
- Is it easy to understand? Is it easy to read?
- What are we missing? Is it comprehensive enough?
- Where do we have too much information? What can be omitted?
- Is there anything misleading?
- Are there other graphics that can be added could helpful?
- Is it a good balance of graphics and texts?
- Is it useful to you? The public?

Notes from Table 1 – Facilitator: Marianne Pitt, Scribe: Josh Son, Advisory Council Members: Damian Pitt, Max Hepp-Buchanan, Joyce Knight, Meredith Weiss, Gray O'Dwyer, Ted Ukrop, LaToya Gray

Do you feel it fulfills its purpose?

There's an important balance that needs to be struck, page 24 – there are places in the city where \$72k a year is not enough to support a household – perhaps we need to have facts to back this information up

-this fact needs context, can these facts stand on their own without context?

The City has many plans, it may be good to put all the plans upfront as we do with the riverfront plan, etc. so that it's all available upfront

-Including stuff that Omari brought up (anti-poverty commission documents)

-include VCU plans

-One way to keep the document streamlined – have a paragraph and then reference them to another document vs. having a comprehensive plan should include all the information, it shouldn't be just a paragraph

Would it be helpful to identify “walls” such as VDOT or things we can't change, FAA guidelines, etc. so that people can understand why we can't do certain things.

How do we get more inclusive?

-perhaps get more civic associations involved more

-there most likely are community leaders that we haven't touched yet that could provide a wealth of information, we need quips from people to add context, additional qualitative data

Is there a way we can organize information according to themes, like page 7 – there's different color schemes for different topics

Are missing anything on technology? How do we plan for that in the next 15 years, autonomous cars, fiber optics, wifi hotspots, etc.

-how affordable housing may not be as quick to adopting new technology

-Autonomous vehicles can impact the city largely on different levels, physical, programming, zoning, parking issues, etc.

-(Nicholas, not on AC) planning for autonomous may be a good idea, but it may not be worth planning for it since it's still in its beginning stages

-Can we plan for things we don't want to have happen to us i.e. early stage autonomous vehicles still cause accidents when someone is in driver seat and they fall asleep at the wheel

-for example, what do we do with parking decks when we don't need parking spaces anymore?

Are we meeting the baseline technology for a future/smart city? Should this be a big section we need to include baseline info?

Guiding Principles are needed

Is there safety, is there economic development, there's nothing here that explains what we should focus on

Preservation is what makes Richmond authentic, is there a way to say this?

-How do balance new and old

-The great things about Richmond, historic preservation, environment, etc.

We should have information on why people stay and what's caused its growth over the years

What information will help us determine how much we'll grow?

If you were to mirror the density of the fan across the city, the population would be 950k people

(Nicholas) - we could go out into community and ask "what does Richmond do well?" and "what can Richmond do better?"

There's a few data points on transportation: what % doesn't drive, what % of income is spent on transit, what are % of trips traveled in (insert mode)

Natural resources talks about pervious land, impervious land, then utilities talk about stormwater management system but there's no connection made between the two.

-climate change and energy part is under developed, borderline self-congratulatory

-River access needs to be addressed in the plan as well in the natural resources section

-Do we address food deserts?

-Sarah is trying to get the most up-to-date information on food deserts

-Systems of measurement - are we using grocery stores as a type of measurement or is it acreage for things like impervious surfaces, etc. perhaps identify the types of measurement i.e. population, other things that could inform organization

-The format is great, very readable and easy to digest

-It would be appreciated if we knew what hardcopies we need to bring or if they'll be provided

-Perhaps having a Technical advisory subcommittee for subject-matter experts

Notes from Table 2 – Facilitator: Maritza Pechin, Scribe: Tasha Chambers, Advisory Council Members: Bernard Harkless, Jennifer Mullen, Monica Lozano, Jer-Mykeal McCoy, Rodney Poole, Cyane Crump, Olivya Wilson, Kendra Norrell

- An abbreviated version of the report may be useful, but the current report is full of good information.*
- A final version of the report is planned for April 2018; final comments are due by Mar. 28. This will address the amount of missing information and placeholders.*
- How do we spread the word about the report/Master Plan Update process?*
- There should be more emphasis on historic preservation v. murals.*
- How do we engage schools in this process?*
- The report and process should clearly state that the Master Plan will focus on the city of Richmond only, not the Richmond region.*
- How can we visually dive deeper on public housing v. low-income housing?*
- VHDA, RRHA and Richmond Region Tourism may have beneficial info to tighten up the report*
- When complete, the map books will be a good resource.*
- Page 25 of Insight Report could be reworked.*
- Figure 9 in report may not be accurate.*
- An exploration of tax credit properties and special use permits will be a good addition to report.*
- The Master Plan Update will help inform policy but we are not policymakers.*

Rodney noted that the report that it is overwhelming and the task seems daunting. In addition, he added there were a lot of placeholders and seems like much more work is needed. Rodney asked when placeholders will be filled?

Maritza responded that all comments due on Mar 28 and the next month the report will be updated.

Jer-Mykeal asked how we (Council/PDR) get the word out about this (the report)? Maritza responded that she would lean on the Council's expertise on this but wants to be sure the data is correct.

Monica noted that the Insights Report will help inform people and was full of good info... The length was not too long to her. Cyane added that the report had good info. Demonstrates how neighborhoods are changing.

Maritza asked Cyane what was meant by that.

Cyane replied that the information while good was still questionable in "Figure 9" Cyane wanted to know PDR planned to use this information going forward? She added that the page should be removed. In addition, she wanted to know where was information on historic preservation.

Jennifer added that we this under the economic development page.

Maritza noted that PDR is creating maps for each district, which includes the historic information/data.

Cyane commented that there was not much mention of historic preservation but lots on murals. Jennifer agreed. There are less murals and more historic preservation in Richmond. Historic preservation drives the art scene...murals.

Maritza decided to hold off on publishing the maps until all were ready so people were not offended. This document (Insights Report) is intended to be high level. The map book is more granular. It was agreed to remove the typology map.

Jennifer noted that growth patterns were a bit difficult to understand and Monica stated that page 25's map was a bit confusing. Maritza responded that it's probably a formatting challenge; the description is on page 24

Jer-Mykeal had questions about the presence of public housing in this document. Jer-Mykeal asked if PDR knew how many of these residents live in public housing.

Cyane added that RRHA is redeveloping Faye Towers. Olivya stated that she heard the question differently. How will this affect the public housing residents? Do we have maps that reflect how neighborhoods will change?

Maritza responded that our actions can help inform policy. We can reach out to RRHA about demographics.

Olivya asked about those who do not living in public housing. Where are other low-income people living. Jennifer suggested that we have to distinguish public housing v. low-income housing.

Maritza stated that 92,000 people spend more than 30% of their income on housing...where are they living? On page 22, Figure 14, it shows you how cost-burdened they are. Costs are rising for those who are poor.

Cyane asked if we should we compare our cities to other cities? Maritza responded that Richmond is a touch city to compare because we cannot annex land from surrounding counties. Louisville for example is not the best city. The ones that the CRC picked are not truly comparable. We can remove Figure 15.

Jer-Mykeal asked if schools were part of the convo? Maritza responded that it's been harder to get info from schools. Using DC as an example, they used to sell their school land.

We are continually trying to get info from the school. We are looking for all the school info...what is the enrollment? What are the trends? How are kids getting to school? Why? From a city planning standing, we know about new building and renovations. We don't know if an apt building has x population but schools do know. That's why we want that data. The Master Plan wants to put its hands around lots of things but we don't have the info to inform.

Rodney agreed that that has been an issue. Jennifer and Cyane added that school data is important to the master plan update.

Maritza noted that one can track eviction rates in Madison, WI. It usually means that kids are moving from school to school because they have unstable housing.

Rodney - On page 24, more than _____ goes into affordable housing (missing info). This is very important news and the most compelling sentence in the entire document.

Bernard asked how many vouchers RRHA has that are used and not used? Having that info will help frame the conversation on affordable housing

Maritza agreed that that info helps to introduce the idea of public housing. Also, suggested that the Council please let her know if we are using terminology we do not understand.

Olivya asked about anchors. Maritza responded that it is an institution that is not moving; VCU, VUU and UR are examples of anchor institutions. Arts and educational facilities hardly move but revitalize neighborhoods. Maritza added that we don't have time to do a comprehensive plan on universities, but would like to know how they have shifted. Didn't know how to capture that.

Cyane stated that Richmond Region Tourism may have information Rodney added that anchors do change. UR used to be a sleepy Baptist college but after the Robins donation it is now 3x bigger. It's totally different than in 1969 when he graduated. More students are coming from the North.

Maritza stated that was interesting but she did not know how to track that. Does that change our city? Do they stay?

Cyane responded that assessed property values may help with that.

Maritza commented that PDR could update the assessed value map with an indicator of tax-exempt money

Omari (public participant) mentioned VCU acquires more land there is less land for Richmond. He thought there was something to pay attention to. He

encouraged the Council to look at special use permits to look at trends from the previous master plan.

Maritza added that we will have a map for special use permits.

Bernard asked for clarification on the affordable housing map? Maritza answered that it shows public housing info in the district. Some districts have no public housing.

Bernard responded that VHDA may be helpful with this.

Kendra asked how PDR defined the "region". She noticed that PDR included Henricus...how does that impact Richmond? Maritza agreed that PDR should be clearer on that. Rodney agreed.

Maritza asked the Council to put additional comments about the report in Excel. Or what works best for them. Maritza stated that she wants to have updated info in books for the Council at the next meeting.

Allison (public participant) asked what is the goal with affordable housing map? Maritza responded that the map is the existing conditions. You're talking about deconcentrating poverty. But right now, this map is just what exists today. This helps inform this process.

Cyane asked for clarification about input from residents on housing. Maritza responded that she does want to get opinions.

Omari encouraged the Council to take a look at tax credit properties that have expired. Which units are affordable? When are properties will be increasing over the 20 years?

Maritza stated that she has that info. But as we develop policy ideas, we have to determine if it is something that can go into the Master Plan process. A recommendation could just be further study. We might have to commission additional studies. We have to have an end point.

Omari concluded that that info was pretty important. Data is important.

Notes from Table 3 – Facilitator: William Palmquist, Scribe: Yessenia Revilla, Advisory Council Members: Preston Lloyd, Burt Pinnock, Jonathan Bibbs, Elyana Javaheri, Louise Lockett, Ashley Hawkins

Comments and Questions

- The introduction should point out what the reader is going to get from this document?
Will: This is a document will help to place everyone in the same page when we start the engaging process of the MP. This*

document will help us to start with facts and not misleading information

- The introduction should explain the intention of the document and the goal of the document. The table of content is not enough to guide the readers*
- Move the box on page 5, “Why should I care about Richmond 300” to the introduction page*
- The introduction also should explain why we are updating the MP, the inspirational goal. Not just because we have to satisfy the State Code*
- How The Capital Regional Collaborative Project (CRCP) is link to the MP, please explain that connection in this document. For instance the benchmarks used by the CRCP how are we going to relate them to the MP benchmarks*
- On page 8, 9 also please consider the Economic History of the City. Explain that the Richmond was at some point the core of a lot of big factories. Example Scott’s addition history...*
- Page 20, How will the Urban Design Typology will useful for the MP? Please explain in the document a good use of the Urban design Typology*
- Should we have a section to address the assumption of the data shown? For example, the projection of numbers of new jobs and in what areas?*
- Page 7, time line needs to be updated, not enough time for hosting the community meetings*
- Page 22, why was the city of Akron was chosen? It doesn’t make sense, Akron has a completely different issues*
- Page 23, May be helpful to include more information about why those cities were chosen to compare to Richmond. It is important to point out what these cities have in common, i.e. that they cannot grow physically and the fact that no annexation will occur any time soon...*
- The document is missing information about education at the university level. Richmond has a large population of VCU students. The fact that we attract this large number of students from all over the country should be shown. For example, an statement like this.....these are the top three majors in VCU and this is the projection of jobs (enrollment?) in those majors.*
- What is the relation between the VCU Master Plan and the City MP?*
- Since VCU does not pay taxes to the city if VCU is still growing are we going to lose those taxes? What does that means for the city?*
- There is a misconception about taxes of VCU. Please explain how VCU pay taxes (by use, etc) so there is not misconceptions*
- Color label for each section of the document*
- Page 24, this document also needs to show the number of public housing in the city and explain what that number means to the city. We have a massive concentration of public housing. Also, Point out as a bullet point that the major’s goal is to have 3,000 affordable housing*

units by the year of add a map with location of public housing to have something more visual

- Will the MP develop particular measures to measure goals? and how do we make sure following administration will keep measuring those goals?*
- “Where we work” (page 32) should be before of the section “How we move around” (page 26) so there is a correlation*
- Information about our historic district and our historic resources is missing in this document?*
- Public school information is missing in this document?*
- Homeless information is missing in this document? Please check the website homeagain.com*
- Please include a calendar in the website. A calendar with meetings days, time and location, for MP meetings and meetings that the Advisory Council and other folks would be interested in*
- The south side (district 9), Council person has done a lot for the community. Please consider to have one of this meetings in the south side (perhaps at the community center)*
- Additional comments can be collected via email with the comments spreadsheet*

Pros

- The document is pretty easy to read!!!!*

Adjournment