

Advisory Council Notes

Date: August 14, 2019, 4 P.M.
Location: Main Library, 101 E. Franklin St



Members Present: Mr. Rodney Poole, Chair
Mr. Burt Pinnock, Vice-Chair
Ms. Mayda Colón
Ms. Cyane Crump
Ms. LaToya Gray
Mr. Bernard Harkless
Ms. Joyce Knight
Ms. Louise Lockett Gordon
Ms. Monica Lozano
Mr. Jer'Mykeal McCoy
Ms. Gray O'Dwyer
Mr. Damian Pitt
Mr. Ted Ukrop
Ms. Olivya Wilson

Members Absent: Mr. Jonathan Bibbs
Ms. Ashley Hawkins
Mr. Max Hepp-Buchanan, Vice-Chair
Mr. T. Preston Lloyd
Ms. Jennifer Mullen
Ms. Kendra Norrell
Ms. Meredith Weiss

Staff Present: Mr. Mark Olinger, Director of Department of Planning and Development Review (PDR)
Mr. William Palmquist, PDR
Ms. Maritza Pechin, AECOM/PDR
Ms. Marianne Pitts, PDR
Ms. Yessenia Revilla, PDR

4:05 PM Call to Order

Mr. Poole called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Mr. Poole thanked the Advisory Council (AC) and audience for attending. He alerted the public to two opportunities for public comment. He noted that the next meeting of the Advisory Council is September 11, 2019.

Mr. Poole introduced Mayda Colón as a new member of the Advisory Council. He noted that unfortunately, Elyana Javaheri moved to Northern Virginia; and per the AC's by-laws, vacancies are filled with approval from the three chairs, the director,

the Mayor's office, and the CAO's office. He stated that Ms. Colón was selected because she is designer, applied for the AC, and served on the Environment Working Group like Ms. Javaheri did. He noted that Ms. Colón's bio is attached to the agenda.

Mr. Poole asked for comments on the June 12, 2019, Meeting Notes. No corrections or edits were presented by the AC.

Director's Report

Mr. Olinger provided the Director's Report. He noted that DESMAN's parking study presentation will occur on August 19, 1:30pm, at the City Planning Commission Meeting on the 5th floor of City Hall. He noted that the presentation and also VHB's circulation study for Scott's Addition will be uploaded to the website. Mr. Poole asked if the circulation study was a part of the Richmond 300 process. Mr. Olinger noted that it is a joint effort with the Department of Public Works who funded the circulation study.

Mr. Poole asked for Mr. Olinger's thoughts on the Working Group Summit. Mr. Olinger noted that there was great conversation, and it was great to see so many people attend the meeting.

Public Comment #1

There was no public comment.

Presentations & Discussion

Engagement Update

Ms. Pitts provided an engagement update which included a draft plan for Community Consultation #2 (CC2). Mr. Poole asked each AC member to recommend an organization that has a meeting at which staff can briefly present on Richmond 300 during CC2. Ms. Lockett asked if AC members could attend the meetings instead of staff. Ms. Pechin agreed that was a great idea and noted that staff will train the AC on what to present at the next AC meeting. Ms. Lozano asked if there is information about CC2 on the City's website, and Ms. Pechin respond that there will be.

Center for Urban and Regional Analysis's (CURA) Land Use, Housing, and Demographic Analysis Report

Ms. Pechin presented on the CURA's *Land Use, Housing, and Demographic Analysis Report* focusing on the population projections and the market analysis related to the development of grocery stores.

Mr. Poole noted that this report is two years old and asked if CURA continues to track this. Mr. Palmquist respond that he does not think there would be much change in the analysis.

Several AC members questioned why a grocery store could not be developed in Manchester given the amount of development occurring in the area. Mr. Ukrop noted

that there needs to be high volume to make money in the grocery business and that the grocery stores that have recently been developed in the food deserts such as the new Market at 25th Street have been developed using public or philanthropic support. Mr. Harkless added that the units that are being developed in Manchester are just getting built and have not been leased so they may not be considered by a grocer looking at the area. Ms. O'Dwyer asked if the grocery store model being considered is a big box grocery store or a model that considers smaller bodega establishments like Union Market. Mr. Olinger noted that while small establishments have a great selection and vibe, they are often expensive for consumers. Ms. Colón noted that if a grocery store will not come to a location, the focus should be on access and connections to existing stores. Mr. McCoy asked how many people are needed to support a grocery store as there are a lot of people in south Richmond. Ms. Wilson noted that she was confused like Mr. McCoy as she knows that people will travel across the county line to go to the Kroger because there is not a store within the city. Mr. Olinger noted that Richmond 300 needs to think of what can be done to keep locations on the short list for grocery store locations.

Draft Richmond 300 Content - Sticky Topics and Bold Ideas

Ms. Pechin introduced the next item which is a discussion of “Sticky Topics” that have emerged in conversations about Richmond 300. The AC members chose on which topics they wanted to have additional discussion.

1. *Should the plan call for amending the zoning ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by-right? If so, where?*

Mr. Pitt noted that he supports allowing ADUs in all residential districts. He stated that not allowing ADUs is the epitome of NIMBYism.

Mr. Poole stated the ADUs are the low hanging fruit. He noted that 5 years prior he did not support an ADU that was before Planning Commission, but he now sees ADUs as a new product to accommodate growth.

Mr. Pitt noted that it should be acknowledged that the development of ADUs will not solve the housing crisis nor dramatically impact the community. Mr. Poole stated that within a half mile of his house 45 units could be available.

Ms. Lozano stated that regulations for ADUs need to be well thought out to limit nuisance complaints. Mr. Poole stated that these types of regulations exist today.

Ms. O'Dwyer noted that the development of ADUs will contribute to gentrification by creating a landlord class.

Mr. Olinger stated that the number of people building housing is down.

Ms. Colón commented that if the city is to become denser, she would prefer homeowners profiting from it by building ADUs rather than developers.

2. *What is the right approach with the industrial areas?*

Ms. O'Dwyer stated that she would like to see a riverfront park in the proposed Southside river adjacent industrial area. Ms. Lozano agreed and noted that there needs to be improved access to the River in this area. Ms. Crump stated that she supports improved River access on both the north and south sides of the River. She noted that the James River Park Master Plan includes a number of greenways to improve this access. Mr. Pitt inquired if there were any City easements to provide access, and Ms. Pechin responded no. Mr. Olinger noted that conservation easements could be considered.

Ms. O'Dwyer asked if industrial needs to be highway adjacent and segregated from other uses.

Mr. Harkless noted that he is hesitant to make the proposed industrial area a park as people needed jobs, and there needs to be a consideration of the workforce development potential of the area. Ms. O'Dwyer responded that tourism related to a riverfront park will generate jobs. Mr. Pitt stated that there is room for both and noted that the quarries are not permanent uses.

3. *Should a goal of the Master Plan process be to reduce the number of Special Use Permits (SUP) that the City reviews?*

Ms. Crump explained that the up-zonings which would occur as a result of the plan would limit the number of SUPs which would reduce community input on projects. She expressed concern that the community's voice would be lost all together. She noted that the community still needs to be a part of the process whether it is through requiring a community consultation for projects, implementing overlays, or using another tool.

Mr. Pitt stated that the community has a voice in the Richmond 300 process and will have a voice in any re-zonings. He noted the point of the master plan is to set the tone and that the plan should not be re-adjudicated with every development proposal. Mr. Olinger noted the result of the Richmond 300 process is the land use map, and there will be more conversations about zone changes and updating the zoning code.

Ms. O'Dwyer proposed a happy medium which would require community input on proposal which involve demolition.

4. *What is the future of the Route 1 South Corridor? The depth of the lots along Route 1 South may not allow real commercial to come in. Route 1 South is 6 lanes wide – should it be that wide?*

Mr. Olinger noted that he would like to improve the Jefferson Davis Corridor but does not know how. Mr. Poole asked if this can be accomplished with land use categories.

Mr. Pitt recommended focusing on locations of future transit stops, maybe not the whole corridor.

Ms. Lockett Gordon noted that Richmond 300 should think regionally in terms of bike, pedestrian, and transit connections.

Ms. O'Dwyer asked about how much control the City has in terms of the width of the roadway as she sees potential in reducing the roadway width to add more depth to the adjacent parcels. Mr. Olinger responded that it could happen. Ms. Pechin stated that the roadway width could also be reduced to accommodate bike, pedestrian, and transit improvements.

Mr. Poole asked if the sticky topics could be part of CC2.

Public Comment #2

Ms. Genni Sasnett, a Church Hill resident, noted that she lived in Logan Circle, and a Whole Foods came because it was on a commuter route. In regard to ADUs, she noted that the homes in Church Hill lend themselves to ADUs which would provide extra income for an aging population. She asked if a grant program could be established for the construction of ADUs. In regard to the potential reduction of the number of SUPs, she noted the community would grieve the loss of having a voice as they would always like to have some say. She noted that new residents would not have been a part of the Richmond 300 process.

Ms. Susan Miller, a Fan resident, expressed her support of reclaiming riverfront for the public.

Adjournment

Mr. McCoy commented that this was a productive meeting with valuable conversations.

Mr. Poole adjourned the meeting at 5:54pm.