

Advisory Council Notes

Date: July 11, 2018, 4 P.M.
Location: Main Library, Basement
101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23219



Members Present: Mr. Jonathan Bibbs
Mr. Rodney Poole, Chair
Mr. Max Hepp-Buchanan, Vice-Chair
Ms. Cyane Crump
Ms. Latoya Gray
Mr. Bernard Harkless
Ms. Ashley Hawkins
Ms. Elyana Javaheri
Ms. Joyce Knight
Mr. T. Preston Lloyd
Ms. Louise Lockett
Ms. Monica Lozano
Mr. Jer'Mykeal McCoy
Ms. Jennifer Mullen
Ms. Kendra Norrell
Ms. Gray O'Dwyer
Mr. Damian Pitt
Mr. Ted Ukrop
Ms. Meredith Weiss
Ms. Olivya Wilson

Members Absent: Mr. Burt Pinnock, Vice-Chair

Staff Present: Ms. Tasha Chambers, Justice and Sustainability Associates (JSA)
Mr. Don Edwards, JSA
Ms. Kimberly Chen, Planning and Development Review (PDR)
Ms. Anne Darby, PDR
Mr. Mark Olinger, PDR
Mr. William Palmquist, PDR
Ms. Maritza Pechin, AECOM/PDR
Ms. Marianne Pitts, PDR
Ms. Yessenia Revilla, PDR
Mr. Josh Son, PDR

3:30 PM Room opens

4:01 PM Call to Order

Mr. Poole called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Mr. Poole asked for comments on the June 13, 2018 Meeting Notes. Ms. Pitts noted that the corrections received via email have been incorporated into the notes before the Advisory Council (AC). No other corrections or edits were presented by the AC.

Director's Report

I. Map Booklet

Mr. Olinger noted that the map booklet will be available electronically before the next AC meeting.

II. Parking Study

Mr. Olinger reported that the results from the meetings on the parking study are available online and that they will be synthesized into a report to be presented to the Planning Commission in August. The final tally for attendance at the meetings was around 150 people between the seven meetings. The second round of meetings is to be held in October; and prior to the public meetings, the consultant will be meeting with targeted stakeholder groups. Mr. Olinger noted that there were many comments made at the meetings about transportation issues in general that will help to inform the Planning Commission's decisions regarding transportation moving forward.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan asked about the Fan Neighborhood part of the parking study. Mr. Olinger spoke on the need to expand the study to include from Cary Street to the Downtown Expressway and also to include West Grace Street and the need to further study the parking conditions relating to the Main and Robinson corridors in the evenings. Mr. Poole noted that if evening parking counts are needed this work should be done now when there is adequate sunlight until 8pm.

Public Comment #1

Mr. Omari Al-Qadaffi, a housing, transportation, and food policy advocate in the City of Richmond, gave a presentation on Land Use and Displacement in Richmond. The presentation is available on the Richmond 300 website: (http://richmond300.com/marketingMasterPlan/sites/default/files/Richmond300_PresentationByOmariAlQadaffi_180712.pdf).

Mr. McCoy asked for clarification regarding who was responsible for the redlining described in the presentation. Mr. Al-Qadaffi responded that he was referring to the National Home Loan Corporation.

Ms. Crump thanked Mr. Al-Qadaffi for his presentation.

Mr. Ukrop spoke about the rent burden and the high eviction rates in the City. He asked about cities that might be able to provide a good model to solve the problem of concentrated poverty and equitable development. Mr. Al-Qadaffi said that to his knowledge there are not any examples of successes in this area.

Ms. Gray asked about what happened to the tenants in the homes of the 109 scattered sites which were recently auctioned off by RRHA. Mr. Al-Qadaffi stated that the homes were not vacant and that women who lived in some of the homes for 30 years were kicked out.

Mr. McCoy asked how the cost of deferred maintenance has affected the redevelopment of Creighton Court.

A member of the gallery who works for Richmond Opportunities Inc. brought the efforts of the Urban Institute and their development efforts to the attention to the AC. She noted that HUD is moving to more housing vouchers and often applicants who qualify for a voucher through the HUD application process struggle through the second application process with property managers who accept vouchers. This second application process effectively limits the choices of those who receive the vouchers.

Mr. Lloyd asked if the director of Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) would be allowed to present to the AC to allow for a discussion of the issues raised by Mr. Al-Qadaffi. Mr. Poole encouraged Mr. Lloyd to reach out to RRHA and offer time for a presentation during the public comment portion of the agenda.

Engagement Effort Update:

Ms. Chambers provided an update on the ambassador program and media day. She noted that the number of registered ambassadors has risen from 75 to 102 ambassadors. She noted the next training will be tomorrow night at Goodwill Industries on Midlothian Turnpike. She provided the AC with the same packets that the ambassadors are being given, in order to enable the AC to help with the ambassador effort. She asked the AC to engage their communities, their professional sectors, etc. Ms. Chambers noted that she met with African American and Latino professionals in Richmond who work in community engagement to discuss how to reach those who feel cynical about the planning process. She noted that the team needs help reaching Latino communities. She asked specifically for African American and Latino influencers to wield their influence to help out especially in Southside and Northside. She noted the desire to include folk who have not participated in the public process.

Ms. Chambers noted that she is looking at new avenues to reach youth and establish the Youth Advisory council including an open call to youth. She noted that staff will be participating in National Night Out, 2nd Street Festival, and the Folk Festival.

Ms. Chambers noted that the vision to be inclusive in the process was something that the Mayor reiterated during the Media Day. She noted that the public radio station did a segment from Media Day. She stated that Mr. Olinger will be on WRIR on July 18th, and the Free Press has reached out for an interview.

Insights Report Presentation

Mr. Olinger explained that the Insights Report is in the pre-final stage. He highlighted the significance of the Master Plan noting that the City is only 62.5 square miles and the Master Plan needs to plan for growth in this limited area. He noted that the Master Plan should identify the areas that should experience change, without destroying any of the historical or cultural capital while building towards future neighborhoods and cultural capital. He emphasized that as people think about what this city will look like in 2037, they need to think about the City's capital improvement program, and how the City can use its targeted investments to make the biggest difference. He noted that the importance of the Insights Report is to help identify the best way to make use of limited funds, and the Insights Report helps to find what the most important points to improve upon are. Mr. Olinger noted that 33% of the land area of the city is single family houses and 17% is roads and auto infrastructure not even including parking lots; and this makes near 50% of the city untouchable in terms of growth.

Ms. Pechin explained the homework assignment to read the Insights Report and provide answers to the questions by July 20, 2018. Ms. Pechin reviewed the changes in the Insight Report from the previous draft with the AC.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan recommended overlaying the school district boundaries with the MVA map as the lines may be similar.

Ms. O'Dwyer asked if the Insights Report could be organized thematically, or if there are plans to reorganize it. Ms. Pechin responded that the data being organized thematically will be part of the Master Plan, but not the Insights Report.

Mr. Ukrop noted the Opportunity Zone program is in the works to encourage economic development through the deferment of capital gains taxes. Ms. Pechin responded that such a program would be included in the Master Plan, if at all, not the Insights Report because the Insights Report is a snapshot in time and not a plan for the future.

Mr. Pitt noted that he appreciates that his comments were incorporated in this version of the Insights Report.

Mr. Poole asked about how to find the entirety of the source documents for those who are interested. Ms. Pechin responded that she is working with an intern to get the links posted to the website.

Mr. Poole asked to include the requirements for the Master Plan that are mandated by the Virginia General Assembly.

Areas of Change/Stability Mapping in Break-out Groups

A change to the agenda was proposed and accepted to eliminate the public comment section in favor of allowing the public to join the mapping activity with the board.

The AC broke into four groups to provide input on maps of the City of Richmond focusing on areas of change and stability. Staff will compile the maps to share with the AC at a future meeting.

The next meeting is August 8th. Next meeting agenda will include: 1) 90 minutes talking through the Insights Report homework, 2) Overview of the Community Consultation #1 design.