

Advisory Council Notes

Date: November 14, 2018, 4 P.M.
Location: Main Library, Basement
101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23219



Members Present: Mr. Rodney Poole, Chair
Mr. Max Hepp-Buchanan, Vice-Chair
Mr. Burt Pinnock, Vice-Chair
Mr. Jonathan Bibbs
Ms. Cyane Crump
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

Members Absent: Ms. LaToya Gray
Mr. Bernard Harkless
Ms. Meredith Weiss
Ms. Olivya Wilson

Staff Present: Mr. Doug Dunlap, Interim Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Economic and Community Development
Ms. Kimberly Chen, Planning and Development Review (PDR)
Mr. William Palmquist, PDR
Ms. Maritza Pechin, AECOM/PDR
Ms. Marianne Pitts, PDR
Mr. Josh Son, PDR

3:30 PM Room opens

4:02 PM Call to Order

Mr. Poole called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Mr. Poole thanked the Advisory Council (AC) and audience for attending. He alerted the public to two opportunities for public comment. He encouraged the AC members to attend at least one of the upcoming parking meetings. He asked for comments on the October 10, 2018,

Meeting Notes. Mr. Poole noted that he had two corrections that he provided to staff. No additional corrections or edits were presented by the AC.

Director's Report

Ms. Pechin noted that Mr. Olinger is at a conference in Raleigh speaking about Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Land Use Planning. She stated that she has asked Doug Dunlap, the Interim Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) of Economic and Community Development, to attend, but he has not arrived yet. Ms. Pechin shared the parking study meeting flyer and noted that she will email the flyer and text that the AC can share with the community. Ms. Pechin asked the AC to help get the word out to the community about the meetings. She stated that DESMAN, the parking consultant, will be talking through a matrix of recommendations and getting thoughts on which recommendations are an easy win and which will be a heavy lift. She noted that materials from the parking meetings will be on website hopefully by December 4th, and there will be an online survey. Mr. Poole asked if the purpose of the meetings was to discuss what their recommendations are, and Ms. Pechin answered yes. Mr. Poole stated that is why it is important for AC members to attend. Ms. Pechin stated that there could be recommendations that might be appropriate for other parts of the city not within a parking study area. Ms. Mullen asked if the presentations will be available in advance of the meetings. Mr. Ukrop asked what the process was once the recommendations are received. Ms. Pechin stated most of the recommendations might be for the Department of Public Works (DPW), but some may be Master Plan related if they are not tactical. Mr. Poole asked about how much DPW has been involved. Ms. Pechin responded that Lynn Lancaster who is in charge of DPW's Parking Division has been heavily involved. Mr. Hepp-Buchanan asked how the Scott's Addition meeting will be different because there is also a circulation study. Ms. Pechin noted that she will ask Mike Sawyer, the City's Transportation Engineer, about that. Mr. Hepp-Buchanan asked how that gets us closer to building a neighborhood plan for Scott's Addition.

Mr. Poole introduced Mr. Dunlap who arrived at the meeting. Mr. Dunlap stated that he is interim DCAO. He noted that he has been with the City for 18 years so this is his second master plan update process. He noted that the Richmond 300 process is different from 2001 master plan process because in 2001, the Planning Department had a neighborhood team structure. He stated that he appreciates how the AC is helping PDR share information about the process. He spoke of the Nashville Intercity Visit during which the Planning Director commented on how the master plan provided the ability to set the guidelines that go beyond politicians and require citizens in agreement with the plan to bring it forward.

Public Comment #1

Mr. Charles Pool, from the Oregon Hill Neighborhood, noted that there needs to be an emphasis on sustainability and protecting and ensuring the safety of historic districts. He noted that the emphasis has been on growth, but should also be focused on sustainability. He stated that having neighborhood teams would be helpful.

Ms. Crump thanked Mr. Pool for his comments and speaking in favor of historic districts. She supports retaining character and the flavor of districts.

There was no additional public comment.

Community Consultation #1 Draft Report:

Ms. Pitts reviewed the Community Consultation #1 Draft Report with the AC. The report included information on the participants and the input received at the open houses and through the online survey.

Ms. Crump asked if JSA helped with the Community Consultation. Ms. Pitts responded that PDR has asked JSA to pause their work while their scope is modified.

Mr. Pitt asked about the information that was received on the sticky notes at the open houses. He noted that he would not want to rush the process of analyzing the comments especially given the holidays. He recommended pushing back generating a draft vision and goals which Ms. Pechin agreed was a good idea.

Mr. Poole noted that the goal is to have a fully completed report by next month, but the conversation about the vision and goals will take longer.

Ms. Lockett asked if the ambassadors are being used. Ms. Pitts noted that the ambassadors are not being deployed at this time.

Ms. Pitts stated that she and Ms. Pechin have coordinated with the team that is working on outreach regarding the Census 2020. Mr. Dunlap reiterated that the Census 2020 team will be coordinating with Richmond 300.

Ms. O'Dwyer asked if there is a way to associate comments with the participants' addresses. Ms. Pitts responded that the online survey responses can be associated with the participants' zip codes.

Draft Working Group Syllabus:

Ms. Pechin shared the Draft Working Group Syllabus with the AC.

Ms. Javaheri asked about the makeup of the working group membership. Ms. Pechin noted that if members of AC want to be on multiple working groups it would be fine. She also noted that if there are more than 10 members it would also be fine, but she wants consistency so that the working group does not have to start over at every

meeting. In terms of the membership, Ms. Pechin noted that the housing working group would be easy to put together because housing policy advocates are organized. She noted that the AC members know people who can serve on a working group. She also said that she will be reaching out to the 155 individuals who applied to be on the AC to see if they want to participate.

Ms. O'Dwyer expressed concerns about the working groups being more than 10 people noting that a larger group would limit productivity. Ms. Pechin agreed that it is a valid concern and suggested possibly using breakout sessions during the working groups.

Mr. Pitt noted that he liked where the working groups are going. He suggested that it be more of a stakeholder process than an opportunity to receive public input. He suggested membership consist of people active in these spaces professionally and maybe incorporate a time for public comment to the working group. He noted that the 1st meeting could be to develop long list in a smaller group, the 2nd meeting could be to evaluate long list which the public is encouraged public to attend, and the 3rd meeting could be the smaller stakeholder group again to develop short list.

Ms. O'Dwyer stated that she is scared about losing focus at the meetings.

Ms. Crump noted that the topic areas are big picture topic areas, and the AC needs to make sure they are not losing the neighborhood focus as solutions may be different in neighborhoods than citywide. She noted that there are not going to be geographically designed working groups though there are different parts of the city with different issues.

Mr. Pitt asked if it was accurate to assume that there will not be neighborhood meetings as a part of the working groups. Ms. Pechin responded that with this approach, there will not. She noted that this can change.

Mr. Lloyd stated that he likes the topics as the Master Plan is a document to make land use decisions, and he is hesitant to break down the working groups on a neighborhood basis.

Ms. Pechin noted that one of the places where neighborhoods could be involved is in the Land Use Working Group which may become the Land Use and Neighborhoods Working Group. She noted that PDR will need to go out to civic associations with land use map.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan stated that the product of the working groups will get community input during Community Consultation #2.

Mr. Poole recommended picking the people on the working group from certain neighborhoods and that there needs to be a mechanism for this outreach.

Mr. Pitt stated that he would not want to mix neighborhood outreach with technical stakeholders.

Mr. Pinnock clarified that the working groups were based on the 14 topics and what people have heard the AC talk about. Ms. Javaheri asked what the 14 topic areas were, and Ms. Pechin noted they were the 14 topics in the *Insights Report*.

Mr. Pitt stated that he feels like public health and public safety were left out. Ms. Pechin responded that they are such huge topics and fit in many categories. Ms. O'Dwyer noted she thought public health, public safety and housing fit together. Ms. Lockett noted that she agrees that those topics cut everything and could be part of an overarching vision.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan noted that these are the right 5 categories, and some will have different deliverables. He noted that for transportation, there are a few different plans that need to be put in one document, and a consultant may be needed to do this work.

Mr. Poole asked how the AC determines membership for each group. Mr. Lloyd recommended the AC self-select their working group, then that group should get together and decide who else they will need. Ms. Lozano asked what if an AC member falls into multiple categories. Ms. Pechin noted that the AC will have a chance to review what the other groups are doing.

Mr. Ukrop recommended the AC members pick what they want to be on. Ms. Pechin stated that she has created survey asking members which working groups they want to join and for recommendations of other members.

Ms. Pechin stated the syllabus will be finalized by December, and the working groups set up in January. Mr. Poole noted that the AC will revisit the plan in December.

Ms. O'Dwyer noted that every additional person that is brought into the process will slow it down. Mr. Poole noted that beyond 10 participants will make the working groups non-functional.

Mr. McCoy asked about the time allotment for the meetings. Mr. Pinnock recommended the working groups decide what times work best.

Land Use 101:

Mr. Palmquist presented on the concept of land use in the master plan and reviewed the Land Use Regulations handout with the AC.

Mr. Pinnock asked how the information about land use communicated to citizens and developers. Mr. Palmquist noted that it is available online.

Ms. O'Dwyer asked if the Pulse Plan has to be consistent with Master Plan. Mr. Palmquist stated that it has become part of the Master Plan, and Mr. Pitt clarified that it changed the Master Plan. Ms. O'Dwyer stated that means whatever the AC does can be changed next year. Mr. Lloyd stated that City Council today cannot require a future City Council to do anything and that a future City Council can change the Master Plan if they feel it is in the best interest.

Mr. Lloyd asked when does Planning recommend a Special Use Permit (SUP) versus vs rezoning. Mr. Palmquist stated that though he is not the expert from the Department, the SUP requires the applicant to know all the details of the project while a rezoning can be general.

Mr. Palmquist stated that there are 31 land use designations which is only 4 less than the number of zoning districts. Mr. Palmquist reviewed the land use categories table with the AC.

Ms. O'Dwyer noted that the Master Plan can end up 31 categories again. Mr. Dunlap responded that it sounds like Ms. O'Dwyer is concerned that things could unravel in the near future. He noted that when we have updated parts of the plan in the past, it was because of changes in market trends. He stated that he would be surprised if the updated Master Plan unravels in the next few years.

Mr. Pitt stated that staff has made it clear that the number of land use categories needs to be reduced, and he asked where the discussion about this will occur. Mr. Palmquist responded that it will occur in the working group. Mr. Pitt noted that the Land Use working group has a bigger lift than the other working groups and may need more meetings.

Ms. Chen presented a brief history of zoning.

Public Comment #2

Genni Sasnett, the Church Hill Association, thanked the AC for their public service. She stated that when she had expressed neighborhood concerns, she was told that it would be discussed in the working groups and that citizens will be involved. She stated the AC should make sure that there is representation from the community in the working groups. She stated that she was the Chief Operating Officer of a large corporation and that pre-creating and presenting recommendations for feedback is different than involving people in the process. She emphasized that the working groups should include representatives of groups during the process as it is a different process to comment on things than to be a part of the creation. In regard to the land use categories, she noted that there are a multitude of categories, and it makes sense to slim down; however there needs to be thoughtful discussion about the land use categories. She stated that she would like to preserve single-family category for parts of Church Hill.

Martha Culpepper, a representative from Oregon Hill, noted that the existing Master Plan does not show the neighborhood as single-family. She noted that three historic buildings were lost on Cary Street and that the Master Plan should ensure the single-family character is preserved. She noted that the biggest rival for her neighborhood is VCU expansion.

Charles Pool, of the Oregon Hill Home Improvement Council, shared that the Oregon Hill Home Improvement Council has passed resolution asking for the single-family designation in Oregon Hill. He noted that the request is for single-family not residential as residential can be high rise. He also noted that the Master Plan needs to include policies regarding sustainability.

Sarah Driggs, from Ginter Park, stated that she agrees with Mr. Pool and Ms. Sasnett. She noted that the plan should value mixed use while protecting the historic single-family homes and historic neighborhoods as many residents came to Richmond because of historic neighborhoods. She recommended that the process include community engagement not just community outreach. She noted that if the AC is having a hard time doing this, then slow the process down.

Mr. Pinnock asked the speakers to elaborate more on single-family and if they are saying that homes should only have a single family in them.

Ms. Sasnett responded that in Church Hill, there should be no huge apartment complexes. She said that she is passionate about preserving the integrity of historic neighborhoods.

Ms. Culpepper stated that in Oregon Hill, 1/3 or less are students, and the residents do not want apartment buildings.

Mr. Pool stated that current future land use is the same as VCU and is not descriptive of anything. He stated that the single-family unit is what distinguishes the Oregon Hill neighborhood.

Ms. Crump asked if the speakers are comfortable with a single-family home being converted to a duplex if the look, feel, and form of the structure remain like a single-family dwelling. The speakers agreed that they would be comfortable with that though Ms. Culpepper noted that she had some concerns about homes on Cary Street being connected.

Ms. Driggs noted that there might be neighborhoods where a single family per house is appropriate.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:00pm, and members of the public joined AC members for an informal gathering at Chicano's Cocina (523 E. Main St).