

# Advisory Council Notes

Date: September 12, 2018, 4 P.M.  
Location: Studio Two Three  
3300 W. Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23230



Members Present: Mr. Rodney Poole, Chair  
Mr. Max Hepp-Buchanan, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Burt Pinnock, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Jonathan Bibbs  
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. Olivya Wilson  
Ms. Meredith Weiss

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mr. Mark Olinger, Planning and Development Review (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**

**4:02 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 asked for comments on the August 8, 2018 Meeting Notes. No corrections or edits were presented by the AC.

## **Director's Report**

Ms. Pechin provided the Director's Report for Mr. Olinger. noted that the *Insights Report* and Map Books are complete and that hard copies of the *Insights Report* have been provided to the AC members. She noted the document is fundamentally in its final state, but staff will be accepting comments. Ms. Pechin thanked the AC for their comments on the document. She stated that Mr. Olinger presented the Organizational Development Standing Committee of City Council on September 4<sup>th</sup> and provided the Council Members with copies of the *Insights Report* and the Map Book for their respective districts.

Ms. Pechin noted that the Advisory Council bus tour of the south side was a success, and the second tour will be rescheduled as he was sick.

Ms. Pechin stated that the parking consultant is currently conducting stakeholder will civic associations.

## **Public Comment #1**

Genni Sasnett, president of the Church Hill Association, asked if the parking study areas will be extended towards Church Hill. Ms. Pechin responded that yes the Downtown study area will be extend to Pear Street along Main Street up to Franklin Street.

There was no additional public comment.

## **Engagement Effort Update:**

Ms. Pitts, PDR staff, provided an update on efforts since the last AC meeting. She noted that an additional 10 ambassadors have been trained as educators. She stated that she has emailed each civic association in the city to share information about Richmond 300 and the upcoming open houses. Staff has attended 15 civic and business association meetings since the last AC meeting with several more scheduled over the upcoming weeks. Ms. Pitts also noted that she is meeting with individuals who are active in their communities to discuss Richmond 300 and outreach. She stated that Ms. Revilla, PDR staff, has been working on outreach to the Spanish speaking and immigrant communities and has attended multiple festivals to share information about Richmond 300. In regard to media, Ms. Pitts noted that Mr. Olinger has been on a Richmond Association of Realtors (RAR) podcast, participated in a Mindful Mornings event, and is scheduled to be on the Cheats Movements and participate in the AIA Front Porch event. Ms. Pitts noted that Ms. Revilla has been on Spanish speaking radio included Oscar Contreras' program. She noted that the press release for the open houses has been distributed by the Mayor's Press Secretary.

Mr. Bibbs asked for content for social media posts that the AC members can share.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan asked if JSA is still involved as they are not present at this meeting. Ms. Pechin responded that PDR is working to revise JSA's scope. She noted that PDR staff has prepared all material and provided all logistics for the open houses. She noted that PDR wants the open houses to be a success, but the open houses can be taken elsewhere as needed to get more input if there are populations that do not participate in the open houses.

Ms. Hawkins asked how the AC can help since JSA's scope is being revised. Ms. Pechin noted that help with outreach to under-represented communities is needed.

## **Open House Design**

Ms. Pechin reviewed the open house guide with the AC. She noted that she will email it to the Richmond 300 email list serv on Monday so people are prepared to attend the open houses. She stated that participants can provided input on sticky notes or the online survey.

Ms. Pechin walked through the boards which will be displayed at the open houses. The boards showcase the existing conditions information, and the maps were purposely kept citywide so participants think of the whole city. In terms of layout, Ms. Pechin does not a wall of easels, and it will be a mix of easels and table.

For the Big Map Station, Ms. Pechin described the 3' by 4' citywide map at which the question will be "the city has added 30,000 people since last master plan, if we add another 30,000 where do imagine they will live?"

Ms. Pechin shared forms that will be at the open houses. She noted that there will be a kid's corner with a form that was adapted from Plan Louisville.

Ms. Pechin noted that the big message when people are entering is that participants can spend as much time as they want at each station and they do not have to go to all of them. She noted that Philadelphia and Boston had a similar format at their meetings at which they asked for the community for big ideas.

Ms. Lozano asked can something fall outside the big ideas boards or should people focus on those topics. Ms. Pechin noted that if something comes up, we will add a new piece of paper.

Mr. Poole asked if there will be PDR staff at each board. Ms. Pechin noted that there will not be staff at every board but at groups of board. Mr. Poole asked if we anticipate people cycling through and coming at different times. Ms. Pechin responded yes. Ms. Pechin anticipates using AC members helping based on their specialty. Mr. Pitt asked if the AC should arrive an hour early, and Ms. Pechin responded yes. Ms. Crump recommended for the Big Map that the question should be where do the new 30,000 people live, work, and play. Ms. Pechin agreed.

Ms. Pechin noted that outreach at festivals will be focused on driving people to the website. Mr. Poole asked if we keeping track of website hits, and Ms. Pechin responded no.

Mr. Bibbs asked what is going to be at the booths at the festival to drive people to the website. Ms. Pechin acknowledged that she did not know as staff has been focused on preparing for the open houses. She asked the AC to provide input on what should be at the meetings. Mr. Pinnock suggested giving away free stuff. Mr. Bibbs stated that festivals are a good opportunity to focus on children and suggested a sticker that says “In 2037, this will be in my city too.” Mr. Pinnock suggested an activity to build what your city looks like. Ms. Mullen asked if we have iPad, and Ms. Pechin responded yes but noted that they are limited in functionality. Mr. Poole suggested hard copies of survey with clipboards. Ms. Hawkins noted that Studio 23 is a Folk Fest vendor. Mr. Bibbs stated that people like the historical development of the city and noted that old pictures of the City draw people. Mr. Lloyd suggested the Valentine can help with historical pictures. Ms. Pechin noted she met with the Valentine last week to discuss having a Richmond 300 branded Controversial History exhibit late 2019/early 2020. She noted that initial thoughts on the subject of the exhibit is to talk about the last big boom in development and population when the city did not add land (1910’s Fan development). Ms. Pechin noted that the timing of the exhibit works out well because it will be when we are going back to the community. She noted that the Valentine can also have walking tours. Mr. Poole encouraged engaging the Valentine during the 2nd Street Festival. Mr. Bibbs recommended engaging with the Black History Museum. Ms. Lozano recommended a more interactive banner. Ms. Javaheri stated that when ICA opened, there was a map of the world and people marked where they were from with stickers. Mr. Hepp-Buchanan suggested in terms of drawing in kids, the libraries have Lego build nights which are successful. Mr. Lloyd described the ULI event big map which used Legos for new jobs and residents to create a three dimensional map. Mr. Hepp-Buchanan likes the idea of using Legos and the map. Mr. Pitt noted that he has lots of Legos we can use.

## Insights Report

Ms. Pechin led the AC in a group discussion about their big ideas from reading the Insights Report. Ms. Pechin noted that the AC members have spent a lot of time looking through the Insights Report and had taken time for comments. She stated that the big things that kept coming up in the homework were about housing and transportation.

***Transportation:*** She asked the AC to speak to their big ideas regarding transportation:

- Ms. Lozano – Complete streets, multimodal transportation, sidewalks and bike lanes

- Mr. Pitt – Robust BRT on all major corridors, but if he had to pick one next, South side/Hull/Midlothian.
- Mr. Hepp-Buchanan – Looking at transportation through an equity lens, pedestrian and bike fatalities have occurred where car ownership is low; South side does not have a lot of sidewalks, if we cannot build sidewalks what else can we do (traffic calming, lower speeds).

**Equity in Planning:** Ms. Pechin asked what the AC members think it means to do a master plan with an equity lens. Mr. Ukrop stated that it is a plan that is pragmatic and realistic and considers financial restrictions. Ms. Lozano stated that it considers socioeconomic and other demographic differences. Mr. McCoy noted that it recognizes historic disinvestments in terms of infrastructure or policy. Mr. Pinnock asked if the plan should target these areas first.

Ms. Pechin stated that the American Planning Association (APA) is looking at equity in planning.

Ms. Lozano noted that Portland updated their plan with an equity lens.

Ms. Hawkins stated that the plan should focus on communities that have been put at a disservice of planning processes, and these people should be at the forefront.

Ms. Javaheri stated that diversity should be in every possible way to take into account the diverse groups of people in the city.

**Affordable Housing:** Mr. Poole noted that at least 60% of people on the AC made reference to affordable housing in comments, and this needs to be a big issue. He asked how do we make economic development meet the needs of all people.

Mr. Lloyd stated people in the development community say there is not blueprint on how to address affordable housing which is a challenge. He recommended a comprehensive approach with tools to address affordable housing.

Mr. McCoy stated that Nashville soccer stadium development included community bargaining agreement between developer and the community which can be used as a model.

Mr. Pitt noted that the AC should be prepared for negative reaction from certain sectors in response to equity. He stated that some people might say that we are trying to bring them down while bringing others up, and the AC should be prepared for possible backlash. Ms. Lozano responded that Portland handle it by providing opportunities for all people opportunities for success.

Mr. Poole noted that he thinks Mr. Lloyd is right, and the AC can consider recommending that each development of a certain size should have community input.

Ms. Pechin asked Mr. Lloyd what he meant by blueprint. Mr. Lloyd responded that he meant an affordable housing strategy. Ms. Pechin noted that there will be a housing work group. She noted that the Mayor had an affordable housing summit, and the summit document can be a starting point.

Mr. Pinnock stated that there are enough smart people at this table to address affordable housing, and that this body can come up with radical thoughts rather than have another commission.

Ms. Mullen asked if there will be information on how the master plan relates to schools. Ms. Pechin said that there is enrollment information, and that in terms of school closure and realignment, the AC would refer to the school facilities plan which is out of date. She stated that the AC should think about if an area is redeveloped would it need a new school.

Ms. Crump noted that it is not just schools but the availability of child care as well.

***Plan Design:*** Mr. Lloyd stated that the temptation for the AC is to have the master plan address everything, but it is mainly a tool for council to make land use decisions. He noted that the more concrete and specific the document can be the better. Ms. Hawkins asked Mr. Lloyd to give an example. Mr. Lloyd noted that for Scott's Addition, the plan can talk about walkability specifically, and when developer comes in he can look at master plan for specific recommendation about how to design the project to promote walkability. Mr. Poole noted that by specificity, the plan needs to include recommendations on density especially as the city is growing as development can go higher and can be denser.

Ms. Pechin recommended that the AC should look at two plans, the Hull Street Plan and the Pulse Plan. She noted that the Hull Street Plan has nice pictures of what it should look like, but it does not talk about land use, how tall things should be, which are the primary streets, etc. She stated that the Pulse Plan is much more specific especially with land use recommendations.

Ms. Pechin stated that the two largest outputs of process are the future transportation and the future land use map.

Ms. Javaheri noted that the plan should look at the impact on public health. She stated that the AC should look at what has happened to result in the City being in the situation that it is in now.

Mr. McCoy stated that housing is an issue and the plan needs to look at the future of transportation and employment in the city. He noted that 20 years ago there was not Facebook, Uber, or Lyft. He noted that the plan needs to consider if government funding is cut how the City will change.

Mr. Hepp-Buchanan noted that autonomous vehicles are one of these things the plan should consider.

## **Public Comment #2:**

Mr. Andrea Quilici noted that transportation should look at not only how the city works within but to the outside with the potential of high speed rail. He noted that the plan should address issues with gentrification, but acknowledged that he does not know how AC can address this but the AC should think about this. He stated that that sustainability should be discussed. He asked if the plan would think about a City of nodes or corridors and about ways to provide accessibility to green spaces for all.

Mr. Stuart Schwartz stated that he is hearing lots of good things. He stated that the city needs to get ahead on affordable housing. He recommended the preservation of the existing affordable housing and the inclusion of new affordable housing in new development. He recommended that rezonings require affordable housing. He spoke of the land use connection to schools and the need for the economic integration in schools. Mr. McCoy asked in regard to economic integration in the school system, if there is a good case study. Mr. Schwartz responded that the case study out of Montgomery County, MD, which required affordable housing. He stated studies show kids in economic integrated schools are doing well.

Ms. Genni Sasnett asked if there will be references in the plan to accessibility for people with disabilities. Mr. Poole asked staff if there is anything in the current master plan. Ms. Pechin responded no, but Yvette Jones from the Office of Aging and Disabilities is on the master plan technical team. Ms. Pechin also stated she has spoken to the Aging and Disabilities Board. She noted that she does not know what the master plan recommendations will be. Mr. Poole stated that ADA requirements are in the federal code. Mr. Pinnock stated that ADA and building codes regulate accessibility, and it is a matter of enforcement of existing codes. Ms. Sasnett stated that people with disabilities cannot find accessible housing, and people with electric wheelchairs have to go on the streets because of issues with the sidewalks. Ms. Lozano emphasized the need to look at things through an equity lens. Mr. Pitt stated that complete streets can address some of these concerns, and in regard to the aging in place aspect, granny flats and infill housing should be looked at. Ms. Lozano stated that the plan should prioritize sidewalks where disable people are.

There was no additional public comment.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Poole adjourned the meeting at 5:37 PM. The next meeting of the Advisory Council is October 10, 2018 at 4 P.M. at the Main Library (101 E. Franklin St). The agenda will include: 1) Review initial feedback from Open Houses.