

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
April 12, 2012

Members/Alternates Present

Richard Ayers (M).....County of Powhatan
Douglas G. Conner (M).....City of Richmond
Steve A. Elswick (M).....County of Chesterfield
Daniel A. Gecker (M).....County of Chesterfield
Even Fabricant (M).....County of Hanover
Russell J. Gulley (M).....County of Chesterfield
James M. Holland (M).....County of Chesterfield
E. Martin Jewell (M).....City of Richmond
David A. Kaechele (M).....County of Henrico
Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Treasurer (M).....County of Hanover
Kelli Le Duc (A).....County of New Kent
Lynn McAteer (M).....City of Richmond
Floyd H. Miles (M).....County of Charles City
John H. Mitchell (M).....County of Henrico
Tyrone E. Nelson (M).....County of Henrico
Patricia S. O'Bannon (M).....County of Henrico
C. Harold Padgett (M).....County of Hanover
Ken Peterson, Secretary (M).....County of Goochland
W. Canova Peterson (M).....County of Hanover
Edward W. Pollard (M).....County of New Kent
Faye O. Prichard, Vice Chairman (M).....Town of Ashland
Charles R. Samuels (M).....City of Richmond
Randall R. Silber (A).....County of Henrico
Carson Tucker (M).....County of Powhatan
David Williams (M).....County of Powhatan

Members Absent

L. Ray Ashworth (M).....City of Richmond
Thomas M. Branin (M).....County of Henrico
James H. Burrell, Chairman (M).....County of New Kent
James Crews (M).....County of Goochland
Richard W. Glover (M).....County of Henrico
Kathy C. Graziano (M).....City of Richmond
Dorothy Jaeckle (M).....County of Chesterfield
Millard D. Stith (M).....County of Chesterfield
Frank J. Thornton (M).....County of Henrico
Arthur S. Warren (M).....County of Chesterfield

Others Present

Manuel AlvarezCounty of Goochland
John Amos.....RRPDC Legal Council
John Benton.....Citizen, Chesterfield County
Jan HatcherPartnership for Smarter Growth
Walter Johnson.....County of Henrico

Staff Present

Robert A. Crum Executive Director
Jo A. Evans.....Assistant Executive Director
Julie H. Fry Executive Secretary
Sulabh Aryal.....Associate Planner
Aisling Chapin..... Intern
Anne DarbySenior Planner
John FoggSenior Planner
Billy GammelAssociate Planner
Chuck Gates Communications Coordinator
Barbara Jacocks.....Principal Planner
Jin LeeSenior Planner
Daniel N. Lysy Director of Urban Transportation
Randy Selleck.....Principal Planner
Matt Smith..... Intern
Jackie S. Stewart.....Director of Planning
Sarah Stewart.....Senior Planner
Peter M. Sweetland..... Finance and Contracts Administrator
Lee Yolton.....Principal Planner

Call to Order

Vice Chairman Prichard called the regularly scheduled April 12, 2012 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 1:15 p.m. in the RRPDC board room. Vice Chairman Prichard reported that Chairman Burrell could not be in attendance today. She then led members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by Commission Executive Director of Meeting Quorum

Mr. Crum certified that a quorum of members was present.

B. Requests for Additions or Changes to the Order of Business

Vice Chairman Prichard asked if there were any additions or changes to be made to the agenda. There were no requests to change the agenda, and the agenda was accepted as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Vice Chairman Prichard asked if there was anyone from the public in attendance who wished to make a comment to members of the Commission. She reminded speakers that their time is limited to three minutes. As there were no requests from the public to address the Commission, the Vice Chairman closed the public comment period.

D. Chairman's Report

Vice Chairman Prichard said that she would not have a report on behalf of the Chairman.

E. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Crum brought the members' attention to the monthly staff activity report, which is included in the agenda book under Tab 1 and details work being advanced by staff on behalf of the localities. He said staff will be happy to address any questions on what is included in the report.

Mr. Crum said one of the programs the Board approved in the current work program is participation with the Richmond Region Energy Alliance. Jackie Stewart is distributing some information on a program being offered by the Energy Alliance. Homeowners can receive a cost effective energy audit on their houses. Two RRPDC staff members have taken advantage of this program to make their homes more energy efficient. Mr. Crum asked that members pass this information along to their constituents and staffs.

Another piece of information being distributed follows up on the presentation made during last month's meeting by Laura Lafayette from the Richmond Association of Realtors. Affordable Housing Week is the week of April 23. Information is included on a forum to be held on April 26 at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens.

Mr. Crum reported that the Capital Region Collaborative (CRC) had not met since December to give the jurisdictions an opportunity to appoint new members. The CRC met for the first time this year on April 6. Mr. Crum thanked all CRC members for their attendance and said that he hoped they found the information presented during the meeting valuable. More information on the activities of the CRC will be presented over the coming months. A focus will be made on job creation and workforce preparation in addition to the other five priorities.

During today's Executive Committee meeting, information was presented on the preliminary FY 13 budget. The presentation will be given to the full Board during next month's meeting. At that time, staff will ask the Board to approve the budget and work program for FY 13.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chairman Prichard said the Executive Committee has recommended approval of the items listed on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes – March 8, 2012**
- B. Approval of February Financial Report**
- C. Authorization to File and Execute FY 13 Federal and State Grant Applications and Agreements on Behalf of the RRPDC for the Richmond Area MPO's FY 13 Unified Work Program**

Vice Chairman Prichard asked if anyone wished to have any of these items pulled from the Consent Agenda for additional discussion.

As there were no requests for discussion on the items, on motion made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Gulley, the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously as presented.

III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to bring before the Commission members.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Richmond Region Socioeconomic Data Report

Vice Chairman Prichard asked Mr. Crum to introduce the item.

Mr. Crum said that Barbara Jacocks, RRPDC Principal Planner, will make today's presentation. This project is one undertaken by staff every four years to support the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. This report does a good job in assessing past development trends in the Region, what the current population trends are in the Region, and identifies future development trends. RRPDC staff worked closely with staffs from each of the jurisdictions to collect information needed to complete the report. No action is required by the Board on this item, but Mr. Crum encouraged members to ask questions.

Ms. Jacocks thanked members for the opportunity to present the findings of this report to them. She said the information collected in the report has been very useful not only for the Long Range Transportation Plan efforts, but also for work being done

on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that is being initiated this year.

Since the last presentation was given on the Socioeconomic Data Report, additional information has been added in terms of residential growth over the past several decades. The 2035 Socioeconomic Data Report represents an analysis of 2008 base year and 2035 projections of a number of socioeconomic factors: population, housing, housing units, households, school enrollment, and vehicle registration. This information was collected by locality and assigned to 712 discrete Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs) within the Richmond Region.

Staff has been working with the localities and other groups and committees, such as the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), to refine the numbers included in the report and to address some concerns that were raised about the data.

Ms. Jacocks provided a visual to show growth trends during the decades from pre-1940 through 2000. Working with existing land use, staff established separate points for each residential unit.

Ms. Jacocks provided information on historic population trends. She indicated this historical data was used to provide a 30-year projection for the Long Range Transportation Plan. Chesterfield County grew extensively in the 1970s and 1980s, whereas in the 1990s, growth moved into Powhatan, Hanover, and New Kent Counties. Based on US Census data from 1970 – 2000, the Region has grown by 58 percent over that period.

Projections for the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) had to be made prior to the 2010 Census data being released. Using census data from 2008, projections for 2035 were made using additional sources such as the Census American Community Survey estimates, localities' 3-C data (continuing, comprehensive, cooperative), the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), and future land use plans from the localities' comprehensive plans. Thresholds were accepted and adopted by the Socioeconomic Group, which is comprised of planners and demographers from each of the jurisdictions, as well as members of the MPO and TAC. The data was then distributed to each of the TAZs.

Once the 2010 Census data was received, comparisons and adjustments were made to the report.

Employment projections were also made with information from the VEC's second quarter data and verified by RRPDC staff. This data was also reviewed by the local planning staffs. Projections for 2035 were based on the proportional relationship with population, with local guidance on distribution to individual TAZs based on future land use plans, and known development proposals.

From this data, 14 regional development centers have been identified. These are where population and density are greatest. This is a guide to build on. Basic commonalities have been established on density in terms of auto ownership, household size, and family size within the urban, suburban, and rural zones.

Using the adopted population thresholds for each locality, this represents an “ideal” model of regional growth where the urban core absorbs an equal amount of population and employment density. The rural area remains distinctly low density in character. The suburban area is predicted to encounter the most change.

New items included in the Socioeconomic Data Report include:

- benefit from a 30-year look back to predict over similar period to 2035
- early trends in 2000s show a different regional growth pattern: urban core is growing again
- trending decline in household sizes resulting in slower K-12 school enrollment growth
- intersection of population and employment concentrations = Regional Development Centers
- strong base year for employment statistics and auto registration data
- broader applications to socioeconomic data

Ms. Jacocks indicated that the Socioeconomic Data Report is being used in the following ways:

- by consultants for studies such as the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study for Broad Street, Route 5 Corridor Study, City Sustainability Plan
- Urban Land Institute’s Richmond Reality Check
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Regional Long Range Transportation Plan and Travel Demand Models

The Socioeconomic Data Report will be updated at least every four years in conjunction with the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Fabricant asked if any financial data had been captured that would indicate where more programs were needed to address distressed areas. Ms. Jacocks said this is going to be considered during the CEDS process, which will look at issues other than transportation.

Mr. Williams asked why Powhatan was indicated with just a star for future growth instead of showing the area boundaries. Ms. Jacocks said stars were provided for new centers which have less density than the larger regional centers. When absolute numbers are considered, these are smaller areas. She said the data is also by TAZ, so the geographic areas are larger and density is more spread out.

Ms. McAteer said the 2010 Census data shows an increase in poverty levels and asked if any discussion had taken place on how the localities would need to address the requirements of the growing distressed areas. Ms. Jacocks said this will be a component of the CEDS research, to identify employment and transportation needs.

Mr. Jewell asked what might contribute to the lower employment growth shown for the City of Richmond. Ms. Jacocks said this was based on past trends. She said staff adjusted the data based on information received from local staff. Employment growth was determined by documenting the data with the larger employers in the Region.

Mr. Crum cautioned using percentage of change. It appears that the City of Richmond shows the largest numerical increase in employment after Chesterfield and Henrico. Staff has made the best planning estimates by working with the local staffs on current zoning, current policies, and the trends that are tracking. If this is not the trend that a locality wants to see by 2035, then it is hoped this study will provide an incentive to reevaluate local policies, etc.

Mr. Jewell said poverty is increasing in the entire Region, and he wanted to know how that was included in what was being shown. Ms. Jacocks said this will be studied during the CEDS process and will identify employment opportunities in localities. She said staff felt very confident in the data used, which shows Richmond as the second largest employment center.

Mr. Gecker asked if what is being projected isn't what is desired for the Region, then what type of planning efforts need to be undertaken to prevent these trends. In 1970, Richmond had about 250,000 residents and then dropped to just under 200,000. In Chesterfield, growth management policies have been discussed at length. The best growth management strategy would be to repopulate Richmond. He asked if the city had looked to see where those who left had been living and working. Mr. Gecker said work needs to be done to repopulate the core and decisions need to be made on what policies need to be created to achieve that goal. The issue is the need to reutilize what is already in place and available.

Mr. Holland noted that policies need to be in place to provide affordable housing which will in turn provide good schools and a safe environment. Ms. Jacocks said there is a CEDS work group focusing on those issues.

Mr. Kaechele asked if the 2008 job numbers had been confirmed by the Census data. Ms. Jacocks asked Mr. Gammel to address this question. Mr. Gammel said some of the information was provided by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. For the purpose of this particular study, staff contacted all employers in the Region with 50 or more employees to verify they did have the number of employees at the physical location as indicated by VEC. The Census does not provide specific employment information. Ms. Jacocks said again that the CEDS process will provide more detail.

Mr. Gulley asked for more clarification on what Mr. Gecker had asked – what policies need to be changed in order to alter what is being projected.

Mr. Crum said this PDC has historically not dealt with land use issues. He said he believes RRPDC can develop data that will stimulate this type of conversation in the localities. Staff is close to completing the first ever Regional Existing Land Use Inventory. This will show where areas are used for residential and commercial purposes as well as where vacant and undeveloped properties are located. This inventory will allow localities to consider “what if” scenarios. Mr. Crum said this is the type of role the RRPDC would like to have in the Region. Decisions will still be made by the jurisdictions, but the RRPDC can provide the data to allow these types of conversations to take place. Some change in local policies will need to be made if the trend is to be altered.

Mr. Gulley asked if this data will be provided to members to use in the localities. Mr. Crum said the land use inventory will be presented to members in the coming months and would be available to use in the localities within the next few months. Ms. Jacocks said a meeting took place recently with local staffs to discuss existing land use layers. Through GIS, the data base layers can be built and kept up to date for the localities to use in making land use decisions and investments in transportation and utilities.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she is assuming what was provided today is a snapshot of the Region. She asked if age or other demographic data can be made available on what types of individuals are moving from the core into the suburbs – young families, etc. – or moving back into the core – young professionals. She said this information would help the localities know what type of planning needs to be undertaken. Ms. Jacocks said, again, CEDS is looking at this type of information as well as looking at state and national trends.

Vice Chairman Prichard thanked members for their interest in the presentation but noted that there was another presentation that needed to be made before time ran out. She also noted that it is very frustrating that data for Ashland cannot be broken out from Hanover County when studies such as this are researched.

B. Rivers of the Richmond Region Public Access Guide

Mr. Crum said about a year ago, staff produced the Rivers of the Region Public Access Guide. This was a project born from the Capital Region Collaborative when, during public input meetings, the community expressed concern about not knowing how to access the James River. The guide was so popular that the original supply of 3,000 copies was depleted very quickly. MeadWestvaco saw the guide and offered to contribute toward the printing of an additional 30,000 copies. Anne Darby, RRPDC Senior Planner, was the project manager for this effort.

Ms. Darby said with receipt of the generous contribution from MeadWestvaco, staff was able to take another look at the brochure's design prior to printing the additional copies.

She noted that this brochure included all of the rivers in the Richmond Region, not just the James River (Appomattox, Chickahominy, and Pamunkey).

Ms. Darby reviewed the criteria used to select the sites listed in the brochure:

- open to the public
- easily accessed by the general public for recreation
- safe, legal
- free or single-use fee

Feedback was solicited from various groups, organizations, and agencies including:

- state Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- state Department of Conservation and Recreation
- county/city planning and parks/recreation staffs
- James River Outdoor Coalition
- James River Association
- Friends of the Lower Appomattox River
- Mattaponi and Pamunkey River Association
- Friends of the James River Park
- James River News Hub

Ms. Darby provided photos of some of the sites on the various rivers. She indicated that staff visited each of the sites on the map to ensure each met the criteria. Ms. Darby encouraged members to visit the locations as they all provide something unique.

All of the access points on the map remain the same as on the previous version.

Mr. Crum said he wanted to acknowledge the design work on the brochure, which was done in-house by Ms. Darby and Mr. Gates. He said it has been very rewarding to have produced a product that has been receiving so many compliments from other organizations and agencies. He said that staff will be glad to deliver the brochures to localities that would like to have some for distribution.

Mr. Williams asked why there was the disclaimer on the brochure about eating catfish from the James River. He said a lot of water quality improvements to the James River have been made over the last several years. Ms. Darby said this disclaimer is a result of conversations held with the members of the MPO's Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee. One of the members asked that this be included as a public service.

Vice Chairman Prichard congratulated staff on the quality of the brochure.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to bring before members of the Board.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, Vice Chairman Prichard adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:05 p.m.

Robert A. Crum, Jr.
Executive Director

Faye O. Prichard
Vice Chairman