

**RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**April 11, 2013**

**Members (Alternates) Present**

Jonathan T. Baliles .....	City of Richmond
Timothy M. Davey .....	Chesterfield County
Steve A. Elswick .....	Chesterfield County
Evan Fabricant.....	Hanover County
Daniel A. Gecker .....	Chesterfield County
Richard W. Glover .....	Henrico County
Kathy C. Graziano.....	City of Richmond
Russell J. Gulley.....	Chesterfield County
James M. Holland.....	Chesterfield County
Dorothy Jaeckle.....	Chesterfield County
Bonnie-Leigh Jones.....	Henrico County
David A. Kaechele .....	Henrico County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Vice Chairman.....	Hanover County
Floyd H. Miles.....	Charles City County
John H. Mitchell.....	Henrico County
Patricia S. O'Bannon.....	Henrico County
C. Harold Padgett .....	Hanover County
Ken Peterson, Treasurer .....	Goochland County
W. Canova Peterson .....	Hanover County
Edward W. Pollard .....	New Kent County
Faye O. Prichard, Chairman .....	Town of Ashland
Charles R. Samuels.....	City of Richmond
Randall R. Silber (A).....	Henrico County
Frank J. Thornton .....	Henrico County
Carson Tucker .....	Powhatan County

**Members Absent**

Parker C. Agelasto.....	City of Richmond
L. Ray Ashworth .....	City of Richmond
Richard Ayers .....	Powhatan County
Lynn McAteer .....	City of Richmond
Tyrone E. Nelson.....	Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller.....	New Kent County
Arthur S. Warren .....	Chesterfield County
David Williams, Secretary .....	Powhatan County

**Others Present**

John Amos .....RRPDC Legal Council  
Nathan Burrell .....City of Richmond  
Joanne Simmelink ..... Chesterfield County

**Staff Present**

Robert A. Crum ..... Executive Director  
Jo A. Evans .....Assistant Executive Director  
Julie H. Fry ..... Executive Secretary  
Anne Darby .....Senior Planner  
Billy Gammel .....Associate Planner  
Barbara Jacocks .....Principal Planner  
Jin Lee .....Senior Planner  
Daniel N. Lysy .....Director, Urban Transportation  
Barbara Nelson .....Principal Planner  
Greta Ryan .....Senior Planner  
Matt Smith ..... Intern  
Jackie Stewart ..... Director, Planning  
Sarah Stewart .....Senior Planner  
Peter M. Sweetland ..... Finance and Contracts Administrator

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**Call to Order**

Chairman Prichard called the regularly scheduled April 11, 2013 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 9:10 a.m. in the RRPDC board room. 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**

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**

As there were no requests from the public to address the Commission, Chairman Prichard closed the public comment period.

### **D. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Prichard said she did not have a report.

### **E. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Crum brought 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 reported that The Community Foundation approved the agency's grant request for funding to begin the Regional Indicators Project. These funds require no local match. The project will begin this month and updates will be provided to the Board as the project moves forward.

Mr. Crum said he would like to note that the Region's new Commonwealth Transportation Board member, Roger Cole, has been very accessible to staff. Mr. Crum said Mr. Cole worked closely with MPO staff during the recent fund allocations process, and he is contacting staff to offer assistance while looking for ways to best represent the Richmond Region. Mr. Crum said he is very pleased with Mr. Cole's efforts on behalf of the Region. He suggested that if members are in contact with him, to take a moment to thank Mr. Cole for his work.

Ms. O'Bannon asked about the item in the Staff Status Report regarding the UASI railroad mapping project. She asked how the project is progressing.

Mr. Crum said the federal Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) designation for the Region was not renewed, and the funds have been eliminated. The funds were used by the emergency management staffs in the various jurisdictions to purchase equipment, etc. The Region missed the designation by two or three urban metro areas. However, one emergency management planner will be retained through the ability to secure state grant funds. Information will be presented to members of the Board next month on the revised emergency management program for the Region.

Mr. Crum reported that the railroad mapping project does have a draft report ready for presentation. Ms. O'Bannon said there have been some rail accidents over the past ten years that would have benefited from having information on rail access points.

Mr. Crum said the railroad mapping project draft report can be presented to the Board. Ms. O'Bannon asked how the UASI designation had been lost. Mr. Crum said it was based on population. The population parameters were changed to match the existing funding.

## **F. Regional Interest Items**

Chairman Prichard asked for Board members to take about thirty seconds to mention something positive going on in their locality.

Items brought up by members going around the table:

- New Kent County Wine Festival will be held on May 11
- Chairman Prichard participated in the Liberty Trail painting with a team from Chesterfield County this past weekend; she applauded the City of Richmond for this project
- Hanover County has approved zoning for the new outlet mall, which will be built at the old Pro Bass Shop location; the interchange at Lewistown Road will also be redesigned
- Beaverdam Wine Festival is this weekend
- RRPDC presented the technical assistance project to Goochland County to create an inventory of roads eligible for the six-year improvement plan to pave-in-place or for rural rustic designation; priorities will be established within the inventory so work can be done as funds become available; a safety overlay will also be completed to identify the most dangerous intersections/roadways
- Chesterfield County and Timmons have rolled out new branding and website for the Meadowville redevelopment site; the rollout took place in the same manner as a private developer
- Powhatan, Goochland, and Henrico Counties, along with the Department of Corrections, are developing a water sharing plan; it was noted that Powhatan County appreciates this effort as the county would not have been able to meet its future water needs on its own
- Charles City County has opened its first public boat ramp for access to the James River
- Colonial Downs is now open for the season in New Kent County; the July 4th celebrations are well worth the drive
- regional unemployment numbers need to be monitored with regard to matching skill sets to jobs; kudos to the City of Richmond for removal of the felon box from employment applications
- tourism in the Region should be a priority and a focus of all jurisdictions with regard to economic benefits; the Region has a lot going for it – climate, tourism, etc.
- Monument Avenue 10K is this weekend and brings a lot of people into the Region from other areas of the country
- Richmond International Raceway is another venue that can be used to promote tourism in the Region

- Flying Squirrels are back in town and are doing well
- there is a website accessible through the City of Richmond's website that will give real time updates on the progress at the Redskins training camp
- NASCAR will be in Henrico County on April 26-27 and will bring a lot of tax revenue to the Region
- Ashland Women's Club fundraiser for the Hilliard House is on April 28
- all of the boards of supervisors need to be given credit for their hard work to develop budgets to best benefit their citizens
- a \$10 million investment has been made at the Richmond International Raceway to upgrade the facilities
- Travelers Insurance is moving into the old Circuit City building in Henrico County
- Hanover Planning Commission has eliminated cash proffers; these have resurfaced as developers are asking for reductions in road proffers; there is a comp plan workshop scheduled to hear the public input on this issue
- Historic Route 1 sign will be dedicated this afternoon for an area between Brook and Parham Roads
- Brookhill in Henrico County is being recognized for its involvement with Gabriel's Insurrection
- Ashland's Wine for Cures is an event that will happen soon; Ashland Variety Show was a big success
- Mr. Davey made a presentation to the Hanover County Board on the ULI Realty Check event set for May 14
- on April 25 a cook-off between the basketball coaches from VCU and the University of Richmond will be held at Benedictine High School
- Richmond City Council passed a resolution honoring Charles Peters, who passed away in January
- tonight at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart a preview performance will be given by the American Youth Harp Ensemble, the Saint Bridget's Boys and Girls Choir, and the Virginia Chorus; these groups have been invited to perform at the Lincoln Center on April 27; another preview performance will be given on April 19 at St. Bridget's

Chairman Prichard thanked members for sharing their information.

## **II. CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- A. Approval of Minutes – March 14, 2013
- B. Approval of February Financial Report
- C. Authorization to File and Execute FY 14 Federal and State Grant Applications and Agreements on Behalf of the RRPDC for the Richmond Area MPO's FY 14 Unified Work Program

There was no request to have any of the items removed from the Consent Agenda for additional discussion and on motion made by Ms. Graziano and seconded by Mr. Gecker, the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously as presented.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business to bring before the Board.

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Chapel Island Project Update**

Chairman Prichard asked Ms. Jacocks to lead the discussion on this item.

Ms. Jacocks introduced Mr. Nathan Burrell, Acting Supervisor for the James River Park System, who has been the project manager for the Chapel Island work. She noted that Mr. Burrell has been instrumental in organizing the project work and the volunteers who have completed the work.

Ms. Jacocks reported that Chapel Island is a hidden resource on the James River. She said she first became aware of Chapel Island 21 years ago when she was working on another planning project involving Tobacco Row. Funding for this project was made available through a Coastal Zone Management Program Grant which RRPDC was able to secure for the City of Richmond. The \$49,000 grant was matched by volunteer work hours and in-kind hours from City staff. Mr. Burrell indicated since January, about 1,000 work hours had been logged by City staff and another 500 hours have been provided through volunteer groups.

Chapel Island is accessible from Great Shiplock Park. There are five and a half acres on the east end of the Island that can be developed for passive recreation. Ms. Jacocks noted about a half mile of trails will be installed by the volunteers as well as a canoe input ramp. The Virginia Capital Trail head is also located on Chapel Island.

Ms. Jacocks provided a brief history of Chapel Island and Great Shiplock Park, as well as Trigg Ship Yard.

Examples of the work being done on Chapel Island to complete the trails were provided, including photos of some of the river views, the North Loop Trail, Trigg Cove, and the kayak/canoe put-in ramp. Examples of some of the interpretive signs that are being installed were also provided.

Ms. O'Bannon asked how to access the park. Mr. Burrell said the main parking lot is at 2803 Dock Street; there are about 20 parking spaces. Mr. Crum said the entrance is across from the Lucky Strike building. Mr. Burrell added that this is one of the first projects on the River Front Plan to be started. He said many new groups of

volunteers have been brought in to work on the project. Mr. Burrell said this will offer a new recreational area for the City and the Region.

Chairman Prichard thanked Mr. Burrell and Ms. Jacocks for their presentation.

## **B. Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Timeline Review**

Chairman Prichard asked Ms. Jacocks to provide information on this item.

Ms. Jacocks provided some background information on the CEDS project, which began in July, 2011. A grant in the amount of \$75,000 was secured from the federal Economic Development Administration. A 50 percent match was required. An Economic Development Roundtable was established by bringing in local economic development staffs from the jurisdictions as well as representatives from various businesses and non-profit organizations in the Region.

In January, 2012, the committee met and formed four work groups, which met from February, 2012 through April of this year. These work groups centered around talent, infrastructure, business clusters, and quality of life. The work groups have met with the larger committee several times over the course of the past year, including a recent meeting held on April 5, 2013.

At this time, a draft document is being prepared that will serve as a repository for data that can be used throughout the entire Region for economic development. One of the goals for the document is that it will complement other efforts underway in the Region, such as the Capital Region Collaborative. Public comment will be invited as the draft report is developed.

Ms. Jacocks reported that it is expected a final draft will be ready to present to members of the RRPDC Board this fall. Copies will be provided in advance for input from members. Once the RRPDC Board has endorsed the report, it will be submitted to the federal Economic Development Administration for review and approval.

Ms. Jacocks said it is hoped this will be a launching point for many other strategies that can move the Region forward in economic development. She noted that the primary reason for the development of a CEDS was to help the Region be in a better position to retain jobs and advance economic growth.

## **C. Land Use Inventory – Underutilized Corridors**

Chairman Prichard asked Ms. Darby to present this item for discussion.

Ms. Darby said this presentation is being made to advise members on work that staff is planning to do as opposed to work that has already been completed. She said she would like feedback from members on what sort of information they would like

included or eliminated from this project. Ms. Darby said staff wanted to make certain that the work being done by staff on behalf of the jurisdictions is important and useful to the jurisdictions.

Ms. Darby reminded members that last summer, she presented to members information on the Region's first parcel-based land use inventory. The inventory was created to provide a baseline for the Region and to track future development. Updates will be made to the inventory periodically.

Last fall, the next phase of the project was presented which provided information that was overlaid onto the inventory – undeveloped land by zoning inside regional water and sewer service areas. Ms. Darby provided a map to show this information. The analysis was completed to assist localities in knowing where development could take place within existing water and sewer service areas, which could in turn, save the localities from having to install water and sewer service in advance of development.

Ms. Darby showed a preliminary map of the corridors that will be studied in this next phase. Those include Routes 1, 7555, 60, 10, 360, and 33 as they cross through the Region. These corridors are currently underutilized and have some common characteristics – wide roads, auto-centric, empty parking lots, declining businesses, vacant buildings, etc. Ms. Darby said staff would like to know if members feel these are the correct corridors to study and if there are others in the localities that need to be added.

Ms. Darby said these corridors have become underutilized because as a Region, changes have been made in where citizens live and work in addition to how they travel to and from work, home, and retail centers. The new transportation corridors – I-95, I-64, I-295 – allow the Region to function more expediently. As a result, the old gateways have become underutilized. Ms. Darby provided photos to show how the underutilized corridors look at this time.

Ms. Darby stressed that this is a regional issue and is not more prevalent in any one jurisdiction over another. She said staff is hoping this project will help provide a regional solution to the problem. Ms. Darby noted there have been some inter-jurisdictional efforts over the last few years to address the underutilized corridors. Many of the corridors have historic value to the Region. One example of a redevelopment effort between jurisdictions is what is being done in the old Cloverleaf Mall area of Chesterfield County and the City of Richmond. Ms. Darby said staff believes these efforts are a great beginning of jurisdictional collaboration and revitalization to improve the corridors and provide quality of life, economic, and tourism opportunities. Ms. Darby said water quality changes will also be included.

Examples were provided to show Route 1 in Ashland/Hanover County. Underutilized areas are shown based on a land to improvement value ratio inventory. This is a basic way of analysis for small corridors to show areas that could be targeted for redevelopment.



Ms. Darby said the analysis is geographically based in GIS. Each parcel was evaluated by local staff to provide the improvement value. The improvement value is divided by the land value. If the improvement value is less than the land value, this will indicate distress. Higher resulting ratios indicate higher use of the parcel. Ms. Darby said ratios above 1.0 indicate that the parcel is doing well. She said the parcels with a ratio of 0.0 will be studied to see if these are greenfields.

Ms. Darby said exceptions to the ratio are large tracts of land such as farms and forests. These have no improvement value; the value is the land. These parcels will be removed if it has been zoned as agricultural by the locality.

Ms. Darby said staff hopes the ending result can be shared with the localities to help identify parcels that can be developed in a way that will be most beneficial to the locality and the Region.

Information was also provided on the improvement/land value ratio by number of parcels along the Route 1 corridor in Ashland and Hanover County. Ms. Darby said this type of analysis will be done for each corridor identified in each jurisdiction. Information was also provided using the ratio by percentage of acreage along the same Route 1 corridor.

Ms. Jaeckle asked if acreage with no development is being considered distressed. Ms. Darby said those types of parcels will be taken off for this initial work. She said there are parcels that are undeveloped but not distressed. Ms. Jaeckle said there is a big difference in parcels that are undeveloped compared to parcels that are developed and useless.

Ms. Darby said staff understands there are existing plans for certain parcels in each jurisdiction and this will be taken into consideration. She said as the maps are developed, the work will be done with information available from the localities.

Mr. Glover asked how existing zoning and land use plans will be incorporated into this project and any recommendations that may be made by RRPDC staff. Ms. Darby said each jurisdiction's future plans and existing zoning will be a factor in what RRPDC staff does to identify parcels. She said if there are intentions for parcels already existing, these will be identified and respected. Ms. Darby said overlays will be done to eliminate areas not served by water and sewer. Whatever has already been planned by the localities will be taken out of the process.

Mr. C. Peterson said that historically, planners have said strip development is not to be considered. He asked if major corridors are where all development should be taking place. Ms. Darby said it would depend on what would work best for the locality. Strip malls typically are a drain on the economy and impede traffic. She said there are new ways of development that can move people and traffic more

efficiently while creating nodes of development. The Cloverleaf Mall redevelopment is a good example how this new planning can work.

Mr. Crum said many of the distressed areas were developed using vintage 70s and 80s planning methods. He said the opportunity will be in how to reenergize and reutilize the areas. He said the project hopes to identify how to develop the areas and what will best benefit the communities to add value. All methods of growth should be considered.

Mr. Glover noted that, for example, Route 1 and Route 33 were zoned many years ago to take into consideration the railroad tracks. Those types of things will influence how the parcels are treated with respect to current comprehensive land use plans. Ms. Darby said she agreed with Mr. Glover and all of these aspects will be taken into consideration. It will be important to understand why changes in pattern have occurred and how improvements can be made working within those parameters.

Ms. O'Bannon asked if the goal of RRPDC was to provide an action plan for the localities to follow. Ms. Darby said the project is being funded through a grant from the Coastal Zone Management Program. The idea is that a report and analysis will be created to be used by local staffs in their own planning processes. An example of this would be the brochure created for Charles City County that was presented to members of the RRPDC Board last month. This brochure will be used as a tool for the local staff when they meet with developers. Ms. Darby said that is what staff has in mind for this project as well, if members think it will be useful.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked if the local staffs will be involved. Ms. Darby said staff is just beginning the work to collect data. She said local staffs will be involved during each phase to ensure the correct information is being collected.

Mr. Davey suggested that a top ten list could be developed to identify the parcels that are the most likely to be developed or revitalized. He said points to consider could be the same ones developers use – retail, hospitality, residential. Mr. Davey said this may allow the top redevelopment opportunities to be identified. Ms. Darby said a similar analysis was just completed as part of the CEDS project.

Mr. K. Peterson said he feels the information will be useful to each of the jurisdictions, but he wondered how a regional solution can be developed without impacting individual comprehensive plans that the localities already have in place. Mr. Crum said residents talk about the corridors in a general sense, without regard to government boundaries. Mr. Crum said RRPDC staff hopes to be able to provide data that can be used at the local level to help make local land use policy decisions. It is hoped that the jurisdictions will take that information to link it with joint efforts between jurisdictions. Local land use decisions will be made by the local jurisdictions.

Mr. C. Peterson said there are many areas along the Route 360 corridor in Mechanicsville that are developed and doing well; however, they are not very attractive. Infrastructure is a barrier to revitalization. He said it would be helpful if such barriers could be identified that may limit what can be done along the underutilized corridors. Ms. Darby said that information can be added.

Mr. Silber said he thought such a project can have value for the localities, each locality will have varying levels of distressed properties. He said in Henrico County, the comprehensive plan identifies these areas and they have been prioritized. He said it will be critical for RRPDC staff to maintain good lines of communication to eliminate any duplication of efforts that may lead to contradicting ideas. Ms. Darby asked if the planning or economic development staff would be the best people to include. Mr. Silber said in Henrico County, the planning staff would be the best ones to work with.

Ms. O'Bannon said Henrico County has previously focused on revitalization of residential areas and developed books to help property owners make improvements to their residences. She said the books are available online through her website. She asked if what RRPDC staff is doing will be just to identify parcels or if a plan will be developed for improvements. Ms. Darby said she is aware of the books which she thinks are a good tool. She said she's heard from members today that a lot of work has already been done locally and that efforts should not be duplicated. Ms. Darby said one thing staff has been considering is to provide suggestions for how to improve lots incrementally that over time will improve the corridor based on best practices.

Mr. Glover said he thought efforts should be focused on vacant land corridors. He said he felt efforts will be duplicated and that any suggestions offered would not fit into current zoning. It will be difficult for the localities to make improvements if these improvements are not in sync with current zoning. Mr. Glover said vacant corridors improvement suggestions, such as Route 5 in Henrico County, would be beneficial to the localities. He said in Henrico County, plans have been set to install infrastructure in these areas.

Chairman Prichard noted that the Route 1 corridor in Ashland is of particular interest to the town with respect to revitalization. She said town staff spends a lot of time trying to determine how to turn 1940s and 1950s planning into success for today's residents. She said this lot by lot analysis will be very helpful to Ashland. She said new types of businesses are being brought into the corridor. Chairman Prichard said it will be helpful to know what types of businesses will mesh with what is already there.

Ms. O'Bannon said what RRPDC staff is doing will be to collect more data and not provide an action plan.

Chairman Prichard said collection of data will help the town create its own action plan. She said she didn't think it had ever been the intent of the RRPDC to tell the

localities what to do, but to provide tools to help the localities make their own planning decisions.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said infrastructure barriers will be found throughout the Region. If the localities acted together to approach companies such as Dominion Power for help to overcome these barriers, that will be a great benefit.

Ms. Graziano said she wanted to stress that RRPDC staff should work with local planning staffs to ensure no duplication of efforts occurs. She said she thought the additional data will be very helpful to local planning staffs as localities move forward. She said the data may even result in localities making zoning changes to reflect what is now taking place as opposed to 50 years ago.

Ms. Jaeckle suggested that staff look at areas along the same types of corridors in other areas to see what has worked and what has not, as well as to determine if the changes were government driven or market driven.

Ms. Darby thanked members for their feedback and said any additional suggestions can be sent to her or Mr. Crum.

**V. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Next Meeting** – Chairman Prichard reminded members that the next meeting will be on Thursday, May 9.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

There was no other business to bring before the Board and Chairman Prichard adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:35 a.m.

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Robert A. Crum, Jr.  
Executive Director

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Faye O. Prichard  
Chairman