

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 11, 2014

Members (Alternates) Present

Parker C. Agelasto.....City of Richmond
Daniel Arkin.....City of Richmond
Jonathan T. Baliles.....City of Richmond
Timothy M. Davey.....Chesterfield County
Steve A. Elswick.....Chesterfield County
Evan Fabricant.....Hanover County
Daniel A. Gecker, Treasurer.....Chesterfield County
Kathy C. Graziano.....City of Richmond
Russell J. Gulley.....Chesterfield County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek.....Hanover County
James M. Holland.....Chesterfield County
Dorothy Jaeckle.....Chesterfield County
David A. Kaechele.....Henrico County
Eric Leabough.....Henrico County
John H. Mitchell.....Henrico County
Patricia S. O'Bannon.....Henrico County
C. Harold Padgett.....Hanover County
Ken Peterson, Chairman.....Goochland County
W. Canova Peterson.....Hanover County
Edward W. Pollard.....New Kent County
Faye O. Prichard.....Town of Ashland
Charles R. Samuels.....City of Richmond
Carson Tucker.....Powhatan County
Arthur S. Warren.....Chesterfield County
David Williams, Vice Chairman.....Powhatan County

Members Absent

Karin Carmack.....Powhatan County
Richard W. Glover.....Henrico County
Floyd H. Miles, Secretary.....Charles City County
Tyrone E. Nelson.....Henrico County
Rodney Poole.....City of Richmond
Frank J. Thornton.....Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller.....New Kent County

Others Present

John AmosRRPDC Legal Counsel
 Derek Andersen Richmond City Emergency Management
 Mike Bohannon.....Richmond City Police Department
 Mike Cox Henrico County Fire Department
 Emily Dillon..... Chesterfield County Fire and EMS
 Floyd Green Powhatan County Emergency Management
 Steve Haasch.....Chesterfield County Planning Department
 Bryan Miers Henrico County Fire Department
 Gerald Pruden Chesterfield County Fire and EMS
 Joanne Simmelink.....Chesterfield County Planning Department
 Brian Turnage Richmond City Fire and EMS

Staff Present

Robert A. Crum Executive Director
 Jo A. Evans.....Assistant Executive Director
 Julie H. Fry Executive Secretary
 Sulabh Aryal.....Associate Planner
 Billy Gammel Associate Planner
 Chuck Gates Communications Coordinator
 Barbara Jacocks Principal Planner
 Jin Lee Senior Planner
 Daniel N. Lysy Director, Transportation
 Kathy Robins Senior Planner
 Greta Ryan..... Senior Planner
 Jackie Stewart..... Director, Planning
 Sarah Stewart..... Senior Planner
 Peter M. Sweetland..... Finance and Contracts Administrator

Call to Order

Chairman Peterson called the regularly scheduled September 11, 2014 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 9:10 a.m. in the RRPDC board room. He then led members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Chairman Peterson asked members to join him in a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims from the September 11, 2011 terrorist attack.

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 Peterson 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 Peterson closed the public comment period.

D. Chairman's Report

Chairman Peterson said that he will not have a report to offer each month; however, this month he would like to bring a couple of items to members' attention.

Chairman Peterson reported that on August 22, he met with Mr. Mark Rhodes, lead auditor from Dunham, Aukamp and Rhodes, who conducted the agency's FY14 audit. He said he believed Mr. Gecker also met with Mr. Rhodes. He said this is a best practice for members of the governing board to meet directly with the auditor to establish a direct line of communication. He said he and Mr. Rhodes had a good conversation and were able to answer a few questions they each had. Chairman Peterson said there was nothing that came out of the meeting he needed to report to members.

On August 19, a joint meeting of the Large and Small Jurisdictions Committees (LSJC) was held. The agenda was developed by staff and included all suggestions that had been brought forward by the members. Some of the topics discussed included administrative items, such as the lease renewal for the office and a possible update of the RRPDC personnel manual. Business items discussed included the regional indicators project and how to best engage the area's legislators – whether by continuing the current legislative agenda format or by some other method. Chairman Peterson reminded members that the LSJC are advisory committees and no decisions or recommendations were made to be reported back to the Executive Committee.

Chairman Peterson said there was additional discussion on some of the issues raised during the LSJC at this morning's Executive Committee meeting. As discussions move forward, any items resulting from these discussions will be brought to the full Board as needed for consideration and action during future meetings.

E. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Crum brought members' attention to the 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 indicated that the large map on the wall will be referred to during the discussion on the Route 60 corridor later on today's agenda.

Over the tables on the other side of the room are maps and graphics created by Mr. Gates and Ms. Darby. These reference the interpretive signs that can be seen at Great Shiplock Park in the City of Richmond. Staff worked with City staff to secure a Coastal Zone Management grant to undertake trailhead work, other walking trails, and a canoe put-in at the park. Going forward, a display will be posted on that wall to feature some of the projects being undertaken by RRPDC staff on behalf of the jurisdictions.

Mr. Crum reminded members that a request had been made to invite a representative from Dominion Virginia Power to address the Board on the recent rate increase initiated by Dominion. Mr. Crum has been in contact with Dominion, and they will have representatives attend the October meeting. In addition to someone who can address the rate increase, there will be someone who can address any economic development questions as they relate to electric infrastructure.

Dr. Michael Rao, President of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), will address the Board during the November meeting on recent and future economic development efforts being undertaken by VCU.

Additionally, as a follow-up to the July meeting, during which Carrie Roth and Nicole Colomb spoke regarding small business development and entrepreneurship efforts between the BioTechnology Park and VCU, arrangements are being made with Ms. Roth to hold a future Board meeting at the BioTech Park and to tour the facilities. Mr. Crum announced that Ms. Roth has recently been named to serve as the permanent CEO at the BioTech Park.

Chairman Peterson noted that ideas for speakers come from the members and he encouraged members to bring forward any ideas they may have for future meeting topics.

F. Environmental and Intergovernmental Reviews

Chairman Peterson asked Mr. Crum to provide information on this item.

Mr. Crum said RRPDC staff contacts partner agencies to ask for comments regarding each review and then compiles the comments to return to the appropriate reviewing agency. This report is provided for members' information only and requires no action. He said these are provided to members to inform them of the work being done by RRPDC staff in cooperation with local staffs as part of the statutory requirements for the agency and to let members know about development activities in their neighboring jurisdictions.

Mr. Crum said he would like to bring attention to the item on page 2 that indicates an expansion is being proposed of Camp Wilderness at Kings Dominion. This expansion will add an additional 32 campsites. There is a Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permit associated with this project, which is why it is being brought to members' attention.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Meeting Minutes – July 10, 2014
- B. Financial Reports – June and July 2014

Mr. Williams made a motion that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Ms. Graziano seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business to bring before the Board.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Emergency Management Planning for the James River

Chairman Peterson asked Mr. Crum to introduce the speakers for this presentation.

Mr. Crum reminded members that during a past meeting, some questions were raised about increased barge traffic on the James River. The RRPDC and MPO have been very involved with investing around the Port of Richmond area to increase barge traffic. The increased use of barge traffic to move freight has resulted in less truck traffic from the Hampton Roads area on I-64. The river is also a recreational asset in the Region. The question was raised regarding how the Region works together to prepare for emergency responses to incidents on the river.

Mr. Crum said there are representatives from several of the regional emergency management departments in attendance to provide information on cooperative response efforts. Mr. Crum introduced Ms. Emily Dillon, who is the Emergency Management Coordinator for Chesterfield County. She also serves as the chair of the Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance (CVEMA).

Ms. Dillon noted that September is National Preparedness Month. Today members of the Region's emergency management departments will provide information on some of the specialty areas used for emergency responses along the James River. She introduced the other speakers and noted that each one will provide information on the role his jurisdiction plays in emergency responses along the James River.

Chief Mike Cox, Operations Chief of Henrico County's Division of Fire, introduced Captain Bryan Miers, Team Leader for Henrico County's Search and Water Rescue Team. Chief Cox noted a handout will be distributed that illustrates the jurisdictional boundaries along the James River. He said the western end of the James River in Henrico County is

used primarily for recreation. There are white water rapids within the City of Richmond and to the east, there is more commercial traffic on the river.

Chief Cox said a commodity flow study was recently completed for the Region. There are indicators on the map that show shipping points along the river for hazardous materials (hazmat). The study also provided the number of shipments along the James River on an annual basis for regulated/hazardous materials. There will be an estimated 60 loads of regulated/hazardous materials transported via ship along the James River in 2014. Barge traffic will produce about 200 shipments during 2014 of these same types of materials. Chief Cox said that there are more accidents involving barges than ships. There are other shipments of non-regulated materials along the river as well.

Chief Cox reviewed several recent incidents over the past few years that required an emergency response, including a release of fuel oil, liquid asphalt, and the train derailment in Lynchburg that posed a potential threat to the water supply for the Region as the contaminated water moved downstream.

Chief Cox said the types of incidents that require a response include:

- fire/accidents
- hazmat releases from vessels, facilities, or transportation
- recreational boating
- emergency medical; drowning

At this time, Captain Miers, with Henrico County's Search and Rescue Dive Team, came forward to discuss what resources Henrico County provides to the Region with regard to incidents on the James River.

There is a 32-member team of firefighters who are also trained in the following areas:

- surface rescue
- subsurface dive operations
- marine response
- swift water rescue
- shipboard firefighting

Captain Miers reported that Henrico County recently received a grant to purchase a new vessel that will have a 1500 GPM pump, integrated phone system, and increased boom deployment capability. The expected delivery of the vessel is in November.

Over the past few years, the Marine Incident Response Team (MIRT) has come together and includes members from several jurisdictions, including the metro Richmond Region and Hampton Roads. There was recently a joint training effort that allowed all of these members to train together and in turn, provide the same training to their own local departments. He said this type of training allows the various jurisdictional departments

to work together, to get to know one another, and to be a better cohesive unit when they need to respond to the same incident.

Captain Miers said the same type of training approach is being proposed for swift water rescue teams. A grant application has been submitted to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to provide funding for the training.

Henrico County firefighters are also sent to Hampton Roads each year to a shipboard firefighting school for additional training. This training is done in conjunction with the U.S. Navy.

The MIRT was originally formed in Hampton Roads with the realization that marine incidents are large in nature and no one jurisdiction will have the resources needed to adequately respond. Henrico County became a MIRT member in 2011. The MIRT responds to various incidents such as:

- vessel fires or other emergencies with hazardous materials
- assisting other localities with incidents
- compiling detailed lists of commercial and military sources of specialized marine firefighting and hazmat equipment
- available 24/7, 365 days per year

Henrico County participates with VDEM to provide a Regional HAZMAT Team. This is a 40-member team that covers an area from the North Carolina border north to Caroline County, west to Charlottesville, and east to Williamsburg. This team responds in concert with the MIRT when needed.

Chief Cox noted that Henrico County has an annual operational cost for emergency management river response of \$272,000.

Captain Brian Turnage, with the City of Richmond Water Rescue 1 Team, noted that water rescue in the City of Richmond operates from two stations – Station 13 and Station 24, using three different companies.

Station 13 is located on Commerce Road and houses Water Rescue 1 and Water Rescue 2 Teams. The station has two DIB inflatable rafts with motors, multiple paddle rafts, and scuba capabilities; eight SRT-trained personnel and a minimum of three divers are on hand at any one time. Rescue 1 responds to all incidents and will then determine if Rescue 2 or Rescue 24 Teams need to be called in. Station 13 covers the lower James River.

Station 24, located on Forest Hill Avenue, covers the upper James River. This station has one inflatable DIB raft with a motor, multiple paddle rafts, and four SRT-trained personnel. This team is for surface rescue only.

Captain Turnage provided slides that showed the types of boats used by the City of Richmond.

The City of Richmond averages between 70-90 water rescues per year. Many of these involve single persons who cannot return to shore. The types of incidents over the past three years include:

recreation/swimmers	38%
good intent	25%
kayakers	14%
miscellaneous	7%
flood response	6%
potential suicides	6%

The City of Richmond also participates regionally in training exercises (dive rescue – ERDI) and operations (equipment and mutual aid). There is a good working relationship with the departments in the other jurisdictions, and resources are shared whenever there is a need.

Sgt. Mike Bohannon, City of Richmond Police Department, said that the City of Richmond has recently created a Police Marine Unit. A vessel was purchased that is equipped with FLIR (thermal imaging), side scan radar, a manual crank davit crane, and dive doors.

The Marine Unit is part time and staffed with one sergeant (K9/SWAT) and two officers (motorcycle). All are trained on boat operations, but have other full time duties within the Police Department. The three staff members have received 40 hours of boat operations training from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The Unit is responsible for an area from Rockett’s Landing to the Rt. 895 bridge. The water level from the I-95 bridge going west toward the City of Richmond is too shallow for the boat. However, the boat can be available to other jurisdictions if there is a need on another part of the James River.

Captain Jerry Pruden, Chesterfield County Fire/EMS, said that he is the operations officer for the County’s water rescue team. He said the team operates out of two fire stations. There are 30 career firefighters who have been trained in water rescue. The types of equipment the County has for use in water rescues include:

- three inflatable boats
- two hard-bottom boats
- two paddle rafts
- scuba capabilities
- swift water technicians
- helicopter rescue technicians
- minimum of three divers on duty at all times

Chesterfield County also partners with VDEM as part of a water rescue team.

There is also a volunteer component in Chesterfield County that has a 24-foot fire boat and a hard bottom rescue boat. The boat also has firefighting capabilities.

Captain Pruden said the divers are public safety divers who use equipment similar to commercial divers. The team will assist the Chesterfield Police Department with evidence recovery. The team also will assist with white water rescue and light salvage work. Captain Pruden reported that the department has partnered with the Virginia National Guard to develop a helicopter/water rescue team. The National Guard provides the helicopter and the County provides divers and rescue technicians.

Chesterfield County responds to river rescues that may fall outside of the County's borders based on the ease of river access. The border is the high tide line on the Chesterfield side of the river. Captain Pruden used a map to point out cut-throughs on the river that were made during the Civil War to provide easier access. When a water rescue call comes in on that part of the river, Henrico County is also notified. He said that Chesterfield County responds to incidents on the Appomattox River as well.

The Chesterfield County dive team responds to an average of 60 calls per year, split evenly between the Appomattox and James Rivers, in addition to some other water rescues in the County.

Captain Pruden said there are challenges within all of the jurisdictions with regard to the lack of adequate state and federal funding for equipment and training costs for water rescue efforts. He noted that state-supported training and technology assistance is also declining for water rescue assets. Captain Pruden said that all incidents on the river are considered high risk / low frequency. He said the jurisdictions will continue to work together to meet the Region's needs.

Mr. Floyd Green, Powhatan County Regional Coordinator, said that Chief Bill McKay from Goochland County had a previous commitment this morning and could not attend. Mr. Green said he will provide information on behalf of Chief McKay as well as information regarding Powhatan County's emergency management resources.

Both counties share the most rural portion of the James River, which is primarily used for recreational activities. He said most of the commercial use along that portion of the river ceased around 1870 when tow boats were no longer used. Mr. Green said that the James River is totally in Goochland County. Powhatan County has no jurisdiction along the river. He said when there is an incident on the river, Goochland County will take the lead response, and Powhatan County will offer assistance as needed. Both counties also assist in other jurisdictions and vice versa.

Mr. Green said there are about 40 miles of river that run along Powhatan and Goochland Counties. Those persons who use the river are typically recreational boaters. Because there are few landmarks and orientation points along this portion of the James River, most boaters do not know where they are or the distance they need to travel between certain points. There is very limited cell phone coverage in this area. When there are incidents, emergency response teams can have a hard time locating the boaters. Mr. Green noted that there are no consequences to people who endanger themselves or others through lack of education about the river or what they need to do to be prepared to enjoy the river safely.

River incident responses are resource intensive and response is made by fire departments that rely heavily on volunteers. The costs of specialized training to respond to river incidents is borne by local taxpayers.

When railroads began putting down tracks to carry freight in the late 1800s, they used the tow boat and bateau tow paths along the edge of the river as beds to put down track. The main east/west route for the railroad, from Goochland and Powhatan Counties down to the City of Richmond, is right along the edge of the James River. If there is a hazardous materials incident along this route involving a train, there is a good chance the materials will spill into the river and endanger the water supply. There is a need to increase the public's knowledge of the river and the associated hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities.

Ms. Dillon said there needs to be a cooperative effort to develop robust notification and response systems to prepare for increased recreational and commercial use of the James River.

She said there is a very good regional response system in place. She said the response teams are not limited to the James River, but will respond to any incident on any body of water in the Region.

Chairman Peterson thanked everyone for their presentations and asked members if they had any questions.

Mr. Williams asked for clarification on how much Henrico County spends on emergency management. Captain Miers said that amount is \$272,000 per year.

Mr. Williams asked if there are any incidents regarding fishermen. Captain Turnage said incidents involving fishermen are rare.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Green if this was an issue in Powhatan and Goochland Counties. Mr. Green said those who hunt and fish regularly know the river fairly well, including access points and how long it will take to get from one point to another. Mr. Green said most incidents involve those who use the river infrequently during the summer.

Mr. Williams asked about the status of signage for the river that had been recommended by the Capital Region Collaborative (CRC). Mr. Green said he will check with the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to see if there are any plans to place signs along the river and report back to Mr. Williams.

Mr. Warren asked if the new VDEM state coordinator has been brought into any conversations regarding water rescue training and funding. Ms. Dillon said the new state coordinator has been involved with the Governor's state evacuation plan evaluation. She said emergency management staffs have not approached the state coordinator with regard to dive team training. She said emergency management staffs work closely with the VDEM search and rescue component to coordinate efforts. Ms. Dillon said Homeland

Security grant allocations this year went to support rail and evacuation and special needs populations.

Mr. Agelasto said the James River Park system has begun a new counting metrics program. He said about 1 million visitors are expected to use the James River Park system this year. These parks are covered by Richmond City Police and Fire and Rescue Divisions. Mr. Agelasto said he appreciates the assistance received from the other jurisdictions in river incident responses. He asked what helicopter resources are provided to the City of Richmond. The response was that Med Flight from Chesterfield County is utilized. This is a State Police program that is available 24/7, 365 days per year. The National Guard also will assist with large scale disasters.

Mr. C. Peterson asked what is meant by “swift water.” The response was that this refers to any water that is moving over three knots, rapidly, or agitated. This also could include flood conditions.

Mr. Holland said he understood that the National Guard also operates out of the Chesterfield County Airport. He asked how much funding is needed for swift water training. The response was that Henrico County recently applied for a grant for swift water instructor training. This would allow three to four instructors from each jurisdiction to have training. The cost for the class is \$30,000 and does not include the cost of back-filling staff to cover while the instructors are in training. This is a three-day class.

Mr. Kaechele asked if any of the jurisdictions can write citations on the river. The response from Henrico County was that the County’s Police Division does maintain a marine unit that can issue citations. It was noted that the City of Richmond can also issue citations as can the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Law enforcement divisions will operate within their jurisdictional boundaries with regard to citations. The Code of Virginia allows local police divisions authority to issue citations on water in the same capacity as the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Mr. Elswick noted this is an example of regional cooperation at its best.

Chairman Peterson thanked everyone for their time to make their presentations. He said that members know that the James River is one of the Region’s most significant assets. It is anticipated that this resource will continue to be developed for recreation and commercial uses. He asked if it was thought the Region has all of the aggregate resources needed to address any incidents along the river related to the increased activity. He asked if there was one take-away for members following the presentation.

The response given was that based on today’s presentation, the extent of regional cooperation that is in place currently is sufficient to address any incidents that may occur. As activity increases, the emergency response needs will also increase. Alternative and supplemental funding will need to be sought for training and equipment.

Ms. O'Bannon asked if elected officials could request a tour of the emergency response vessels. Henrico County staff responded that they would be glad to schedule a tour.

Chairman Peterson said he appreciated the efforts of everyone for the work they do to protect the Region's citizens.

B. U.S. Route 60 Corridor Planning Assistance

Chairman Peterson asked Mr. Crum to introduce this topic.

Mr. Crum said the RRPDC has been engaged with several of the jurisdictions regarding planning work along the Route 60 corridor. He said staff saw this as an opportunity to provide an update on the work that has been done and on emerging opportunities related to the corridor. He said Ms. Barbara Jacocks, RRPDC Principal Planner, will provide the presentation.

Ms. Jacocks noted that the functions of the major arterial routes in the Region have changed over the years. Staff would like to use the work being done along Route 60 to stimulate discussion about this and other aging arterial routes. She said Route 60 has been called the Southside's Main Street. It stretches about 300 miles. There are 75 miles of Route 60 in the Richmond Region. The studies undertaken by RRPDC staff at the request of the jurisdictions have focused on about 20 miles.

Ms. Jacocks pointed out on a slide the study project areas for the City of Richmond, Chesterfield County, and Powhatan County. In Chesterfield County, the technical assistance project for this year will focus on the area from Chippenham Parkway to Chesterfield Towne Center. The project will be led by Mr. Billy Gammel in cooperation with Chesterfield County Planning staff members Steve Haasch and Joanne Simmelink. The focus will be on big box retail reuse potential.

With rural transportation funding, RRPDC staff will be working with March Altman, Powhatan County Director of Planning, and his staff on how to address better access management as the area, which is outside of the MPO study area, and development (land use decisions/highway decisions). For the portion of the area within the MPO study area, work will be done in conjunction with an MPO-sponsored consultant study.

The technical assistance project with the City of Richmond was just completed. The project was led by Ms. Sarah Stewart in cooperation with the City of Richmond's Planning, Public Works, Traffic Engineering, and Economic Development staffs. Ms. Leigh Medford assisted with the preparation of the final report. There are a few copies of the report available if members would like to have a copy.

A \$45 million public investment was made in the study area that has resulted in a nearly complete street from Belt Boulevard to Chippenham Parkway. There are pedestrian crossings, wide medians, and landscaping. While infrastructure was in place, the land use is not compatible to a walkable area. Outside influences were also considered –

Stonebridge in Chesterfield County, expansion of Chippenham-Johnston Willis Medical Center, and the McGuire VA Center, as well as other development on the Chesterfield County side. Chippenham Parkway is a barrier to opportunities for the creation of destinations in the corridor.

Historically, Route 60 was originally used as a route to haul coal to the wharf in Manchester. It developed into a multimodal route once pleasure vehicles came into use. Shopping was added at Southside Plaza/Cloverleaf Mall. There has been some positive reuse of older structures as commercial enterprises have moved west.

Currently there is no accommodation for bicycles. However, there are sidewalks and crosswalks at the major intersections that allow safe access for pedestrians. There are also connections to community gardens and some residential areas. There are no real destination stops.

There is an opportunity to look at the framework for transition – existing land use pattern. Ms. Jacocks reviewed some of the existing uses and types of vacant buildings. Existing zoning along the corridor is B-3 (General Business District). More than half of the B-3 zoned land in the City of Richmond is on Midlothian Turnpike. There will be challenges to change the zoning.

Ms. Jacocks reviewed some of the trends that were identified:

- study area population of 22,000, including younger, more Hispanic and African-American; less affluent than the city as a whole
- 1.4 jobs per resident; only 5 percent live and work in the area
- decrease in overall crime but an increase in homicides
- four intersecting transit routes with 59 different stops; four highest use stops have amenities; three bus pull-outs on the south side of Midlothian
- decrease in vehicular accidents along the improved portion of Midlothian; operating at a third of capacity

Ms. Jacocks also provided information on market trends, including comparisons along selected commercial corridors in the City of Richmond along with the assessed land values in each corridor. She noted that average monthly rent for retail is lower in the study area but higher for industrial and office use. The vacancy rate is higher for retail and office space but lower for industrial use.

Ms. Jacocks also reviewed areas that have been identified as having the potential for building community and maximizing potential. There are areas outside of the study area that can be brought into consideration to offer destinations.

Chairman Peterson thanked Ms. Jacocks for her presentation and asked if members had any comments or questions.

Mr. Fabricant noted that development is moving out along Route 288. He asked if a study could be considered for the corridor along Route 360 to I-64 at the Hanover County line. He said the area is between the city center and the outlying areas.

Mr. Williams said that last year, Sen. Tom Garrett proposed legislation to develop a Route 60 Coalition. He asked if these types of studies by RRPDC may help with the Senator's efforts. Ms. Jacocks said she felt the data that has been collected could be of use in seeking funding. She said if trends and growth patterns can be recognized, long-term needs can be assessed and plans can be put into place.

Mr. Williams said Powhatan County asked to have the study completed because they can see how the other areas along Route 60 have been developed and the County does not want to repeat any mistakes that have been made in the development of Route 60 in the other jurisdictions. Route 60 is a very important road in the County.

Mr. Gates said he did not believe the Route 60 Coalition legislation came out of committee. He said Sen. Garrett's district does not include any of the Region's jurisdictions. Mr. Gates said staff has discussed meeting with Sen. Garrett and the possibility of bringing Sen. Watkins into the discussions as Sen. Watkins' district does include Route 60.

Mr. Williams said Route 60 is important to the entire state for the commercial access. He said issues arise where the road intersects with Route 522 and goes down to two lanes. A VDOT study has shown that the road in that area needs to be widened to four lanes for safety reasons.

Mr. Gates said that VDOT is working on a VTRANS update on state routes of significance. Route 60 is not on that list; Routes 360 and 460 are on the list. He suggested that members contact VDOT to have Route 60 included. The reasoning was that most of the traffic that used to be on Route 60 is now on I-64.

Mr. Pollard said that Route 60 in New Kent County is heavily used and this use will increase as development comes into the County. There is also rail access. He suggested that staff contact the County staff to see if this area could be included in some type of study. Ms. Jacocks said the Bottoms Bridge area was included in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), but it has not yet been designated as a technical assistance project.

Ms. O'Bannon noted that Route 60 east in that area has had an increase in traffic which is why I-64 is being widened in that area. She said after I-64 is widened, traffic on Route 60 will probably decrease.

Mr. Gecker said that Chesterfield County and the City of Richmond have met to discuss how to improve pedestrian safety in the study area at Chippenham Parkway. He asked if the study had identified any suggestions to improve safety. Ms. Jacocks said along the median or the north side of Route 60 has some potential for improvement. She said the same issue was raised at Route 360 and Chippenham Parkway.

Mr. Arkin said when talking about a “Main Street,” he sees this as a roadway that has some type of character that follows the road throughout. He said there is no character that follows the length of Route 60. He said there are signs as one goes from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and the character of the road also changes between jurisdictions. He said there’s nothing along Route 60 currently that makes it a regional Main Street. He said this same discussion would be relevant if it was held thirty years ago. Mr. Arkin noted there are land uses that are spread and locally based without any regional consensus.

Mr. Arkin said in Powhatan County, widening Route 60 at Route 522 will have a direct impact on spread development. He said it’s a matter of time before Route 60 in Powhatan County will look the same as it does to the east. Mr. Arkin suggested that a regional approach is needed that will carry from one end of Route 60 to the other if this is to be a regional Main Street. He said maybe signage could be used to designate that a person is X-number of miles along the state’s Main Street. Mr. Arkin said that unless some thought is given to this, the road will continue as it has and in the next 15 years or so, things will still be the same.

Chairman Peterson noted that Mr. Arkin had made some valid points. He said land use decisions are local decisions. He said the studies being discussed today cross several jurisdictions. He said the City of Richmond has a lot of spokes that come from its center – Route 1, Route 60, Route 360, Route 460, etc. He said RRPDC staff has been asked to do the study on the Route 60 portion. He asked members if this type of study was a good use of staff time and if there were other corridors that could benefit from this same type of study.

The consensus of members was that this type of study is a good use of staff’s time.

Mr. Holland reported on an article he read recently in the Times-Dispatch that told of a resident who has trouble getting from one area to another within the Region. He said this type of issue is common in other areas of the Region with regard to transportation.

Chairman Peterson thanked Ms. Jacocks for her presentation.

V. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Peterson congratulated the City of Richmond and Henrico County on their recent TIGER grant award from the federal government for the Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit route. He said this is a great example of regional cooperation.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no additional business to bring before the Board, Chairman Peterson adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:50 a.m.

Robert A. Crum, Jr.
Executive Director

Ken Peterson
Chairman