

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 14, 2017

Members and Alternates (A) Present

Parker C. Agelasto.....City of Richmond
Angela Cabell Powhatan County
Timothy M. Davey Chesterfield County
Evan Fabricant..... Hanover County
Gloria L. Freye Chesterfield County
Kimberly Gray.....City of Richmond
Leslie Haley..... Chesterfield County
Jimmy Hancock..... Henrico County
Harvey Hinson..... Henrico County
James M. Holland..... Chesterfield County
Dorothy Jaeckle, Chair Chesterfield County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek Hanover County
Kristen LarsonCity of Richmond
Susan Lascolette Goochland County
John Moyer..... New Kent County
Cynthia Newbille, Vice ChairCity of Richmond
Larry Nordvig..... Powhatan County
Patricia S. O'Bannon..... Henrico County
W. Canova Peterson Hanover County
Randy Silber (A) Henrico County
George Spagna, SecretaryTown of Ashland
Frank J. Thornton Henrico County
Randy Whittaker..... Hanover County
Christopher Winslow..... Chesterfield County

Members Absent

Tommy Branin Henrico County
Steve A. Elswick Chesterfield County
Jen Giovannitti Powhatan County
Mike C. Gray.....City of Richmond
Eric Leabough Henrico County
Floyd H. Miles.....Charles City County
Tyrone E. Nelson, Treasurer Henrico County
Rodney PooleCity of Richmond
C. Thomas Tiller..... New Kent County

Others Present

Javon Burton Richmond Association of Realtors
Eric Gregory..... RRPDC Legal Counsel
Chelsea Hartman..... Chesterfield County
Lisa Kyle..... Office of Congressman Dave Brat
Laura Lafayette Richmond Association of Realtors

Staff Present

Martha Shickle Executive Director
Julie Fry Executive Assistant
Barbara Nelson Deputy Executive Director
Tiffany Dubinsky Principle Planner
Ashley Hall..... Manager, Capital Region Collaborative
Barbara Jacocks Director of Planning
Jin Lee Senior Planner
Jackie Stewart..... Manager, Special Projects
Brenda Stone HR Coordinator

NOTE: Staff encountered some issues with playback of the meeting recording. Minutes are written based on the recording as it could be heard and staff notes.

Call to Order

Chairwoman Jaeckle called the regularly scheduled September 14, 2017 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 9:05 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

Ms. Shickle, RRPDC Executive Director, reported that a quorum of members was present.

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

Chairwoman Jaeckle asked if there were any requests to change the agenda or order of business. As there were no requests to make any changes to the agenda, Chairwoman Jaeckle indicated the agenda would stand as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Chairwoman Jaeckle opened the public comment period, noting that if anyone wished to address the members, to please stand and provide his or her name, locality of residence,

and if appropriate the name of any organization being represented. Chairwoman Jaeckle asked that any citizen speaker please limit comments to three minutes, and organizations should limit their comments to five minutes.

As there were no requests from the public to address members of the Board, Chairwoman Jaeckle closed the public comment period.

D. Approval of July 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Chairwoman Jaeckle asked if there was a motion to approve the July 13, 2017 minutes as presented. Mr. Holland so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. Lascolette. There was no additional discussion and the minutes of the July 13, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously as presented.

E. Acceptance of the June and July, 2017 Financial Reports

Chairwoman Jaeckle asked if there was a motion to accept the June and July, 2017 financial reports as presented for file. Mr. Holland so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. O'Bannon. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Chair's Report

- Appointment of FY18 Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Chairwoman Jaeckle said the listing is included for members' information in the agenda packet under Tab 3. Staff did not receive any requests from the jurisdictions for changes to the appointments. No action is required by members.

- Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC) Summer Conference

Chairwoman Jaeckle reported that she and Mr. Nordvig attended the summer conference of the VAPDC, which was held in Norfolk on July 19-21. She said she'll offer some of her observations and then ask Mr. Nordvig if he has anything to add.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said one of the breakout sessions she attended was on autonomous vehicles. She said the speakers are predicting that in the future, Americans will not own vehicles. She said she didn't think this was true because Americans will always own things. Some of the autonomous vehicles could be used like Uber or Lyft, with trips scheduled for certain times. The vehicles will pick up passengers at scheduled times, drop them off, and then return for them at another scheduled time to take the passengers back home.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said as the speaker went on and discussed tests of autonomous vehicles, she said at first, the passengers were very nervous about not having a driver. As the vehicle continued down the road, passengers became more and more comfortable about picking up phones and looking away from the road.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said she sees a lot of what was covered in the presentation coming to fruition, but she still believes Americans will continue to own at least one vehicle.

Mr. Nordvig said the CEO and Executive Director of the Port of Virginia, John Reinhart, provided a presentation on the impacts the Port of Virginia has on the region, from the Hampton Roads area up to the Port of Richmond. He said each of the RRPDC's jurisdictions benefits in some way from the Port of Virginia.

Mr. Nordvig said Mr. Reinhart's presentation centered around how the Port is reinventing itself. Previously, the truck trailers were moved by people driving the machines that picked up the trailers and transported them. Now robotic cranes move over the trailers, pick them up, and move them to the dock to be loaded onto ships. There are watchtowers where technicians who operate the cranes are located.

Recently, due to improvements at the Port, the largest container ship ever to come to the east coast was able to dock at the Port. Mr. Reinhart indicates that the region now competes globally with China and India, as well as the other large ports on the east coast. The more automated the Port of Virginia becomes, the more ships and freight can be brought in and transported.

Mr. Nordvig said he'd also like to mention the presentation by Tim Coyne, who is the Public Defender for the City of Winchester. Mr. Coyne spoke about the heroin and opioid crisis that's happening now across the country. He said that in Virginia, overdoses are the leading cause of death behind car accidents.

Mr. Coyne's presentation was followed by one given by Dr. Marissa Levine, who is the Interim Virginia State Health Commissioner. She said that the opioid crisis will probably cause an onslaught of Hepatitis C cases. This will affect people who are not abusing drugs and will require more funding for local health departments, law enforcement, and other local agencies.

Mr. Nordvig said he was glad for the opportunity to attend the VAPDC conference as he thought it was very worthwhile. He said he would encourage other members to attend if they have an opportunity to do so.

G. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Shickle brought members' attention to the staff Key Tasks report, which is included in the agenda book under Tab 4 and details key projects being advanced by staff on behalf of the localities. She said she will be glad to answer any questions on items in the report.

Ms. Shickle said she'd like to update members on a few items. As there have been some changes in agency staffing, Ms. Shickle said that instead of filling vacant permanent positions, the agency has partnered with the Wilder School at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to bring on board two Wilder Fellows. One of them, Jada Smith, is

working with the Emergency Management program, and the other Fellow, Jesse Harris, is working on numerous tasks within the agency including work with the Capital Region Collaborative, technical assistance with Goochland County and Environmental programs.

Ms. Shickle said she is equally dismayed and excited to announce that Tiffany Dubinsky has accepted a job with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). She'll be working on transit and ITS related tasks. Ms. Shickle said that while it's sad for a staff member to move on, it is an exciting opportunity for Ms. Dubinsky. Her last day at RRPDC will be September 20. Ms. Shickle said Ms. Dubinsky began working for RRPDC as an intern. She left to work at the Northern Shenandoah Valley RC, so Ms. Shickle said she's had two opportunities to work with Ms. Dubinsky. Members congratulated Ms. Dubinsky on her new position with DRTP with a round of applause.

Ms. Shickle said she hoped members had noticed there are no microphones on the tables. New microphones and speakers are now installed in the ceiling. She said the equipment has been programmed so that if you are sitting next to someone, you hear them from their seat next to you instead of through the speakers. If you are seated on the other side of the room, you will hear the amplification. Ms. Shickle said it is hoped this smart technology will eliminate the echo effect. She asked members to feel free to provide any feedback they may have on the new equipment. Ms. Shickle also cautioned members that the equipment is very sensitive and will pick up other sounds such as paper shuffling on the table, etc. She said the equipment has been in use by staff for about a week and that work continues with the vendor to fine tune the settings.

Ms. Shickle said the sound system is also equipped with a T-Coil system to allow some hearing aid devices to pick up sound directly through hearing aids. There are also three headsets that can be used for additional amplification if needed.

Lastly, Ms. Shickle noted that the meeting is now being recorded digitally, so there are no more cassette tapes.

Ms. Shickle said she is also pleased to announce that staff is close to signing a contract with West Cary Group to work with staff to develop a new website. The vendor was selected through a competitive bid process that netted about 27 proposals.

Ms. Shickle said that if the Hazard Mitigation Plan has not been scheduled for a vote in a local jurisdiction, it will be soon. The Plan serves 26 jurisdictions and will be brought before all of their governing bodies for adoption. One of the jurisdictions adopted the Plan in late August, which will make the Plan effective as of that date.

There are a lot of events happening around the region this fall. Next week, in partnership with the Capital Region Collaborative (CRC), an event is being held entitled Art Means Big Business. If you have not received an invitation to attend, please let us know.

All of the jurisdictions of the region have been designated as Playful Cities through a program initiative sponsored by KABOOM!. There is a national Play Day RVA happening

next week to promote activities dealing with the well being of all residents. Good media coverage of the events around the region is expected and will continue to raise awareness of the importance of developing and sustaining a sense of Quality Place in the region.

Another event happening next week is Give a Day RVA. Each of the jurisdictions will have opportunities for their citizens to spend a day of service in their own communities. There are approximately 1,500 volunteers working at 65 events to give a day of service. A celebration event will be held at The Diamond on Saturday, September 23. This region wide event is the result of the recent realignment of the HandsOn volunteer match program to the regional priorities. HandsOn and the Collaborative are partnering to create opportunities for residents of the region to contribute to moving the needles in each of the priority areas. Give A Day RVA is just one of many opportunities to demonstrate how individuals can contribute to our regional objectives.

Mission Tomorrow will be held on November 1-2, 2017, at the Richmond Raceway. This event is in partnership with ChamberRVA and other area organizations to bring together all of the region's 8th graders to learn about career opportunities and readiness. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she chaperoned last year's event.

Ms. O'Bannon noted that during a recent meeting of the Workforce Development Board, one of the speakers reported that she had several jobs available for area youth. Unfortunately, only about half the jobs were filled because the majority of the applicants failed a drug test due to marijuana use. Ms. O'Bannon said she hopes this will be brought up to the students who attend Mission Tomorrow.

Ms. Shickle said a number of the employers do point out what is taken into consideration during the hiring process, including drug testing and driving records.

Mr. Holland asked if this type of career planning carries forward into high school. Ms. Shickle said Mission Tomorrow partners with the schools' CTE programs and continues to be a part of the school curriculum.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said Mission Tomorrow points out to students that they need to begin to establish some career goals as they continue their classes into high school.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said the event is very well structured and requires students to have a punch card that they take around to a specified number of employers. There are also many hands-on activities for the students to try and opportunities to speak with people who are employed in a specific field. She said she thought last year's event was very successful and well worth the effort.

Ms. Shickle reported that GO Virginia is well underway. The Region 4 plan has been approved and the project selection process has begun. Projects selected for funding within the regions will be forwarded to the GO Virginia Board for review with awards made by the end of the calendar year. She said she'll be glad to provide a more detailed timeline to anyone who would like a copy of the process.

Mr. Agelasto asked where he could find a copy of the full GO Virginia Plan. Ms. Shickle said she will forward a copy to him.

Mr. Fabricant said he had a question on the Financial Report. Chairwoman Jaeckle said Mr. Fabricant could ask his question now.

Mr. Fabricant said he noticed on the June report, under the Cash Basis Report, the Miscellaneous line shows a 777 percent usage and he wondered why this line item showed such a large percentage of the budgeted amount. Ms. Shickle said these funds were those received for tenant improvements and there was no category in the budget under which they could be placed. These are funds (\$24,000) that were received from the landlord and then passed through to the contractor who did the work. This accounts for the overage shown with regard to the \$4,600 budget amount.

Mr. Fabricant asked about the amount on the Rent line. Ms. Shickle said that is the amount pre-paid to the landlord for July rent. Rent is paid in advance, and the \$24,000 amount shown is what was received for the tenant improvements.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said that if anyone is interested in seeing the presentations from the VAPDC Summer Conference that she and Mr. Nordvig mentioned, all of the presentations are listed on the VAPDC website.

Ms. Shickle reported that under Tab 5, there is a listing of the RRPDC meetings for the remainder of the year along with proposed agenda items. She said the Executive Committee recommended one change to the listing during their meeting this morning. They would like to move the presentation from the Department of Social Services from the October meeting to the December meeting.

Chairwoman Jaeckle added that the CAOs/Managers Panel Discussion was an agenda item they felt should be a standalone agenda item.

Ms. Shickle said the draft audit report for FY17 will also be presented during the October meeting. If there are no items that need attention in November, there may be a request during the October meeting to cancel the November meetings.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairwoman Jaeckle noted there are no items included on the Consent Agenda this month.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. RRPDC Future Working Group Update

Chairwoman Jaeckle said Mr. Davey will provide an update on this agenda item.

Mr. Davey reported that during last month's Board meeting, there was a suggestion that an ad hoc committee be formed to discuss the future direction of the RRPDC. Mr. Davey said not everyone who volunteered to be on the committee could attend the first meeting. He, as chair of the committee, has tried to connect with each of the members to determine how they would like to move ahead with the group. A series of meetings was set up and the group will meet this morning at the conclusion of the Board meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Regional Housing Trends Update

Chairwoman Jaeckle asked Ms. Lafayette to come forward to make her presentation.

Ms. Lafayette thanked members for the chance to speak with them this morning. She said she always enjoys meeting the members. Ms. Lafayette said the Richmond Realtors Association (RAR) works in partnership with RRPDC year round and not just once a year when she's in attendance to provide housing trend information to members. She said under the agency's previous leadership, and now under Ms. Shickle's guidance, she feels that RRPDC has become an agency that means a great deal to the region. She said RAR could not do the work it does without the help of RRPDC staff members to provide data and support. Ms. Lafayette said she has yet to make a call for assistance when she has not received a quick response.

Ms. Lafayette said she would like to introduce Javon Burton, a research fellow who graduated from Hampden Sydney in May. He will be working with RAR over this year to conduct some of the studies she will mention during this morning's presentation.

Ms. Lafayette said she presented similar information in Chesterfield and Henrico Counties recently, and she hopes she will not be too repetitious. Ms. Lafayette discussed the following bullet points:

- Central Virginia's economy and job growth are outperforming the nation's
- average annual job growth historically in Central Virginia is 7,200 jobs
- average annual job growth over the last six years was 12,400
- unemployment rate is below 4 percent

Average units sold in 2016 totaled 16,679, which is still under the 2005 total of 20,057. Ms. Lafayette said she believes the region is on track to sell about 17,000 units in 2017. The region RAR covers also includes the Tri-Cities.

Chairwoman Jaeckle said she remembers that Ms. Lafayette predicted when she first joined RAR that it would take about five years for the economy to recover from the 2010 downturn. Chairwoman Jaeckle said she's always admired the fact that Ms. Lafayette is forthright with the information she presents. At the time, a five-year recovery was not what local officials wanted to hear.

Ms. O'Bannon said the economic forecast for the coming year was presented last week, and she noted the speaker said the last economic downturn happened after Hurricane Sandy. With the two recent hurricanes, Ms. O'Bannon said she wonders how long it will take for those regions to recover.

Ms. Lafayette said economists are always looking backwards. She said there is now no real estate market in Houston, and there is no way to know how long it will take for that economy to recover. Real estate is fairly localized.

Ms. Lafayette said she believes there may be another slow down by 2018 or 2019, but not a recession.

Chesterfield County is always the leader in single family residential sales, as shown on the chart for 2016. Henrico County and the City of Richmond are typically following behind. Almost all of the jurisdictions are experiencing some type of growth. For the last several years, the fourth quarter has been fairly strong and she's hoping for the same this year.

Ms. Lafayette also provided year to date information on average sale prices and the number of single family residences sold in the same time period. Ms. Lafayette said the condo market is showing strong growth, as is the rental market.

Ms. Lafayette said the redevelopment on both sides of the river, especially in the Manchester area, is being influenced by the increase in low income housing credits. She said this is a reflection of demographics – increase in empty-nesters and the increase in those 65-75 years of age and older who are looking to downsize.

Affordable housing is a problem for nearly 30 percent of households across the region. Seniors and single heads of households are the most cost burdened. This limits the amount of money that can be saved for retirement or for children's education. There is also an impact on how much money there is for discretionary spending.

Ms. Lafayette noted the following points in looking ahead with regard to the real estate market:

- rising interest rates, continued tight credit, and low inventory present challenges for first-time and move-up buyers
- the costs of new construction create challenges for the development of affordable housing
 - density done right
 - low income housing tax credits (LIHTC) and incentives
- a decline in federal dollars will make the financing and production of affordable housing far more challenging in the years to come
- the region will never “build its way out” of the affordable housing challenge

Ms. Lafayette said there is a need to encourage developers to bring affordable housing into areas where there are jobs. Local governments need to take a look at how LIHTC are

awarded and to determine the best incentives to offer to developers to build affordable housing near mixed use and mixed income centers.

Ms. Lafayette said members of RRPDC can help what RAR is doing by:

- remind Congressional delegation that the federal government needs to do its share
- return on investment along the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor – more transit equals locational, educational, vocational choice and opportunity
- Neighborhoods in Bloom (NIB) – preserve neighborhoods to increase affordable housing
- housing options for seniors equal market opportunities for builders and frees up affordable inventory for others to purchase

Ms. Lafayette said she will be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. Holland asked if there is a way to separate the cost of housing from the cost of land with regard to new development. He also commented that the growing number of seniors in the region will generate a need for additional transportation to get these seniors to critical services.

Ms. Lafayette said in most instances, land value has recovered. Land where development is taking place is more highly valued. The values are market driven and can't be changed. The City of Richmond has established the Maggie Walker Community Land Trust. When a buyer is interested in buying a house, the land remains with the Trust and the buyer only pays the cost for the house. This creates a more affordable housing option. She said land trusts are a possible solution. With regard to seniors and transportation, Ms. Lafayette said there should be a greater deployment of public and mass transportation.

Ms. O'Bannon said she's heard from seniors in her district that taxi service would be preferred. Ms. Lafayette said she didn't know if this would be cost effective given limited incomes.

Mr. Peterson said there is a disparity in where affordable housing is located with respect to the location of better paying jobs. He said there is a financial segregation being brought about with mixed use development. The workers who are needed to fill the jobs in those developments typically can't afford to live there. He asked if there are examples of where local governments have addressed this type of financial segregation.

Ms. Lafayette said there are many affordable housing units being placed into the mixed use developments. There needs to be more attractive incentives for developers to put affordable units into the mixed income and mixed use developments. She said one idea may be to pair affordable housing with office parks.

Mr. Fabricant said he sees that the high cost of health insurance as something that will impact the ability of anyone to find housing. Ms. Lafayette noted that many people are

just one challenge away from losing housing. She said as policy makers, there needs to be some sort of awareness of the issue and how policy making could mitigate such situations.

Mr. Fabricant asked if realtors are aware of ways to help people buy houses they can afford. Ms. Lafayette said that following the recession, many realtors began to take the approach of helping buyers purchase homes they can afford and not what they can qualify for to buy.

Mr. Winslow asked how return on investment along the BRT corridor will be measured. Ms. Lafayette said RAR is still developing the criteria. They will look at zoning overlay for assessed value from 2012 and then look at the assessments when the BRT funding was announced. This will provide information on how the values changed. They will also look at occupancy, job creation, and residential units. Investment dollars around the corridor can be tracked. The area around the corridor can also be evaluated. Ms. Lafayette said they hope to be able to bring information to local governments to show economic opportunities for similar projects.

Ms. Shickle thanked Ms. Lafayette for her presentation. She said as she's been focused on building the agency's capacity within the region, Ms. Lafayette has been very helpful as a learning resource and advisor.

Ms. Lafayette said she always enjoys her interaction with public servants in the region and appreciates their service to the region.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Hinson announced that Buddy Ragsdale passed away this morning. He said Mr. Ragsdale was a long time public servant in Henrico County, serving in many capacities. He was also a member of the General Assembly. Mr. Hinson asked members to remember the Ragsdale family in their thoughts and prayers.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no additional business to bring before the Board, on motion duly made and seconded, Chairwoman Jaeckle adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:25 a.m.

Martha Shickle
Executive Director

Dorothy Jaeckle
Chair