

Minutes:

Historic Falls of the James State Scenic River Advisory Committee

Meeting: May 18, 2017 – 5th Floor Conference Room – City Hall – Richmond, VA

Greg Velzy – Chair presiding

Called to order: 12:06 pm

Attendance:

Falls Members: John Heerwald, John Moser, Jane Myers, Jim Hill, Greg Velzy, Ralph Hambrick, Tricia Pearsall, Ralph White, John Moeser.

Falls Members Not Present: Anne Wright, Justin Doyle, Alex Dahm, John Thompson, Leighton Powell, Nathan Burrell – Manager, James River Park.

Minutes: March 16, 2017 minutes approved.

Current Issues:

Riverfront Development Plan Update:

- **T. Potterfield Bridge Updates –**
 - Paving of path completed so the path now meets accessibility issues.
 - Construction difficulties are beginning to surface: grates are popping up and cables loosening.
 - Signage not up yet. Since this topic is under Mark Olinger's purview, Ralph White summoned Mark Olinger to address the Committee to report on the state of the signage progress. Olinger stated that the signs are under fabrication and production and should be up soon. On some, the text is still being finalized. This is separate from the way-finding signs. All interpretive signs should be up by summer's end. Way-finding signs were updated last year. Next is to work on the pedestrian signs. There will be a stakeholders meeting and coordinating with Venture Richmond on Brown's Island signs down to Great Shiplock Park. Ralph W. voiced concern about signs being erected as late as summer's end and asked about putting some of the signs up along the Potterfield Bridge now. Olinger said he would see if that could happen.
 - Tricia P relayed that JROC was talking about removing the wooden steps due to safety concerns and asked Olinger about funding or lack thereof for completion of the Manchester steps from the top of the new metal stairs to the top of the wall. She emphasized the safety issues that exist now (families walking through the gates and children sitting on the edge of the Manchester Wall). Olinger indicated he would bring this up at the Construction Walk-through scheduled for May 24th. Discussion ensued about how best to prevent someone falling off the Manchester Wall, and it was suggested that the gates be removed.
- **Downriver Updates:**
 - The Downriver Plan has been passed by City Council as an addendum to the Riverfront Development Plan. Hargreaves will work on their Priority 1 Contract, allowing work to begin on the eastern portion of the Downriver Parcel. As funding now stands, Hargreaves can only complete the design and proceed to 2nd drawings, but not 3rd drawings.
 - Greg Velzy asked Mark Olinger if CSX was responsible for the vegetation along the City Docks between 17th and 21st Street, as it's not being maintained. Olinger says that CSX is supposed to clean it up 3

times a year by current contract. He needs to get with CSX and Capital Trails to see if they can fundraise for additional maintenance monies.

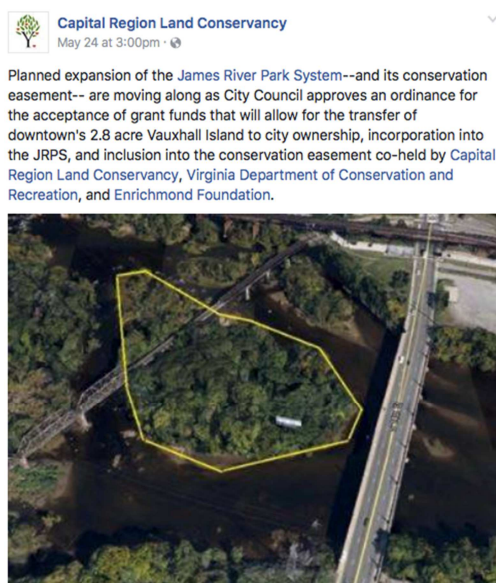
- Ralph Hambrick brought up the issue of funding since the Mayor says this the Riverfront is of utmost importance, but no funding. Olinger said that once the Potterfield is signed off, Hargreaves is coming to do the design work and he, Olinger, can then use leftover funds for Hargreaves to make the schematic drawings for the downriver portion. The funding appropriation will go to council on July 24th 2017 and everyone should be there to advocate for funding. If that goes through, then, at this time next year they should be able to begin the actual implementation.
- Greg Velzy asked who might be the persons to talk to about getting a Water Taxi system in place along the canal/dock. Olinger stated that it is still regulated by Utilities.
- Olinger also stated that the Kick-Stand folks seem to be doing well, offering services to fix flat tires etc.
- Greg Velzy then inquired about movement on the USP-Echo Harbor parcel. Olinger stated that there had been conversation and that they have come in to get an easement access for their POD. The engineering has been done for the sewer, but they still have no developer.
- There was more discussion with Mark Olinger about spaces for parking when accessing water and accessible parking along the Downriver Portion. He indicated that much would be determined by constraints due to restraints on the funding. He stated that the Capital Trail was not likely to be moved.

- **Next Phase - Missing Link**

- Olinger stated that Potterfield is finished. Lehigh Terraces should be the next phase, then Chapel Island, but this may not be the succession.
- City has applied for funding for the design of the Missing Link.
- Ralph Hambrick stated that Engineers recommended that a bridge be built from Manchester to Belleisle as the connector, but that this is wrought with all sorts of permitting issues – building piers in the River, etc.
- ******(Mayor Stoney committed to completing the Missing Link during his first term as Mayor at an event - May 19, 2017 – Bike to Work Day)

EnRichmond: Leighton Powell wrote (e-mail): “I haven't followed up with John Sydnor about Enrichmond's current partnership with the City because the Richmond Recreation & Parks Advisory Board, which I chair, has identified a review of the City's contracts with groups such as Enrichmond as a top priority for the new Director of Parks & Recreation (whoever that turns out to be). In any event, this issue is definitely being addressed.”

*** (Regarding Vauxhall Island, Capital Region Land Conservancy posted this on May 24th, 2017.)



Falls Committee Meeting with Levar Stoney: Leighton Powell (e-mail): I'm drafting our letter to Mayor Stoney requesting a meeting. I met with his Chief of Staff recently, and now is a very good time to approach the Mayor.

Capital Region Land Conservancy:

- Malvern Hill is under contract and fund raising is ongoing. See the Malvern Hill drone video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6JmTBeCO7w>
- Capital Region Land Conservancy continues to work on waterfront easements in Henrico and Goochland.
- Jane stated that when talking about water conservation and clean water to talk about *the water we drink*.

James River Park Economic Development Study: The Economic Impact Study is out and was e-mailed to Falls' members. (<http://jamesriverpark.org/documents/JRPS-Economic-Impact-Study-4-17.pdf>)

Master Plan Funding and Preparation: Nathan has received proposals from VHB, Hargreaves and one that is a hybrid between VHB/Hargreaves. Price range from \$170,000.00 to \$250,000.00. After some discussion, members of the committee voiced concern about the cost, the limited scope and the lack of enforcement of such a document. John Moeser suggested that a good facilitator should be hired to construct such a Plan. *John Heerwald and Jim Hill both reiterated the important and lasting value of having a Master Plan.*

GRTC Bus Routes: The current plan to go to City Hall has no River Stops.

RVAH20 – Anne Wright submitted via e-mail: RVA H2O had three speakers give background and information on stream restoration from 3 perspectives: 1- why restore (nutrients and meeting goals); 2- how to choose and why (engineering perspective); and 3- choice of stream for functional benefit (results). Talks were good.

They then presented a draft list of CRITERIA for all new projects going forward in the city and asked for suggestions and adjustments. There was much discussion on a number of the items until a consensus was reached, and then the suggestions were agreed upon and incorporated. The meeting went overtime, but all criteria were discussed. If new projects do not meet the criteria, the project will not be done. I think this is all to avoid a repeat of the Reedy Creek fiasco.

The attendees were from diverse 'stakeholders' and the input was good. If there are follow-up meetings, I would like to attend. Anne

New Business:

Ralph Hambrick suggested that he and Greg meet with Lisa Sims of Venture Richmond concerning various riverfront efforts and have her attend a Falls Meeting as well. It was also suggested that we invite Bob Steidel – Director of Public Utilities to attend a Falls Meeting as well.

Reports:

James River Park: Nathan absent because of Dominion Riverrock work - May 19 – May 21, 2017

JRA: Justin absent

JRAC:

JROC:

FOJRP: RVA OspreyCam - <https://www.richmondospreycamera.com> A coordinated effort between RichmondOutside.com and Riverside Outfitters. Names: Maggie + Walker.

Open discussion:

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 1:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tricia Pearsall

Next month's meeting will be held **Thursday, June 15, 2017** at 5th Floor Conference Room – City Hall