

Minutes:

**Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee
Meeting – Legends + Zoom
Richmond VA**

Meeting: December 16, 2021

Greg Velzy: Chair – Presiding

Call to Order: 12:08 PM

Attending Committee Members: Tricia Pearsall, John Heerwald, Ralph Hambrick(Zoom), Leighton Powell, Justin Doyle, Anne Wright, Greg Velzy, Parker Agelasto. Community attending: Josh Stutz, Executive Director, Friends of the James River Park, Shawna Shade, Office Administrator, Friends of the James River Park

Minutes: Minutes of November 18, 2021. Motion to approve-Tricia Pearsall. Second-Greg Velzy. Approved. Many thanks to Leighton Powell for such accurate and detailed minutes.

Current Issues:

- **Riverfront Development Plan** (and other James River related) updates: Kevin Vonck, (Director, Department of Planning and Community Review, City of Richmond not present).
 - **Parking Manchester:** Discussion ensued regarding lack of availability of parking as all but 3 spaces on the west of Hull at the 14th Street Bridge are cordoned off and there seem to be no spaces on Manchester Road. Forecast for fishing season seems like chaos regarding parking.
 - **Libby Hill Viewshed:** Important to not let this zoning issue go away as Mark Olinger seemed to have made great progress.
 - **First Street and Parking:** Check on status.

- **CRLC-** Parker Agelasto:
 - CRLC has a new website: <https://capitalregionland.org> visit and explore
 - CRLC hopes to build a virtual library of comprehensive plans (City and County) for all areas and features in the region
 - Virginia Outdoors Plan 2023 – working on surveys and stakeholder engagement: (here is information but the survey seems to be closed:
<https://www.gotostage.com/channel/a8ef320e289e4fdc9fb5ea7e68136a79/recording/a2e7690a058b4127b629b3281d00c9fe/watch>
 - Parker is continuing negotiations with Norfolk Southern concerning easement and transfer of Brander Street property. Working on grant to allow purchase of this property.
 - Also working to establish trail and easement along Rattlesnake Creek to allow for public access also a Flood Plane Resiliency Plan.
 - Also working on conservation of two more parcels for easement into the JRP system. Hope to make announcement of easement incorporation by Earth Day 2022.
 - Parker is working to establish CRLC as the Grant Agent for the Richmond Parks and Recreation Department, since CRLC has the expertise and could provide that assistance for the City.
 - Working on a land swap of 10 acres near Goodes Creek and Bellmeade. This would become part of the Fall Line Trail.
 - Governor has doubled the appropriation of Virginian Land Conservation Funding to about 20 million for indigenous land conservation: <https://www.rappahannocktribe.org/northam-pledges-over-20-million-for-tribal-land-re-acquisition-and-cultural-site-conservation/>
 - Governor's budget has proposed \$245 million for Outdoor Recreation:
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2021/december/headline-916154-en.html>

- Governor has also proposed in his budget at least \$100 million for Richmond's outdated Sewer System https://richmond.com/news/state-and-regional/govt-and-politics/northams-budget-includes-funds-for-richmonds-outdated-sewer-system-millions-to-restore-chesapeake-bay/article_5cea9f36-1a1b-5b55-9a32-476e0cd6d47e.html
- Governor's budget also proposes for FY2023 - @290,00 for American Shad restoration.
- **JRA:** Justin Doyle: Pushing the closing of JRA's Dock Street purchase until January 2022 and hope to have construction documents in early 2022. JRA has wrapped up the community engagement period with excellent feedback. Justin said there had been much discussion regarding building in the floodplain, and JRA hoped to set an example of how it could be done properly. They are also working to meet the deed restrictions imposed by CRLC and to work out an arrangement of second (first) right of refusal should the property be sold in the future.
- **I-95 bridge signage** update: Trevor Hershey of the VDOT signage program apologized for the delay and hoped to get it up this week. Tricia also wrote Mr. Burgess about a sign for the Powhite Parkway Bridge. No reply to date.
- **Virginia Scenic Rivers Program:** Lynn Crump wrote that "I would just notify folks, it looks like 3 rivers are going forward this GA, in case folks can be present to support them - The extension of the Middle James, which will have finished it from Aaron's Creek to Columbia, an extension on the Maury all the way to the James River and the North Fork of the Shenandoah in Shenandoah county near Woodstock." Excellent news!
- **James River Park update:** Bryce not present. Josh Stutz and Greg Velzy filled in.
 - Huguenot Flatwater Access Ramp is progressing very slowly due in part to construction company's inability to build a secure coffer dam.
 - New Superintendent James River Park should be made public by mid-January 2022.
 - Attendance slightly down to around 1.86 million to date
 - FOJRP has secured grant of \$290,000 for ramp at Pumphouse.
- **DPU updates:** Grace LeRose and Jenn Clarke not present:
- **BridgePark** Proposal Restructure: Jim Hill not present.

New Business:

Reports:

JRA: See above

JRAC: Christmas Parade of Boats was amazing this year.

JROC: The 7th Annual King of the James adventure triathlon was very successful. Raised about \$18,000 for JROC. December project to cleanup and re-establish western trail at Huguenot Flatwater.

FOJRP: Josh Stutz and Shawna Shade:

- FOJRP will be working on a new website in the coming months with hopes of it being complete in mid-March.
- We have 3 new board members.
- We will be hosting the Wood River Run 5k on Saturday, April 16th.
- Book sales continue to be strong, we have approx. 200 remaining.
- Legend is working with us to create a new FOJPR beer. It will be a pilsner (much to Shawna's delight, she is happy it is not another IPA)
- We were recently awarded a grant to construct an outdoor classroom at Reedy Creek, next to HQ's. Installation should begin in Feb.

Open discussion:

Adjourn: 1:30pm

Next Public Meeting: January 20, 2022

Meetings begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5th floor of Richmond City Hall if City Hall is open. If not, meetings conducted via Zoom. Meetings are scheduled for the THIRD Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to the public. If you are not now receiving e-mail meeting notices and wish to receive them, please provide your name and e-mail address to velzyg@verizon.net. If you would like to be removed from the list, so indicate at the above e-mail address.

Tricia Pearsall – Secretary