

**Minutes:**

**Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee  
Zoom  
Richmond VA**

**Meeting:** May 20 , 2021

Leighton Powell: Vice Chair – Presiding

**Call to Order:** 12:08 PM

Attending via Zoom: Committee Members: Anne Wright, Jim Hill, Ralph Hambrick, Leighton Powell, Tricia Pearsall, John Heerwald, Alex Dahm, Parker Agelasto. City and River Community Representatives: Kevin Vonck(Acting Director, Department of Planning and Community Review, City of Richmond), Jenn Clarke (Public Education and Outreach Coordinator, City of Richmond), Grace LeRose (TMDL Coordinator at City of Richmond Virginia), Shawna Shade (Friends of the James River Park)

**Minutes:** Minutes of March 18, 2021. Approved.

**Current Issues:**

- **Riverfront Development Plan (and other James River related) budget proposals and in-progress updates:**  
Kevin Vonck, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Community Review, City of Richmond
  - Missing Link Trail – Kevin is currently working with Bryce Wilk to submit conceptual renderings to the UDC in order to get this project on the table
  - Manchester development update:
    - Parking – Diversity Park – 20–21 public parking spaces will be made available as per the agreement with the City in order for their project to be 'signed off'. They will be marked as public spaces.
    - Future pathways/trails – improvements to Slave Trail. Mr. Vonck did not know about this project. Parker Agelasto stated that he was working with Norfolk Southern to get this site improved and perhaps get the track line donated to the City.
    - Manchester Canal - Army Corps of Engineering made a site visit to look at appropriating \$100,000 toward the restoration of the Manchester Canal. This project is in the works.
    - Development Rezoning of Manchester site of silos. Need to secure access by extension of Decatur Street, formalizing Manchester Road and opening up that road to Maury Street. Discussions underway and proposal to Planning: BizSense article:  
<https://richmondbizsense.com/2021/05/17/hourigans-southern-states-silos-rezoning-heads-to-planning-commission/#>
  - Tredegar Street improvements – Public Works has this project in its queue.
  - Vauxhall Island + other islands (Williams) - easement status - Mr. Vonck knew nothing of this status, but Parker Agelasto gave a brief synopsis. The easement process on Vauxhall and other islands are being studied collectively by the legal department of the City and Bryan Fuller, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Jane Meyer, CRLC. Getting clear title on these properties has been a stumbling block. They are striving to consolidate the process instead of creating an easement for each parcel. This will take time, but hopefully can be a model for the Dock Street property easement.
- **DPU updates:** Jennifer I. Clarke, DPU - Public Education and Outreach Coordinator, City of Richmond:
  - DPU is wrapping up several initiatives:
    - “No trash where you splash” billboards (very positive)
    - Forest View Alley Project - cleanup and pervious surface installations (positive except for a few neighbors)

- Still working with Senate Bill 1064: [S.B. 1064](#). A bill to direct compliance with regulations of certain combined sewer overflow outfalls; James River watershed. 20104654D. Jenn is happy to make a presentation to the Falls Committee (possibly in June or July) on this project for the CSO. Making a presentation to PlanRVA.
  - Paddlers are going from Lynchburg to the Chesapeake Bay to highlight improvements to wastewater treatment on the James River.
- **VA Scenic Rivers**
    - Rivers Management Society Symposium report: Leighton Powell: Lynn Crump did a great job giving a presentation on the Visual Resource Management Track (There were 3 tracks) There were sessions on Riverkeepers and many other river projects. Leighton gave a welcoming presentation to Richmond, VA and talked about the scenic vistas inventory and technology for recognizing such as well as the proposed Viewshed project. Ralph Hambrick and Nathan Burrell gave a session on Transforming the James River. They said that FOLAR also gave an excellent presentation. Leighton added that she will be attending the Land Conservation Conference.
    - I-95 Bridge signage update: It's not up, so we will reach out to Rick Burgess, VDOT.
- **CRLC Updates: Parker Agelasto**
    - CRLC has been extremely busy. Report for the last 3 years: Drawdown federal funds by receiving more than 6 million in federal programs to increase public space. <https://www.capitalregionland.org/about-us/>
    - Has received 2 million from the Agricultural Department for farmland preservation along James River in Goochland, Powhatan and Charles City Counties: <https://www.capitalregionland.org/keep-farmers-afloat/>
    - Continuing to acquire land for park and open spaces in the City of Richmond:
      - Received a gift of 13 acres along Warwick Road – Grindall Creek (had a big cleanup)
      - Seeking grants funding of \$800,000 to acquire land off Hull Street near Pocoshock Creek
      - Seeking land along Goodes Creek near Lynnhaven Avenue area Bellemeade to Lumpkin Road (part of the Dick Edmunds estate)
    - Reached out to Norfolk Southern concerning their property along Brander Street and the Salve Trail as well as Manchester Green.
    - Scheduling a strategy meeting with Justin Doyle and Mary Kay Martin to discuss Friend of the James River Park's interest in adding land to the Park and surrounds.
    - Conservation Games will return in the Fall 2021.
    - Looking to team up with conservation projects in Henrico Public Schools
    - Dock Street Property: 3011-3021 Dock Street – Protected the view!
      - Due diligence completed – money wired yesterday
      - Title is clear
      - Will close and put under easement with assistance from the Conservation Fund (a partner) by August 1, 2021.
      - Will/must host public engagement within a year's time as how to best develop use guidelines for now and future for property.
      - JRA must come up with finances for their 0.8 acres subject to their public presentation and public engagement sessions. Leighton asked a question about restrictions being put on the JRA purchases. Parker said there was a list which included things such as: no structure to impede viewshed. No waterfront ownership. All building and usage subject to easement first. Limitations on eco footprint. Deed would give the City the right of first refusal of ownership, should it be sold. Deed would restrict public ownership. etc. Grace asked if JRA were paying for the property. Yes, paying for their share at market price.
      - Hope to spruce up the area a bit soon.
- **BridgePark Proposal Restructure:** Jim Hill: nothing to report. Working on mission statement but probably nothing before the fall.
  - **James River Park:** Bryce Wilk (not present) No report.

- **JRA:** Justin not present. No report.

**New Business:**

**Reports:**

**James River Park System:** No report

**JRA:** No report

**JRAC:** Meeting earlier but no report

**JROC:** May project involved demolishing the Wetlands' board walk and replacing. Also have now begun Thursday evening projects. This month is rebuilding steps in Forest Hills Park

**FOJRP:** Shawna Shade: Friends is also in process of interviewing for position of Executive Director. FOJR also contributed \$25,000 to CRLC for the Dock Street purchase.

**Open discussion:** Anne Wright informed the group of the threat from an extremely aggressive invasive called Japanese Knotweed which has been sighted on the eastern tip of Belle Isle near a particularly important and fragile area of native plants. The Invasive Task Force has hired a contractor to remove and repair the area and try to advise on how to ID and get rid of it.

**Adjourn:** 1:06PM

**Next Public Meeting: June 17, 2021 via Zoom unless City Hall is Open**

Meetings begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Richmond City Hall or on 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](mailto:velzyg@verizon.net). If you would like to be removed from the list, so indicate at the above e-mail address.

Tricia Pearsall – Secretary