

Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee
Zoom Meeting - Richmond, VA
November 18, 2021

Attendees: Chair Greg Velzy, Parker Agelasto, Ralph Hambrick, Jim Hill, Grace LeRose, Tricia Pearsall, Leighton Powell, Shawna Shade, and Josh Stutz.

Call to Order: Chair Greg Velzy called the meeting to order.

Minutes: Tricia moved, and Jim seconded to approve the Minutes dated October 21, 2021. Unanimous approval.

Current Issues:

- Riverfront Development Plan updates: Kevin Vonck, Director, Dept. of Planning & Development Review, City of Richmond. Kevin was not able to attend.
 - Missing Link Update: Parker reported that they have connected with someone at Norfolk Southern. He said that a lot of the land at that part of the James River Park System has changed through the flow of the river. The Assessor's Office is identifying them as new parcels.
 - Libby Hill Viewshed Overlay: Tricia noted that this is an ongoing project, and it is important that we continue to monitor what happens.
- James River Safety Issues: Greg noted that a letter about CSX was submitted to the Richmond Times-Dispatch. No appearance in the Times Dispatch.
- CRLC updates: Parker Agelasto:
 - Dock Street: Parker found the keys and opened the gates so that Dock Street parcels were open for last weekend's InLight Festival. The Conservation Fund owns the property and has outlaid \$5 million. CRLC has raised \$300,000, and there is still \$1.6 million to raise. The Cabell Foundation has deferred its grant funding to March. CRLC is working with the City of Richmond to submit an Aid to Local Ports grant application. Goal is to have remaining 4.4 acres transferred to the City by August 2022. JRA engagement survey generated 80 responses. City survey generated 400 responses. James River Park easement was completed 12 years ago. Parker is finding discrepancies. They have gone through to list all properties to determine what is in the easement and what is not. Several City-owned parcels are not listed and should be. Other privately owned parcels are included but should not be. Total acreage has increased from 285 to 405 acres. The City has identified the parcels in the easement for which it has good title. There are still a few to review, but those with good title would total another 100+ acres. The City is not in violation for impervious percentage, and eventually the James River Park easement will be 500+ acres. CRLC has had conversations with Norfolk Southern about six acres on the south side of the James between Ancarrow's and the highway. It is mostly riparian buffer. CRLC is in conversations to have strip of land transferred to the City and added to the easement. Acquisition will allow the Slave Trail work to proceed. CRLC received \$150,000 from VLCF. The City owns a parcel in south Richmond near Bell's Road near the Deepwater Terminal that was identified as potential Casino site with Parks as a backup. Parker suggested that the Falls group send a letter to the Administration recommending that it be a park. Leighton can coordinate with the Richmond Parks & Recreation Advisory Board for its support.

- Lower Chickahominy Watershed Survey: Parker reported that James City, Charles City, and New Kent Counties are undertaking a process to identify outdoor recreation opportunities for economic impact. They are looking for river access points.
- JRA just released its State of the James.
- Virginia Outdoors Plan is looking for projects to include in the 2023 Plan. For example, City of Richmond might want to add 10-minute walk model
- Choose Clean Water Conference will be in Richmond in May.
- VaULT Conference will be back in Richmond in April. It is now on a four-year schedule to be in RVA following the gubernatorial election.
- November 29 is deadline for pre-application for land acquisition. CRLC can make applications directly, as can the City of Richmond.
- Stakeholders Meeting for JRA Center: Justin Doyle was not able to attend. Grace LeRose attended the meeting. She commented that JRA survey respondents were white and from the West End. Also, FEMA is preparing to redraw the flood maps because of climate change. JRA architect Ed Pillsbury responded that the Education Center will be designed to take on water. She has suggested that perhaps that's not the best approach and that building in a floodplain/floodway sends the wrong message. She noted that they are having a similar conversation regarding the proposed Slavery Museum in Shockoe Bottom.
- Appomattox River: Parker announced that they are closing on a ___-acre site in Chesterfield. Campbell's Bridge: 1-acre site; Riverfront riparian portion of the Battersea Dam.
- Virginia Scenic Rivers
 - I-95 Bridge signage update. Tricia reported that the sign has not been erected.
 - 2022 legislation: Tricia has spoken recently with Lynn Crump. There are no Scenic Rivers bills planned for the upcoming Session.
 - State Scenic Vista Survey
- JRP update: Bryce Wilk was not in attendance. Josh Stutz reported on the following:
 - Park Management Plan + Master Plan strategy + climate change impact update. ARPA funding will greatly benefit Parks. \$1.5 for land acquisition and \$500,000 for new Parks & Recreation Master Plan.
 - Islands and Dock Street easement updates
 - Huguenot Flatwater - Huguenot Flatwater construction update
 - Superintendent update. RVA HR listed the job as an Operations position rather than
- DPU:
 - Pipeline: Grace LeRose reported that the work is complete and the trail is open again. There are numerous posts heralding the effort.
 - Leak in James River and Kanawha Canal structure repair. Greg will visit the site and follow up with Grace.
 - RVA.H2O Stakeholder Meeting 11.9.21 – Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
 - Green Infrastructure Master Plan. There is a \$900,000 budget item for the first time. Grant applications must show how the project aligns with the RVA H2O goals.
 - Interim Plan for Richmond's combined sewer system.
 - Our new, real-time combined sewer system overflow notification map
- BridgePark - update: Jim Hill

New Business:

Reports:

JRA: Justin Doyle

JRAC: Parade of Lights – December 11, 2021 – 5:30pm

JROC: Greg Velzy, Matthew Rosenberg

FoJRP: Joshua Stutz reported that priority project is building an access ramp at The Pumphouse.

Open discussion:

Adjourn:

Next Public Meeting: December 16, 2021

Meetings usually begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5th floor of Richmond City Hall, but by Zoom or another location if necessary. 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.