

## Minutes:

### Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, City Hall Richmond VA

**Meeting:** November 15, 2022

Greg Velzy: Chair – Presiding

**Call to Order:** 12:10 PM

**Attending Committee Members:** Ralph Hambrick(Zoom), Leighton Powell, Greg Velzy, Tricia Pearsall, Anne Wright (Zoom), Jane Myers (Zoom), **Community members present:** Giles Garrison (Superintendent, James River Park System), Grace LeRose (Program Manager, City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities), Heather Mackey (Principal Environmental Planner, DEQ, Office of Watersheds and Local Government Assistance Programs), Mary Jacobs (DEQ staff), Josh Stutz (Executive Director, Friends of the James River Park), Jake Savage (President of the Board, *Friends of the James River Park*), Saber Moazamigoodarzi (Water Resources, DPU, City of Richmond), Leo Mantey (Senior Planner, *Planning and Development Review*, City of Richmond), Jonathan Brown (Senior Land Use Planner and Affordable Housing Ordinance Administrator, PDR, City of Richmond), Matthew J. Ebinger (City *Planning* Commission Secretary, Principal Planner, PDR, City of Richmond) Zoom, Shaianna Trump (Associate Planner Land, City of Richmond, Virginia).

**Minutes:** Minutes of September 15, 2022 - Leighton Powell motion to approve, Greg Velzy seconded. Approved as amended.

## **Current Issues:**

- **Presentation: Chesapeake Bay Act - Buffer Regulations:** Heather Mackey, Principal Environmental Planner, DEQ, Office of Watersheds and Local Government Assistance Programs- Riparian Buffers Modification & Mitigation and Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Regulations - Attached is the Heather Mackey's Buffer Training - Falls of the James PowerPoint Presentation along with ArcGIS - Chesapeake Bay Protection Areas Map – City of Richmond as provided by Grace LeRose, DPU.
  - Summary Notes: Since 2016, Heather Mackey has helped to develop liaisons with locales implementing the 1988 Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodefull/title62.1/chapter3.1/article2.5/>) She presented a general overview of the Buffer and Regulations as stated by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and how it affects the City of Richmond, Virginia. The Bay Act regarding riparian buffers and their regulations is a State mandated program but is implemented locally by individual locales and municipalities. The State performs locale oversight seeking to determine if each locale is compliant and assisting in working with each locale to make this applicable to affect each locale's coastal resiliency and compliance. It remains enforceable. The Bay Act regulations are designed to be integrated into pre-construction documents, basically land-based planning, i.e. the land use/developer applicant + planning work together to ensure that water quality is totally protected. Buffers are super important as 20% - 30% of storm water reaches the river. The object is to limit land disturbance, limit erosion of vegetation and to limit pervious surfaces.
  - For the City of Richmond, there are specifically defined areas: RPA (Resource Protection Areas), RMA (Resource Manager Areas) and IDA(Intensely Developed Areas).(See the attached map as to specifically designated areas). Also attached are Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act regulations with 2021 amendments and the Riparian Buffer Manual. There are more recent amendments pertaining to mature trees (9.29.2021) and resiliency guidelines on the website: <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/water/chesapeake-bay/chesapeake-bay-preservation-act/local-program-regulations-guidance>
  - Help is needed in for education outreach as their staff is limited to 4 for 84 localities. If you see violations, take photos and send to Heather at [heather.mackey@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:heather.mackey@deq.virginia.gov). See something, say something.
  - Much discussion followed.

- **CRLC Updates:** Parker Agelasto sent the following report:
  - (Parker Agelasto: Josh and Carrie Rogers donated 3.5 acres to CRLC to be added to the James River Park System conservation easement and transferred to the City in the future. This is the property west of Westover Hills Boulevard at Nickle Bridge where Buttermilk West Trail access has been granted on private land. It will now be public land and will ensure the trail will remain open to the public in perpetuity.
  - Also, we are trying to close out fundraising on the Dock Street property. CRLC has another \$175,000 to raise towards its \$250,000 challenge grant from the Cabell Foundation. Our goal is to complete fundraising by the end of the year so the property can be transferred to the City. A draft of the conservation easement has been submitted to the City for consideration. Our goal is to have it prepared for introduction no later than the December City Council meeting.)
- **Virginia Scenic Rivers:** Samantha Wangsgard – (no update)
- **Scenic Virginia:** Leighton Powell – (no update received)
- **JRA Update:** Justin Doyle - (no update received)
- **James River Park:** Giles Garrison, Superintendent, James River Park. ( see attached report)
- **DPU:** Grace LeRose sent Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act – City of Richmond map.

**New Business:** As previously notified, John Moeser, a former member of the Falls Committee, died on October 17, 2022. If you would like to contribute in his name perhaps to a James River diversity fund, please let Tricia Pearsall know. Thanks.

**Reports:**

JRAC: December 10, 2022 – Parade of Lights  
 JROC: very successful King of the James – 11.13.2022

**Open discussion:**

**Adjourn:** 1:40pm

**Next Public Meeting: December 15, 2022**

Meetings begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Richmond City Hall and 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](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