



Resort Advisory Commission
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

DATE: November 6, 2014
TIME: 3:00 pm
PLACE: Virginia Beach Convention Center, Meeting Room 3AB

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Billy Almond
Kristina Chastain
Preston Midgett
Jim Davis
Sylvia Strickland
Michael Cloud-Butler
Bobby Melatti
Joe DaBiero
Laura Habr
Sam Reid
Bill Gambrell
Randy Thompson
Tom Brown

Gerrie West

OTHERS PRESENT

Doug Smith, Deputy City Manager
Chris Richardson, Ches. Bay Distillery
David Couch, CVB Econ. Dev.
Curtis Cobert, CVB Econ. Dev.
John Uhrin, Council
Barry Frankenfield, SGA
Diana Burke, VBHA
Stacey Parker, The Pilot
Bill Reed, BEACON
Matt McInerney, VBPD
Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.
Robin Hart, SGA/Recorder

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Ken Taylor
John Hawa
Bryan Cuffee
Nancy Creech
Craig Roback

Chair Billy Almond called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.
Motion carried to approve the minutes from the October 2, 2014 meeting as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett reports that they met last Thursday. Their first agenda item was a presentation on how they could add metered parking, mainly in the 16th Street area, to provide some relief to the residents. There were also some suggestions for changes to the Residential Parking Permit (RPP) program. The TPPC had asked Rob Fries to vet the ideas with the residents and report to TPPC next month.

They also discussed and approved a change in the Commercial Parking Lot

Ordinance, and it is just a matter of Council approval.

Mike Eason provides the background on changes. Since the compromise of having an automated lot during the day and an attendant present at night seemed to work in modifying negative behavior that occurred primarily at night, the current request is to have a fully automated commercial lot. It would require specific lighting and an HD camera under those circumstances. The lot would then be required to close to new entrances at the same time as the municipal lots, which was at 12:30a.m.

Preston says they are also required to have a telephone number listed for assistance. **Motion carried to support the changes as presented.**

They revisited the Pacific Avenue Street closures for the project that ranges from 16th Street to 23rd Street over the next three winters. The retailers on Atlantic asked if the trolley lanes could be open from 16th to 23rd Streets on Atlantic Avenue, and have all traffic directed to Atlantic instead of Arctic Avenue. Both businesses and residents liked the idea. Bob Gey was to discuss with Mike Tippin.

The TPPC thought that it was a good idea, although they did not take any specific position. Preston brought the idea to RAC to pass on any thoughts or concerns to Bob Gey.

Planning and Design Review Committee (PDRC)

Billy Almond reports that they met Tuesday morning and reviewed several projects.

The Chesapeake Bay Distillery will relocate to the old Hotline Surf Shop on 17th Street. The second project is a café renovation at 23rd Street and the boardwalk. Because they are doing a major renovation to the building that affect the café, they will also take that time to make some renovations to the café. The third project, The Green Cat Café, which is the old bank building on 38th & Pacific on the east side. PDRC reviewed and offered comment on color scheme for The Green Cat Café, and approved all three projects.

They had a lengthy discussion on replacing the canopies at the 17th & 31st Street parks. Mike Eason brought examples of several systems, ranging from an A-frame, tent-like structure with permanent posts in the ground, to a more arched structure with a higher clear space. Mike will come back with more information, as it appears that the 17th Street canopy will be replaced first, and 31st Street will be next.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Jim Davis requests a delay in his report, pending a brief on Sense of Arrival from Tom Ippolito.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

Billy Almond reports for Chair Ken Taylor that they discussed everything from the Strategic Plan to reports on various projects. Billy defers to John Uhrin.

John updates the Commission on the proposed arena. John went with a group to visit the arena in Lincoln, Nebraska, similar to the proposed arena for Virginia Beach. The Nebraska arena was also designed with room for expansion for a professional sports team in the future.

Key points to note were the incredible amount of revitalization surrounding the

arena, the success of attracting larger acts to the area, and the ease of security and traffic control (through a private contractor).

The schedule for the arena includes a closed-session presentation to Council and the developer on November 18, with a press conference on November 19 or 20 for the public. The formal presentation to Council and the public will be on November 25. There will be a public outreach meeting around the first week in December.

The density of our market here is much higher than that of Lincoln. John says that we have a lot more to draw on in this area. Nebraska also has a larger arena in Omaha that is only 60 miles away. We have heard from many consultants and others that Hampton Roads is the largest market in the country not served by an arena.

Oceanfront Visionary Committee (OVC)

Chair Kristina Chastain reported a productive first meeting after their hiatus. They discussed several ideas, including how to cultivate these mini-communities just a block or two off the oceanfront; how to make our city desirable to both locals and tourists, and lastly, how to make these communities attractive to design-heavy businesses, and similar businesses who could occupy the older buildings that have character and charm.

They decided to tackle the importance of green space and open space, identifying those areas and their role in unifying people and promoting goodwill in the community.

G.R.E.E.N. Committee

Laura reports that they did have a small group at their last meeting, and one of the goals was to recruit new members, centering on the idea of the Clean Beach Program.

John Uhrin adds comments about the report on the percentage of recycling materials collected from the beach. He wants to note that, over the last four years, they have added recycling opportunities on the beach, on Atlantic Avenue, on the North End, and Sandbridge. We are diverting over 20% of the entire stream away from the landfills. The efforts send the right message to the community and to visitors that we care about these issues. Every pound we can take out of the black can and put in the green can is a plus for the taxpayer as well.

Other Business

Deputy City Manager Introduction

Billy Almond introduces Doug Smith who is at the RAC meeting for his first time. Doug replaces Steve Herbert as Deputy City Manager.

Comprehensive Plan Meeting Announcement

Billy announces that the last public input meeting for the comprehensive plan update is Thursday November 13. The comprehensive plan looks at where the city wants to go for the next five years and broken into development segments.

Strategic Plan Review

The RAC went through a Strategic Planning Session in March of 2013. He asks the members to review the summary of the subcommittees' action items to see if topics

need to be revamped, removed, etc. and determine if there should be another Strategic Planning Session to reprioritize.

Preston Midgett adds the Arena and to the TPPC goals, along with the Dome Site Traffic and Parking plan.

Billy Almond discusses the PDRC items, the same five that have been on for a number of years. The Resort Master Plan is implemented and updated. Maintenance and Upkeep is ongoing, with new projects and open space. Upkeep is an important piece. There are other projects in the works with 19th Street, with the arena and dome sites. Aging Private Investments is an umbrella to try to elevate everyone at the resort. The Review Process for PDRC is always a topic, as they get a range from people that come in at the beginning of a project and need a lot of advice, to completed construction documents. They are working on getting involved in the process at the right time to offer the most valuable input.

Jim Davis of OEC believes that they are moving along with the short-term goals for that the Sense of Arrival project. He recommends that they re-evaluate the long-term goals in collaboration with the PDRC, and the newly formed OVC.

Billy comments on RIC goals. The Strategic Plan Implementation, Funding Sources for Major Projects, Sports tourism, Expansion of the Aquarium, which is in process for the stranding facility, the Marsh Pavilion and the ropes course, the Dome site: Peterson is engaged in that, and the Arena, and the convention hotel. Laura Habr asks about how the rest of the area will be zoned and planned. Billy says that the oceanfront resort district came from the whole rezoning of the oceanfront through form-based code, and if there is anything that they could talk about is the rest of the beach, for example Old Beach.

Billy comments on the Communications Committee, which has been folded into the OVC. Billy asks Kristina Chastain for her Top 5 priorities to add to the Strategic Plan document.

Laura says that all their initiatives can be rolled into the Clean Beach Program for the G.R.E.E.N. Committee.

Billy asks the Commission to send in any additional items for their plans, and they will review the Strategic Plan again at the March 2015 meeting.

Staff Report – Mike Eason

Mike Eason reports that the ice rink is going up this week. It will run simultaneously with the Holiday Lights. In addition, the horse-riding franchise is up at the oceanfront.

From a staff perspective, the parking contract with Central Parking will expire in March 2015, and the Beach Equipment rental franchise expired. RFPs are out for both.

There is also a recommendation for a valet franchise to operate off 21st Street to accommodate the restaurants that are open during the winter months. It will go before Council later this month.

Dannette Smith and Sean Adams will be here in December for an update on the outreach program.

Economic Development Report

No report this month.

Old Business

None

New Business

Grommet Island

Billy says that on Tuesday they had a delegate from Richmond from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, including the assistant director, who is responsible for all the state parks and open space in the state. They came down to see Grommet Island. They met with the Virginia Gentleman representatives, in all, about 30 people and all were impressed with Grommet Island, the city, the boardwalk, the beach; a good visit.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Center

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation Center will be having an “unplugging ceremony” next Friday. They are generating their own electricity without water and no waste.

On November 16, they have a Community Day to illustrate the Living Building Challenge. They are in the process of getting their Living Building Certification, which will take a year to complete. It is located at Pleasure House Point Park.

RAC Elections

Preston Midgett says they need to have elections for Chair and Vice-Chair for RAC next year and calls for any other nominees. Hearing none, nominations are closed.

Billy Almond and Kristina Chastain were elected as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for the RAC for 2015.

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.