



Resort Advisory Commission
 2101 Parks Avenue, Suite 302
 Virginia Beach, VA 23451
 (757) 385-4800
 FAX (757) 422-3666

RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
 MINUTES

DATE: July 2, 2015
TIME: 3:00 pm
PLACE: Volunteer Rescue Squad No. 14

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Billy Almond
 Bobby Melatti
 BJ Baumann
 Kristina Chastain
 Sam Reid
 Sylvia Strickland
 Randy Thompson
 Joe DaBiero
 Nancy Creech
 Bill Gambrell
 Gerrie West
 Craig Roback
 Preston Midgett

John Hawa
 Michael Cloud-Butler
 Laura Habr

OTHERS PRESENT

Laura Silverman, Cirque du Soleil
 Sean Brickell, Brickell & Partners PR
 Robin Goff
 Diana Burke, VBHA
 Kal Kassir, BAC
 John Uhrin, Council
 Matt McInerney, 2nd Prec.
 Harry McBrien, 2nd Prec.
 Bill Reed, BEACON
 Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.
 Robin Hart, SGA/Recorder

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Bryan Cuffee

Chair Billy Almond called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.
Motion carried to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2015 meeting as written.

Cirque du Soleil Presentation – Laura Silverman

Laura Silverman, the publicist for Kooza, provides the background of Cirque du Soleil. It was founded 30 years ago in Montreal, Canada. It was designed to bring together dance, street performance, acrobatics, live music and costumes, focusing on the human body and its ability to display amazing feats. There are currently 18 different shows happening around the world; they have performed in over 300 cities on six continents, and have an international cast of 48 artists.

They have performed in arenas such as Norfolk and Hampton, and have resident shows in Las Vegas, Mexico, and Orlando.

Kooza is considered one of their Big Top shows. Created eight years ago, it is a two-hour show focuses on acrobatics and the art of clowning. One of Cirque’s more traditional shows, it has an international cast of 48 artists consisting of circus families and Olympic-trained athletes. The storyline revolves around a character called The

Innocent, and his journey through the world of Kooza with another character, the Trickster.

Virginia Beach is the 45th city for the show, and the show's first time at a beach location. The first trucks will arrive a week from today and a week from tomorrow the big top will go up in the VBCC parking lot.

They have changed the setup for the Virginia Beach location in terms of the entrance tent and climate control. A more beach-like atmosphere with booths and kiosks alongside the concessions will be in a separate entrance tent, and from that tent, patrons will then walk into the Big Top tent. To reduce the heat of the sun glare and save gas emissions from the temperature-controlled tents, they will have a shade tent over the existing tent, which has a capacity of 2500 people per show.

The Kooza premier is July 16, 2015, with performances running Tuesday through Sunday. There are approx. thirty-nine shows in all for the month-long run: weekdays will have an 8:00pm show; on Saturday, a 4:30pm and 8:00pm show; Sunday, a 1:30pm and 5:00pm show. Parking is free directly in front of the convention center.

Mike Eason mentions the trapeze event promoting the show. Bobby Melatti says that Beach Events is helping Dee and Robin of Live Nation to organize a trapeze school event at 17th Street at the oceanfront, where people can sign up to learn to fly on the trapeze. Melissa confirms that Cirque's own trapeze artist will be there on the first day for a meet-and-greet.

Bayfront Advisory Commission – Kal Kassir

Billy Almond introduces Kal Kassir, Chairman of the Bayfront Advisory Commission (BAC). The Resort Advisory Commission (RAC) had asked Kal to the meeting to provide an overview of the Commission and provide an update on their projects.

The Bayfront Advisory Commission was created around 1997 on the recommendation of the Urban Land Institute. Council appointed a Commission to advise them on the issues that had to do with the Shore Drive corridor and the Bayfront communities, responsibilities almost identical to those of the RAC for the resort area.

BAC PROJECTS LIST

- Road Improvement

The current Shore Drive road project has six phases.

Phase I was completed years ago. That is where Pleasure House Road meets Pleasure House Point, where Taste is located. Phase II is from that point to the western part of the Lesner Bridge. Phase III runs from Vista Circle to North Great Neck Road. Phase IV is from West Lesner to Marlin Bay and Phase V is from South Oliver Street to the City line. Phase VI is from First Landing State Park to the North End.

There is no funding yet for Phases II, IV, V or VI, but Phase III has funding. They were supposed to start construction for Phase III this past spring, but put off until 2017 due to design complications with drainage and stormwater management issues. There is little to do in Phase VI; the area will have a natural look. Kal explains that this Shore Drive project does not have the funding that the other project did, where the hotel and restaurant industries agreed to a 1% tax increase; therefore, they don't know how long these projects will take because they will have to pay as they go.

- Road Safety

Kal moves on to their next goal, which was to correct issues with roadway safety. Now that they finally have crosswalks, concepts such as light synchronization, timers, and sensors were implemented to make it easier for people to cross the road in the crosswalks.

- Lesner Bridge

The Lesner Bridge is a \$100M signature project, and Kal gives credit to Council for supporting the project. The road will remain as four lanes, and will have pedestrian walks and multi-purpose trails on both sides. Although it will have seasonal lighting and the columns will have intricate designs, but will not detract from the natural beauty surrounding the bridge.

There is an overview on the southwest bridge corner of the boat ramp, where they would like to commission some public art. They are working with the art foundation and the goal from the private sector is \$350K. They hope for submittals by the end of the year, and the art would go up just as the bridge is completed.

- Sense of Arrival

They know that 25% of the visitors that come to the beach pass through Shore Drive. He says that the views coming from the Eastern Shore are awful. They at least took down the sign that recorded the number of deaths that had occurred on that roadway, and Kal looks to the roadway improvements to bring some beauty in the distant future, but he feels like they need something to happen now. VDOT will not support any projects past the blacktop.

They are working on small things, such as something similar to the flags that Norfolk has put on their side of Shore Drive. The BAC has extended offers to communities to purchase neighborhood signs to identify their neighborhoods. The public works department has offered to place the signs for free as long as they order from the selected vendors with the proper specifications. Thirty groups have purchased signs so far.

- Acquisition of Pleasure House Point

Pleasure House Point is a must-see. It has potential of 1700 residential units. He thinks it was a good idea to preserve the open space, collaborate with Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and to house Lynnhaven River NOW. The Brock Center is open for visits, and is a great example of sustainable buildings and environmental awareness.

Kal Kassir is the BAC's second Chairman. The BAC is under the City's planning department, but they have little to no staff support. He believes that the Deputy City Manager is going to study the whole relationship of all the boards and commissions within the city and try to find a way to give them support.

The BAC does not take a formal vote but do submit a recommendation of their opinions of various items to the city because they want them to know what they think about a particular project.

The bay area is almost an extension of the oceanfront. The biggest thing they have in common is the water and the beaches. The biggest difference between them is that there are more homeowners and residential areas in the bay area, and the oceanfront becomes more commercial, heading south.

There are so many things that they can work on together, and the Sense of Arrival is one of them.

On events, he thinks that there are things they can do that would enhance what they have. The First Landing State Park has 1.3M visitors a year, almost as much as the Aquarium. Although they have a good selection of restaurants, many people that wish they could go to the oceanfront that don't want to drive. He would like to see some sort of transportation to the oceanfront, even on a short-term trial basis. They are interested less in huge promotions for drinking and concerts, and more interested in family- and children-oriented events.

Their Farmers Market has been highly successful, and they are trying to find organizers to do a fishing tournament inside the Bay Area only. The timing of their rockfish season is different in the Bay from that of the Oceanfront.

Now that their marketing campaign is Three Beaches, he thinks now is the time to work together.

QUESTIONS

There was discussion concerning expanding the parking for Pleasure House Point, the development of the Duck Inn property, creating a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere similar to Rudee Promenade, establishing a mode of transportation to link Shore Drive to the oceanfront and how to establish better communications between the BAC and its community as well as between BAC and the RAC.

Joe DaBiero asks about putting a small parking area in Pleasure House Point to allow more people in there, and Kal believes that there might be many restrictions, land easements. Etc. With the area formally under Parks & Recreation, with BAC oversight, they had always thought that they should leave the area alone. They are careful with the trails, animals, etc.

Billy replies that they did the Master Plan for the park, which allowed for 96 parking spaces on both sides of the two lanes, with parallel parking. The idea was not to encroach onto the park, and you have the small parking lot, Winston Place, which is the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, which holds another 20 spaces there.

Kal mentions the charrette they had about 10-15 years ago that had a scenario similar to Rudee Inlet. He says that the Duck Inn property is going to be developed with condominiums on the bay side and the rest of the property is being sold to a group to build approx. 170 senior apartments.

The developers are willing to give the city an area on the corner of Page Avenue and Shore Drive for a second piece of public art, and have agreed to have some sort of an easement to have a walk from that point, under the bridge, and come out on Vista Circle. Doing so will add beauty and provides safety, as they have many people that bike to the area, and then want to eat at one of the restaurants.

Kal would like to see a connection from that walk to a boardwalk on the water, in front of all those establishments, tying it to the marina and then extending it to the wharf.

Billy says it would link all the restaurants like the Rudee Promenade. The designers of the 17th Street Bridge in Ft. Lauderdale took what we might consider dead

space and turned it into public parks.

Bill Gambrell asked what the RAC could do to work better with the BAC, and Kal suggests a RAC and BAC liaison to attend the respective meetings, maybe quarterly.

Billy asks about being connected via the minutes, and Kal replies that Clay Bernick runs the BAC minutes, and is steadily catching up with posting them online.

Joe DaBiero, along with Bill Gambrell, are supportive of establishing a trolley connection from Shore Drive to the oceanfront. It could benefit both areas, especially with the new advertising campaign for the Three Beaches.

Kal says that they used to have a service, years ago, but Brian Solis is working on a detailed report on the opportunity and will have something by their next meeting.

BJ asks what the feedback was from the residents about the new “Three Beaches” advertising campaign, and Kal is not sure how much they are aware of it, as one of their biggest challenges is how to tell their own residents what is going on. He had asked Jim Ricketts to give the BAC a presentation on the campaign.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett reports that the TPPC and HRT found a feasible route that serves both the Heritage and MOCA. The decision is yet to be determined whether HRT will start using the feeder lanes to avoid the liability of driving through the shopping centers. TPPC will await ridership data to take their position. Riders are advised on schedule changes annually.

On other items, Preston mentions that the boardwalk LED lighting is still scheduled for October 1. The 25th Street Garage is open now, and Rob Fries is looking at some innovative ideas at Sandbridge: pay-by-plate, seasonal passes, weekend passes, etc. Mike Eason will have 200 Do Not Tow posters on Monday to reinvigorate that program. They are trying to get the VBRA involved in that program.

Planning and Design Review (PDR)

Gerrie West reports for Billy Almond that they had two mixed-use building projects from the same developer for review: one at 1600 Atlantic Avenue and one at 2904 Atlantic Avenue. They came in under the optional form of the overlay code. They received a brief presentation and renderings, but there was not a quorum to vote, so the information was sent to members for comment and further review.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Sam Reid reports for Jim Davis that the committee talked about Sense of Arrival, and there is now a discussion about having a BMP between 21st and 22nd Street.

John Uhrin says that they were briefed last week about a plan for drainage in the Old Beach area. He learned that the stormwater that falls in Virginia Beach actually goes between the convention center and visitors' center and ultimately goes to Linkhorn Bay. We have resulting flooding and water quality issues that the city is addressing, and within that discussion, he mentioned that, an idea Mike Eason brought up years ago, having a water feature in the center of the interstate would create a wonderful sense of

arrival. Phill Roehrs, the City's Water Resources Engineer, liked the idea, and John thinks that this Master Plan is going to look at having a BMP in that area in order to relieve some of the water and allow it to settle out before it is released. There is potential for the idea.

Other OEC discussion revolved around the changing Virginia Beach tourist profile, the completed installation of the new picket fence around the 24th Street Old Coast Guard Station, and Bobby Melatti's assistants in the 17th and 24th street parks who help maintain a family atmosphere by working with people who may be interfering with events (the homeless, and others).

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

Billy Almond reports that they discussed several items, one of which was a list of eight or nine potential speakers to invite for discussion on an important topic.

They discussed the Sense of Arrival and the drainage aspect, the ViBe district and its momentum, LifeguART and incorporating the schools for publicity, and the possibility of having another Strategic Planning Session in 2016.

Oceanfront Visionary Committee (OVC)

OVC did not meet last month.

G.R.E.E.N. Committee

Mike Eason reports for Laura Habr that they met at the oceanfront for the Beachy Clean Program. They placed stickers on the cans at 3rd street to see how well they worked, and with the help of Nancy Marscheider and the ISOP volunteers, they hope to get all the cans covered from Rudee to 40th Street in the next few weeks. If they have stickers left over, they will move up the North End.

Economic Development Report

None

Staff Report

Mike Eason reports that the 17th Street canopy is installed. It is built to withstand 120mph wind loads, and the light bar will be installed on top soon.

John asked if we can get a panel for the back that would roll down for protection of equipment and avoid delay, and Mike will check into it, and it will be a funding issue.

Due to expense of rescheduling, this year's July 4 fireworks schedule has no rain date, but we will have a scheduled fireworks show on Sunday on a smaller barge.

Mount Trashmore fireworks will have a delay if necessary, as will Sandbridge and the two fireworks events at Shore Drive.

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:17p.m.