



Resort Advisory Commission
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: January 5, 2017
TIME: 3:00 pm
PLACE: Virginia Beach Convention Center, Room 4AB

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Kristina Chastain
Billy Almond
Sam Reid
Bill Gambrell
BJ Baumann
Jim Davis
Russell Lyons
Randy Thompson
Preston Midgett
Bobby Melatti
Nancy Creech
John Hawa
Bryan Cuffee
Craig Roback

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Laura Habr
Tyler Brown
Michael Cloud-Butler
Sylvia Strickland

Gerrie West

OTHERS PRESENT

Bruce Thompson, Gold Key/PHR
Phil Pullen, COVB Public Works
Robert Gey, COVB Public Works
Emily Archer, SGA
Tiffany Russell, CVB
Bernice Pope, HRB
Capt. Ronan, COVB LE
Mariah Pohl, Southside Daily
Mark Shea, SGA
Brad Van Dommelen, CVB
John Uhrin, Council
Diana Burke, VBHA
Bill Reed, BEACON
Stacey Parker, The Pilot
Mike Eason, CVB/Resort Mgmt.
Robin Hart, CVB/Recorder

Chair Kristina Chastain called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

Motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2016 meeting as written.

John Uhrin leaves the room for presentations and returns for the Committee Reports.

Proposed Re-Design of Atlantic Avenue: Cavalier Project Review – Bruce Thompson
Bruce Thompson, CEO of Gold Key/PHR Hotels and Resorts and developer of the Cavalier and came to RAC today to talk about the roadway. He reviews the background of the Cavalier development and the City representatives will talk to the Commission about the more technical aspects of the road design.

They acquired the Cavalier hotel with the idea of redeveloping the hotel and building some residences and eventually develop the oceanfront property into some sort of resort

entity. Originally scheduled to open in April 2016, the project is scheduled to be open possibly this summer.

He started thinking about the Grand Lawn concept, and whether they could bring it back. The concern was the existence of Atlantic Avenue and the intersection right out front of the hotel. They imagined exiting Atlantic Avenue at 40th Street and extending with landscape and pavers, they could keep that grand vista all the way to the resort. Pacific Avenue would remain. Rather than have three hotels at the end, they could have something more like a resort complex, rivaling Greenbrier and The Homestead.

Bruce reviews what they could build today, but the problem would be too much traffic with two hotels and a timeshare or condominium in the same area. With creating the Grand Lawn, they could create internal circulation throughout over an acre of property, which would alleviate a lot of congestion associated with hotels. It appears to be the optimal solution over the plan that he had in mind when he first purchased the hotel.

The points he wants to make are that 1) he receives no additional real estate, 2) no additional density other than a first quality resort, and 3) the plan provides one cohesive resort. Bruce pays for all private property costs and the city pays for all public improvements (stoplights and intersections, and right-of-way).

He talked to several residents, civic leagues and other interested parties as well as the City about the project, and he addressed the issues that people would have with taking out the light and the intersection. He is at RAC today to answer all questions related to the project.

Civic league and church concerns included what would happen to those turning left into the property, that the intersection would only be at 42nd street and make people drive further down, that the previously used bike lane would disappear, and how people would get off Atlantic Avenue. Those concerns were alleviated by adding turn lanes and traffic lights, and rerouting the bike path through the park for added convenience.

Other concerns mentioned the garage delivery access for the Cavalier, which was alleviated by moving the delivery entrance onto Atlantic Avenue and have all traffic circulating internally, and a resort parking program, particularly one that addresses employee parking. Bruce has told the civic leagues that he will not request an RPP program as he does not want employees parking in the neighborhoods.

Bruce states that this discussion is not so much about parking as it is traffic and circulation, and being able to create what he believes is an iconic and cohesive resort that will improve property values at the North End, and also put another marker in the City as something for which the area is known. They will market it as The Cavalier Resort, which would hold a Marriott hotel, an Embassy Suites and the five-star Cavalier on the Hill.

Phil Pullen and Bob Gey begin their discussion on the proposed resign of Atlantic Avenue.

Proposed Re-Design of Atlantic Avenue – Phil Pullen & Robert Gey

Phil and Bob are staff representatives assigned to the infrastructure improvements proposed by Bruce Thompson.

Phil says that if they do not do the proposed improvements, Atlantic Avenue will still tie in with no infrastructure improvements.

The proposed improvements will result in a re-design of Atlantic Avenue with a cul-de-sac, a new signal at 40th and Pacific with adding turn lanes, and a new signal at 42nd and Pacific, which will also have a left turn lane provided by the developer. They will have 90-degree turns instead of the sweeping turn they have now. Atlantic Avenue will be repurposed with a two-lane roadway with bike lanes and sidewalks. There will not be a center turn lane, and they will add tree wells, LED lights and brick pavers.

The cost is roughly \$2.5M for the City for the infrastructure.

QUESTIONS

Preston Midgett asks if a pedestrian crosswalk will be installed where pavers will be added.

Bruce replies that it is the City Manager's concept to have a slight grade increase and decrease at 25mph to slow traffic in this area. The idea will be reviewed by Public Works, as it would possibly involve inadvertently setting up a speed trap for one block.

Bill Gambrell asks about the TRT stop in the plans.

Mark Shea, city representative for HRT, fields questions on the trolley stops. He says that they do not think that there will be a problem with the trolley turning in the cul-de-sac.

Bruce thinks that the trolley turning here is a big improvement, as it will keep trolley service up and down Atlantic Avenue in a straight loop back and forth instead of taking it back out onto Pacific Avenue.

Bruce asks whether the HRT stop on Pacific Avenue will change and Mark says that it will not change as it serves the municipal center.

Craig Roback asks where the buses that line up in front of the Holiday Inn will go now, and Mark replies that they have not raised that detail yet.

Sam Reid asks what happens to the half block of real estate lost in the redesign, and Bruce replied that it has always belonged to the State and the State has given it to the City to create the park.

Preston replies that they will review the plan at the end of the month at TPPC, when they review the trolleys, and report to RAC next month.

Resort Area Transportation Projects Update – Emily Archer

Emily provides an update of other road projects going on in the resort.

This coming winter is the final Phase of the Pacific Avenue construction project, which is now mostly sidewalk and lighting work, and is to be completed by April, mid-May, latest.

The next project, 29th Street between Arctic and Pacific, just went to bid for construction and they are looking at a late-winter to early-spring start date. Construction for the block is approved year-round for 29th Street (not on Arctic and Pacific).

The ViBe District updates have not had much change since the fall. Design is getting underway for all three projects and they will have a Citizens' Information Meeting before they get too far along, maybe in spring 2017. It is fully funded for two blocks on 18th Street, and full design on 19th Street (start date as soon as October 2018), and 17th Street is only funded at 30% but will be included in the Citizens' Information Meeting.

Lastly, Winston-Salem Avenue is still in the design phase, awaiting full funding in FY 2019 and construction in October 2018.

QUESTIONS

John Hawa asks about the final phase of the Pacific Avenue project, which only goes to 22 ½ Street, and he asks when the rest of the construction is going to be done to improve the rest of Pacific Avenue.

Phil says that they await direction by the City, but do hear that question alot. Mike Eason says that it is a priority issue, in that the costs are enormous for underground utilities alone, but they have nothing on the radar.

John Hawa suggests just a resurfacing could help.

Mike will make the request, as he has been asked to come up with a CIP list.

Bill Gambrell asks if the original plan was to go to 25th Street and Preston says that the area between 22 ½ Street and 24 ½ Streets was removed from the project due to cost. That area has had at least three sewer projects this year and is extremely rough. He agrees with the request to repave.

Other Business

Kristina Chastain thanks Joe DaBiero for his service on RAC and welcomes Russell Lyons to the RAC as representative of the VBHA. She thanks Billy Almond for his service as Chair or RAC for the past term.

Committee Reports

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett reports that they did not meet this month due to the holiday.

Planning and Design Review (PDR)

Billy Almond says that they reviewed the proposal for a USN SEAL monument at the 38th Street connector park. The committee supported the design for the project.

They also had a presentation from Smartmouth Brewery who is converting the post office on 32nd Street.

Lastly, they had an update to the offsite parking facility code language changes to bring it in line with FBC.

Starbucks project for Laskin Road sent revised designs to PDRC. They revised their drawings from those submitted at the previous month's meeting to move the dumpster to the center of the parking lot south of the facility.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Jim Davis reports that the OEC did not meet, due to the holidays, but they are still vetting King Neptune as an icon for the resort area Sense of Arrival.

Jim also announces that he will be stepping down from OEC and RAC this year after over 20 years' service. John Uhrin thanked Jim for his service, and expressed his appreciation for his methodical approach to some of the resort area's toughest problems.

Bobby Melatti thanks Jim for always casting a wide net for the consideration of all parts of society in his guidance.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

Kristina Chastain reports that they reviewed their upcoming RAC speakers' schedule and suggested speakers, and discussed the top resort initiatives for RAC from 2016.

G.R.E.E.N. Committee

No G.R.E.E.N. report. The committee did not meet in December due to holidays.

Staff Report

Mike Eason announces to the RAC that the financial disclosure reports are due by January 17, 2017 to the clerk's office. Hard copies were provided in addition to the email that was forwarded to Commissioners. They are new forms this year so please call him with any questions.

The Special Events Office is gearing up for resort events in 2017.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:15p.m.