



Resort Advisory Commission
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

DATE: June 7, 2018

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: The Cavalier

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

- BJ Baumann
- Billy Almond
- Bobby Melatti
- Russell Lyons
- Tyler Brown
- Gerrie West
- John Hawa
- Michael Cloud-Butler
- Nancy Creech
- Bryan Cuffee
- Sam Reid
- Sylvia Strickland
- Laura Habr
- Preston Midgett
- Randy Thompson

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

- Kristina Chastain
- Ron Villanueva
- Phil Boyer
- Keith Ireland
- Craig Roback

OTHERS PRESENT

- Del. Barry Knight
- Del. Chris Stolle
- DCM Ron Williams
- Capt. Mike Ronan, VBLE
- Kristine Gay, Planning
- Stacey Parker, The Pilot
- Kathy Warren, SGA
- Mike Eason, CVB/Resort Mgmt.
- Robin Hart, CVB/Recorder

BJ Baumann called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **Motion carried to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2018 meeting as written.**

Legislative Update – Barry D. Knight, Chris Stolle

The Delegates told the Commission that the big issues this year have concerned Medicaid expansion, and the budget.

Chris Stolle and Barry work closely to advance Hampton Roads, and they look to Barry first as the elder statesman of the group. Barry has been named as one of the budget negotiators for this year. They now have seniority and influence in the House and he and Chris are on the Appropriations Committee. Barry and Chris chair the public safety and transportation subcommittees, respectively. He sits on the HRTPO and is involved in the health care issues through the State, and can talk about Medicaid expansion.

QUESTIONS

Barry and Chris fielded questions from the RAC on transportation funds, sea level rise and flooding concerns, offshore drilling and the pipeline, solar and wind energy industries, the

short-term rental status, funding for economic development, the importance of tourism for economic development, capital improvements for schools, and the school year start date.

Future Amenities for Commercial Real Estate – Don Crigger & Jeff Fritz, CBRE

Billy Almond thought it would be a benefit to the PDRC to hear from the professionals who are marketing the resort and have their ear to the ground on what commercial, retail, office and others are looking for in a destination. The PDRC was stunned with a presentation that made them reconsider how changes in consumer behavior are affecting retail and mixed-use development.

Jeff Fritz began the presentation, which centered on current real estate developments and placemaking with those developments, and the future of retail and office.

To illustrate placemaking, he reviewed districts in Miami (unique in parking), Los Angeles (unique in green space) and Toronto (unique in pedestrian-friendliness) that scored well in Gehl's methodology, showing how communities are designed according to users' needs. Placemaking is rooted in Maslow's hierarchy of needs where safety, comfort, protection, enjoyment, walkability, function, senses and the climate all play a role.

The future of retail looks into the Year 2030 as an endpoint for what they are seeing happen now. A lot of retail will be local and experience-driven to combat the effects of e-commerce. Open-air centers will become more prevalent and flexibility will be key. City centers will become more vehicle-free, so there will be more pedestrian and biking amenities. Inside the store will look more like a showroom rather than an actual place where inventory is stored and shopping occurs.

A lot of consumers' personal decision-making will be outsourced to machines to restock their grocery inventory when it senses that it is low.

Jeff had the opportunity at the May 2018 ICSC Global Retail Real Estate Convention to experience how technology might change the shopping experience by focusing on understanding customer emotions. Beijing has embraced facial recognition for purchases, advertising opportunity and product suggestion.

The economy would become more of a sharing economy, with Airbnb and shared workspaces. There would be more focus of recycling and reusing efforts.

Don Crigger said that, unlike retail, offices are a little slower to change, as the way people work has evolved faster than the offices themselves. Flexibility is also the keyword for the office environment, as the goal is to increase collaboration. The design would be an open concept with more glass and natural light, with huddle rooms for privacy under special circumstance or meetings. The personalized workspace would disappear, so that anyone can come to a space, plug in, work and leave.

Although Town Center and downtown Norfolk tend to be places that people want to both live and work, which makes Virginia Beach slightly challenged in the War for Talent, urban developers are becoming increasingly interested in the calm and peacefulness here. Co-working spaces with different companies is accelerating quickly. Occurring in largely entrepreneurial companies, big businesses are doing it now, and putting their top talent in a co-working environment. Companies are more focused on creating an atmosphere that keeps people at their jobs, incorporating work with leisure and healthy lifestyles.

Don believed that the Wave (Dome) Project is a lifestyle opportunity that they will see a couple of floors in those buildings go in the direction of co-working.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

BJ Baumann has heard a lot of talk about robotics and asked how much it was playing into the retail market. Jeff replied that in Las Vegas, they have embraced the robotics, and part of the innovation at his retail trade show involved security with robotics. It is a real thing happening now.

Billy Almond asked if he has any recent data about parking, and how that industry might be changing. Jeff had not seen anything personally, but he thinks that as more autonomous vehicles and how people get around come into play, there will be a shift for parking requirements.

Tyler Brown asked if the “having an experience” as described in the placemaking above may merge with seeing people use a drive-through type of service where they call in an order and drive by to pick it up. Jeff believed that it depended on the retailer. Panera and Starbucks for example, are shifting toward drive-through options to offer easier service.

Chairman’s Report

BJ announced that the next RAC meeting has been rescheduled from July 5 to July 12. The August 2 RAC meeting will be a strategic planning retreat and subcommittee chairs will be receiving information to prepare.

Committee Reports

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett briefed the Commission on the trolley ticket purchasing app implementation. It will be in effect around July 18, and purchases will be visual validation at first and next year they will have hardware in the trolleys to review the purchase instead.

There was further discussion on what is available for transportation in addition to a ticket app, Preston mentioned Passport for parking, and Loyalty Passes and Seasonal Passes for purchase. Preston added that an app to tell you where parking is available it is in the works with a counter installed in the garages. Currently, parking information is listed in the [Beacon](#) and Randy Thompson mentioned the [Virginia Beach Visitors’ Guide](#).

Kathy Warren said that Rob is working on a marketing program to get the word out, online, in print, wherever they can get exposure. He has a staff member tasked with that, and they are working as quickly as possible with in-house communications.

It was suggested to have the app information on signs where applicable for people who are not from the area.

Rob Fries discussed the two surveys that are being conducted for the parking department. One is at the oceanfront, conducted with drivers in person. They hope to get about 500 surveys. The other survey is online and available until the end of August. He will send to the Commission.

George Kotarides of the AAA came to the TPPC and discuss some of their parking concerns and Rob Fries replied to each concern, such as signage for the 25th Street garage, attempts to make parking more user-friendly, rejuvenating the pavers, cleaning and maintenance of the streets and sidewalks, the utility marking and the Atlantic Avenue sound system technical difficulties.

Mike Eason contacted the utilities company about the difficulty that the city crews are having with cleaning the porous pavers. Ron Williams and the City Manager are also involved.

Planning & Design Review Committee (PDRC)

Billy Almond reported that the PDRC did not meet last month.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Sam Reid reported that the OEC had discussion with a member of the city's traffic engineering department on ways to improve the lighting to provide a more secure environment and to promote a festive atmosphere on the beach.

Sam made a motion that a draft letter in the Commissioner packets from the RAC to City Council be approved. The letter requested a review be conducted and funding be appropriated to enhance the lighting in the resort area to provide for a more unique and engaging ambience, and increase lighting levels in identified problematic areas, such as the 200-300 blocks between 16th and 25th Streets. The motion was seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

BJ Baumann announced that they met this month to discuss a date for the RAC's next strategic planning session. Packets will be going out to the subcommittees to review and revise their priorities as might be needed.

BJ made a motion that a draft letter in the Commissioner packets from the RAC to City Council be approved. The RAC letter read in support of the attached letter from the VBRA, the VBHA and AAA requesting a re-allocation of the \$1.5M for trash trucks back to the TIP fund. The motion was seconded. After discussion, a grammatical change was made in the second to last paragraph, and motion carried unanimously.

Oceanfront Strategic Growth Area Committee (OSGAC)

BJ Baumann reported that the committee did not meet, as they were waiting on the projection lighting study from Jeff Dobrow.

G.R.E.E.N. Report

Laura Habr reported that the committee reviewed housekeeping details regarding recycling, composting, and sustainability efforts. They are a small committee and their focus is at the resort; however, they hope to continue to grow those efforts around the city.

Staff Report

Ron Williams updated the Commission on project activities.

The update included that EDSA is coming back to town again to participate in discussion on the Atlantic Avenue initiatives at the end of June.

In the meantime the Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA) has presented a six-point paper to the City Manager, which will be a six-month plan to address parking, people, placemaking, projects, and programming.

The purpose of the June 26-June 28 EDSA workshop will be to generate a report to Council (with RAC's consensus) advising them what needs to be done on Atlantic Avenue, particularly the connector streets. The report will consist of information gathered from a walkabout on Atlantic Avenue, a SWOT analysis, short-term strategies as well as a one- to five-year horizon, discussion at the VBCC, and a booth at YNot Wednesday at Town Center to ask visitors there about Atlantic Avenue. The booth will be manned by the SGA staff and EDSA.

Thursday morning will involve a report and they are trying to pin down the time for that.

They are inviting the VBHA, AAA, VBRA, civic leagues and the RAC and its subcommittees. It is not exclusive so he invites others to attend for added energy.

Mike Eason announced a first-time event on July 3, 7:30pm @ 24th Street Park with James Monroe, encouraging people to come out to listen.

Old Business

None

New Business

Laura Habr reported that 19th Street is finally underway with construction and informed Commissioners that it will affect the markets for a short while, but they will be in operation. She also announced the upcoming music series at the ViBe District Park.

Sylvia Strickland mentioned a news about Indian remains that were found on an excavation site [near Fort Monroe](#). The remains are believed to be historical and are being identified.

She suggested a small plaque or memorial to the Chesapeake Indians at the resort area, directing people to First Landing State Park where the marker for the Chesapeake Indians' burial site is located. It would represent "First Residents of Virginia Beach" which were the Chesapeake Indians. She believed that remains of 63 Indians were found, dug up in the early 1960's, preserved, and reburied in 1997 at First Landing State Park. A marker for the site was placed there in 2002. Some of the First Landers were shown by the Chesapeake Indians how to learn to eat oysters and other survival skills in this area, and it would be nice to recognize them.

Preston Midgett motioned adding the Chesapeake Indian plaque to the Boardwalk Walking Tour where a cell phone can read the QR code and a one-minute video will provide information. Billy Almond seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Randy hopes that the information that comes from that QR code directs them to First Landing State Park, which is a real asset of the City and it is a great way to get people to visit there.

Russell Lyons adds that the recording should also direct to the VB Surf & Rescue Museum (contact William Hazel), as they are always rotating exhibits of the history of Virginia Beach, and would be good to have the Chesapeake Indians represented there.

Motion carried to add the Chesapeake Indian plaque and QR code to the Boardwalk Walking Tour with a recording history directing people to the First Landing State Park and Virginia Beach Surf & Rescue Museum for more information (with possible placement of plaque at VBS&R Museum).

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.