



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

RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

DATE: September 6, 2018
TIME: 3:00 pm
PLACE: Virginia Beach Convention Center, 2nd Floor

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Kristina Chastain
BJ Baumann
Billy Almond
Bobby Melatti
Phil Boyer
Tyler Brown
Gerrie West
John Hawa
Nancy Creech
Craig Roback
Randy Thompson
Keith Ireland
Sam Reid
Russell Lyons
Michael Cloud-Butler
Sylvia Strickland
Bryan Cuffee
Ron Villanueva
Preston Midgett

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Laura Habr

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Culpepper, Venture Realty
Ofr. Matt McInerney, VBPD
Lt. Scott Wichtendahl, VBPD
Brad Van Dommelen, CVB
Stacey Parker, The Pilot
Kathy Warren, SGA
Emily Archer, SGA
Kristine Gay, SGA
Rob Fries, SGA
Mike Eason, CVB/Resort Mgmt.
Robin Hart, CVB/Recorder

Kristina Chastain called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **Motion carried to approve the minutes from the August 2, 2018 meeting as written.**

Dome Site Project Update (The Wave) – Mike Culpepper

Mike Culpepper reviewed the Dome Site Project, tentatively named The Wave, for the Commission.

He reviewed the history of development of the site as far back as 1985, described the various proposals submitted, through the latest 2017 RFQ. The 2017 RFQ specified a multi-block mixed use development with entertainment concepts that included a 3500-seat live performance venue. The goal was to provide year-round programming attractive to both locals and tourists which would offer either unique or new-to-market retail and authentic restaurants. There was also a desire to offer residential units, but not as the primary use.

Venture engaged the public through civic events, surveys, international media and social engagement, with top preferences centering on a music venue, music events and integrated parking garages. They responded with a design that included those preferences as well as experiential retail and green space.

Mike Culpepper reviewed the studies that were done concerning types of parking, entertainment venue feasibility, economic impact, and retail and merchandising potential. The two fundamental issues at hand were how to approach parking and overall design for the project. He reviewed the direct and indirect impacts expected for the first year of the project for tax revenues, room nights, and increased real estate values.

In summary, he estimated that the new retail/entertainment demand versus the proposed supply for the two new projects for the resort - The Wave and the Cavalier/Oceanfront Marriott – if delivered prior to 2022, would account for less than the additional 314,400 square feet of space that they estimate would be demanded (partially driven by entertainment elements within The Wave project), with 42,500 square feet demanded available. That space could be absorbed through the reduction of vacant space or other addition to the market.

QUESTIONS COMMENTS

After discussion, the RAC carried a motion, with one abstention, to send a letter to Council in support of the proposed Dome Site project, The Wave, as well as Atlantic Avenue revitalization. The idea being that the synergy created when more than one project was developing at a time would benefit the entire area.

Public Safety Initiatives – George Kotarides

Georg Kotarides, President of the Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA), distributed a handout that outlined suggestions on how to make the resort area safer for locals and tourists. Some of the ideas involved creating a Managed District, providing more support for the security cameras initiative, and creating a hub on or near 17th Street that could be used by police, visitors and/or students, or design consultants.

Committee Reports

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett reviewed that the committee heard a presentation from Emily Archer regarding Atlantic Avenue On-street Parking for the upcoming off-season.

Because the program was so successful for the February and March 2018 period, Emily Archer reviewed the program to be implemented for the November 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019 off-season. The exception for the time period will be that, from 15th Street heading south, parking will stop at 4:00pm to allow for Holiday Lights queuing from November 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. A stronger effort will be made to address the recommendations from the parking survey, which included communicating the schedule to the public and better marking available parking areas (using temporary tape and better sign poles).

There was discussion on parking enforcement and funding, and AAA members believed that now is the time to get these types of decisions ironed out as they are creating a buzz at the oceanfront and they will need this type of parking available.

They also had a presentation on expanding a 10-year old conservation and education project called “Brainwaves at the Beach” from the Aquarium’s Mark Swingle. A Motion was carried to support the initial concept, with the understanding they return to the TPPC with specifics on final location and exhibit specifics for approval.

Brian Solis updated the committee on the HRT Mobile Fare Payment App and its successful introduction at the boardwalk on August 3 and the Scooter Share issue. A workgroup is being put together to further delve into considerations about the scooters.

Planning & Design Review Committee (PDRC)

Billy Almond reported that they also had a presentation from Mark Swingle about the Brainwaves project and, after further discussion on sponsorship and the suggestion to periodically change panels with new topics, **a motion was carried to support the presentation from Mark Swingle of the Virginia Aquarium requesting at least two more of the Brainwaves exhibits to be installed on the boardwalk.**

They received a presentation for a project on 27th Street to the south of The Hyatt which, when it was reviewed a couple of years ago and there was an ordeal about the use of the 27th Street connector park for vehicular traffic. The applicant hired a design consultant to design what the PDRC thought was a very nice connector park that incorporated vehicles, pedestrians, bikes, several modes of transportation.

The project returned for approval on a change to the use of the building, which he believed that the current allowance for a building on the oceanfront allows for 15% of the rooms to be residential units, with the rest being hotel units. Kristine Gay confirmed that the maximum number of multi-family residential units that one can have is limited to 15% of the number of hotel units actually built east of Atlantic Avenue.

The request came to PDRC to change the policy to 100%, and Kristine verified that the developer made a request for a special exception for that one project to exceed that percentage.

Billy said at the same time, the designers reviewed the street and the architecture again and the committee made three motions. One vote taken by the PDRC was that they will not continue to support the use of the connector parks by vehicular access even though it is by-right. The second vote was that they would not support the architecture, mainly because the Atlantic Avenue building façade had neither landscaping nor any setback; the design was bland. The third vote, on the policy decision, on the committee's behalf, they could not support the change to 100% apartments on the oceanfront. The discussion ranged from the resort boardwalk needing to be available for only hotels for what they provide for our tax base, to the possibility of the building becoming a multi-story Airbnb.

He wanted to bring it up to the RAC because the Commission might want to consider that, if it happens with this project, what is going to keep it from happening again with other developments.

DISCUSSION

BJ Baumann asked the number of rooms in the current Hyatt House, which numbered 156 rooms. John Uhrin reminded the Commission that they now refer to the rooms as described as units, as the other form-based zoning referred to rooms as described by square footage.

Randy Thompson asked how much of the square footage they are requesting and Kristine replied that if they opted only encumber the one parcel with this review process. If they wanted to reference the historic land use, they would have to include the other parcels into the alternative compliance request which would include the 156 rooms to the north and the retail on Pacific Avenue.

Preston Midgett said that a residential project on their boardwalk is on prime oceanfront property, of which they have 40 blocks. They have residential areas at both the north and south ends of the property and we have FBC for a reason. A residential building has a different expectation than that of a tourist. Visitors there like the activity; residents are a little different. A residential building also does not add to their TIP Fund. This building came to them with 174 hotel rooms and they are going to put 230 apartments in the same footprint. He believes that

this is opening a pandora's box. You are putting residents in a tourist-oriented area. He urges the Commission to take another look at the project.

John Hawa believed that it constituted "spot-zoning", which is not a good thing. He does not think they should support it at all, and asked what the Commission needs to do about the project.

Billy Almond stated that the project is going to the Planning Commission on Wednesday September 12. Preston Midgett also pointed out that a resident at this location may spend money to eat out once or twice. If there is a hotel guest there, that changes every three or four days, there is more opportunity for them to spend money at the resort.

The RAC had concerns for the precedent that may be set for allowing deviation from the existing form based code limit of 15% residential units. After discussion, the RAC voted unanimously, with one abstention from Craig Roback, to send a letter to the Planning Commission requesting that they defer their vote a minimum of 30 days at their September 12, 2018 meeting for The Apartments at 27th Street project. The RAC wanted to have time for further discussion for the Commission and its subcommittees.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

The OEC did not meet in August.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

Kristina Chastain reported that the RIC discussed how often an update for the RASAP refresh might be provided to the RAC.

They also discussed potential and scheduled speakers for the RIC and RAC meetings.

Nominations for the next RAC Chair and Vice-Chair are coming up, and they will ask for members for the nominating committee soon.

Oceanfront Strategic Growth Area Committee (OSGAC)

BJ Baumann reported that the OSGAC receive a review of the current RASAP Plan from Ashby Moss and Ron Williams. There was discussion on how to go about conducting the refresh, and who should be involved.

Mike Eason provided an update on Atlantic Avenue updates and ideas for the next 10 years, and it was suggested that short-term improvements be made block-by-block.

G.R.E.E.N. Report

The G.R.E.E.N. committee did not meet in August.

Staff Report

Mike Eason reported about upcoming events.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.