

**Minutes:**

**Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee**

**Meeting: September 21, 2017 - 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room – City Hall – Richmond, VA**

**Greg Velzy – Chair Presiding**

**Call to Order: 12:10**

**Minutes** - July 20, 2017 minutes - approved

**Attending:** Greg Velzy, Tricia Pearsall, Justin Doyle, John Moeser, John Heerwald, John Thompson, Jim Hill, Alex Dahm, Anne Wright, Ralph White, Leighton Powell

**Current Issues:**

○ **Riverfront Development Plan:**

- **Potterfield Bridge** – Updates: The bridge is still a major Richmond destination, but it's still warping, and the loose rubber gaskets can be seen from underneath. Jim Hill reported that Kim Chen had been hired to replace Kathleen Onufer as Principle Planner and he would reach out to her to give us updates. He also added that the Committee should speak up to Mark Olinger. Alex added that construction crews had been tightening down the decking.

Regarding the steps adjacent to the Manchester Wall, Ralph suggested that instead of just proposing to tear them down, that entrance to them be made more difficult. Someone else suggested turning the staircase into a ramp with horizontal treads (or in Ireland, they use studs) (perhaps another JROC project)

3 Days in April Section: Alex Dahm added that Venture Richmond is re-lighting this section though someone keeps tampering with their deck hardware. Should be completed shortly.

- **Downriver Updates** – No difference with progress that anyone knows. Stone might open their restaurant sooner than expected: According to **Style Weekly**: “We were promised a restaurant and it looks like we’re going to get it — next year. **Stone Brewing** is about to start renovating Intermediate Terminal site nearby for the four-floor spot, Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, to open later next year. And that’s still about a year ahead of schedule for the brewery.”

USP/Echo Harbor Property – No word though application was submitted by the Land Use Committee Meeting September 19, 2017: To support a project to provide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements to extend the Virginia Capital Trail to the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge and the City’s application in relation thereto to the Virginia Department of Transportation for \$821,600 from the federal Transportation Alternatives Program.

Mayor Stoney

Forwarded to the September 25, 2017 Council meeting with recommendation to approve

Leighton will follow up

- **Missing Link Phase** – Grant Application Update and Mayor’s Directive – Justin Doyle: According to Nathan Burrell, there may be city funds directed for an assessment. A bridge has been suggested from the Potterfield area to Belle Isle eliminating need for using railroad land.

- **EnRichmond – Vauxhall Island** - Cede to City of Richmond Update. No information. Leighton will check up on this.
- **Falls Committee’s meeting with Mayor Levar Stoney** – Leighton Powell: No report
- **Capital Region Land Conservancy Update** –

From Jane Myers: CRLC hopes to close on the purchase of Malvern Hill in Henrico County in early December. The property is over 800 acres. In July CRLC announced having been awarded \$1.7M from the American Battlefield Protection Program in support of our purchase. After the acquisition about 1/2 is slated to go to the National Park Service and most of the remainder to Henrico County. A small portion will go to the James River Association on which they hope to provide non-motorized boat access on Turkey Island Creek, a tributary of the James.

By the end of 2017, CRLC hopes to complete: an 81-acre easement in Henrico County on Deep Bottom Creek, a tributary of the James; a 130-acre easement on the Chickahominy River in Henrico; a 140-acre easement on the James in Powhatan County; and if all goes well a 100+ acre easement in Chesterfield on the James.

Our annual event at Tuckahoe Plantation "Fields, Forests, + Streams" will be held on Sunday October 29th. Everyone is invited and tickets can be purchased on-line at [www.capitalregionland.org](http://www.capitalregionland.org).

- **Master Plan Proposals** – VHB and Hargreaves and Associates Updates – Working on a joint plan between two firms. Cost will be in the neighborhood of \$250,000.00 Friends has offered \$50,000.00 as seed funds and is fundraising for the remainder.
- **RVAH20** – Update on stream restoration underway: From Anne Wright: DPU seems to be listening to suggestions made by stakeholders as new techniques come into play and they are not calling for removal of large trees. DPU will probably not revisit Reedy Creek, but will move on to other tributaries. There is also a push to restore even higher into the watersheds. Anne says that DPU seems to now be moving into the implementation phase.

### New Business:

- **Larus Park:** There was a lengthy discussion of the issue regarding Larus Park regarding Chesterfield County's proposal to lease a portion — 1.26 acres — to build a water pumping station that would increase the county's water supply. This is not part of the Falls' Committee's purview but the precedent of using lands gifted to the City as a Park, for other uses is a reminder of what is possible with the James River Park. At the end, Ralph suggested that Chesterfield County deed an acre or so of land to a park in exchange.
- **Canal Improvements:** Alex Dahm would like to make a presentation to the Committee in November outlining improvements to the James River and Kanawha Canal. DPU is in process of drafting a re-watering process.
- **Carleton Abbot,** architect of the James River Park, is the subject of an exhibition, "Carlton Abbott: 50 Years of Architectural Drawings" at the Branch Museum of Architecture and Design 2501 Monument Ave Richmond, Virginia. It opens September 28, 2017.

### Reports -

**James River Park System** – No report

**JRA** - Sturgeon are very active this season. JRA has posted a video of Sturgeon mating in the Tredegar pool area above the Potterfield Bridge.

**JRAC** - Cleanup. No report, but a big success.

**JROC** - King of the James (James River type triathlon) to be held October 22, 2017.

**FoJRP** - Ralph White River Hero Awards to be awarded at a reception on October 5, 2017. For tickets and information, go to: <http://www.jamesriverpark.org/be-a-friend/river-hero.php>

**Open discussion:**

- Ralph is concerned that the park is losing its meadows. We suggested he talk with Nathan. They are needed for fireflies and we will lose that. Greg suggested that Ralph flag the space that should be meadows and asked Anne to talk to Ralph about the big meadow in the Wetlands and the small one in the Pony Pasture area.
- Leighton voiced concern over the fact that there's been no Director of Parks and Recreation for over a year. She said that she would look into this.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 1:18pm

**\*\*\*\*Next Public Meeting: - 19 OCTOBER, 2017\*\*\*\***

Meetings begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Richmond City Hall.

Meetings are scheduled for the THIRD Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to the public. If you are not now receiving e-mail meeting notices and wish to receive them, please provide your name and e-mail address to [velzyg@verizon.net](mailto:velzyg@verizon.net) . If you would like to be removed from the list, so indicate at the above e-mail address.