

Minutes:

Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee Zoom and On-Site: Main Street Station Gallery Meeting Richmond VA

Meeting: December 17, 2020

Greg Velzy: Chair – Presiding

Call to Order: 12:05 PM

- **Attending in person:** Committee members: Tricia Pearsall, Greg Velzy, John Heerwald. Guest: Shawna Shade, Friends of the James River Park. **Attending via Zoom:** Committee Members: Anne Wright, Justin Doyle, Jim Hill, Ralph Hambrick, Leighton Powell, Parker Agelasto-Executive Director, Capital Region Land Conservancy. Guests: Grace LeRose - TMDL Coordinator, City of Richmond VA, Jennifer Clarke- Public Education and Outreach Coordinator, City of Richmond VA

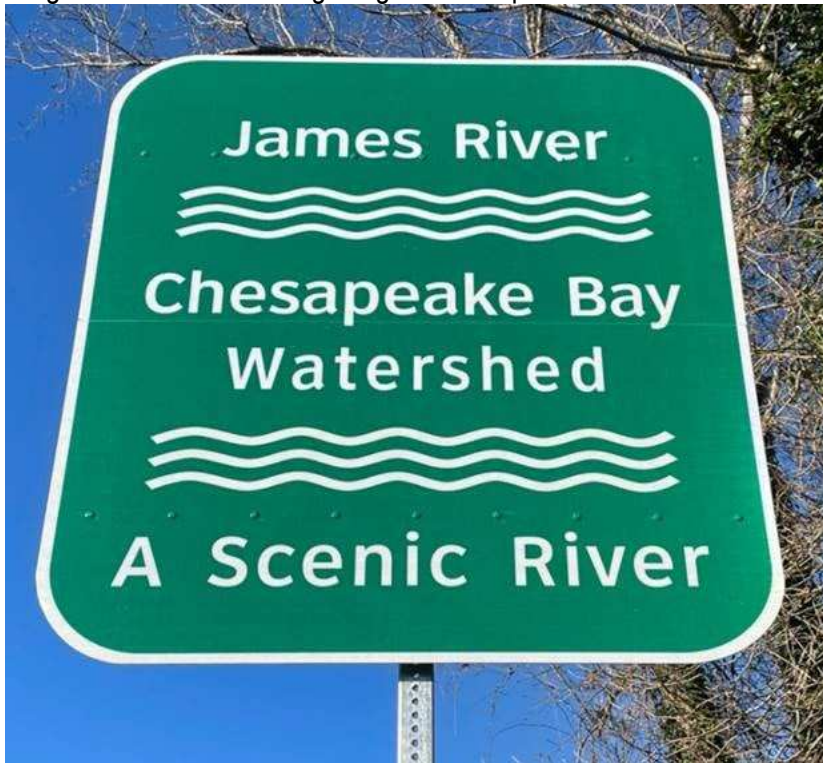
Minutes - Minutes of November 19, 2020: John Heerwald moved the minutes be approved. Seconded by Tricia Pearsall. Approved

Current Issues:

- **Riverfront Development Plan (and other James River related) budget proposals and priorities + Libby Hill Viewshed Proposal update + Manchester Development/Hull Street Projects and Manchester Canal Bridge updates** - Mark Olinger, Director, Dept. of Planning & Development Review could not be present, but said he would fill in on these topics in January 2021. Leighton said that the Libby Hill Viewshed project was included in the Richmond 300 Plan. There was also discussion about a building height zoning change in Oregon Hill. Jim Hill stated that the residents had desired only residential land use (as in houses with surrounding land), so doubted this was a concern. Has also been talk that Dominion Energy is putting up solar panels on its Tredegar Street building, but doubted the height would impede river views from Oregon Hill.
- **Richmond 300 Master Plan update:** Passed at City Council Meeting on Monday, December 14, 2020 with provisions for additions and amending. (<https://richmondbizsense.com/2020/12/15/city-council-adopts-richmond-300-plan-with-promise-to-amend-it/>)
- **Brown's Island Improvement Plan – Venture Richmond:** Max Hepp-Buchanan not present but can give on-site tours in early spring.
- **Tredegar Street Project** - Justin and Alex announced that VDOT had awarded funding for Tredegar Street corridor improvement (sidewalks, etc.) that Mark Olinger had talked about previously. Alex went on to say that 7th and Tredegar (The Westroc Building) purchased by Costar. (<https://richmondbizsense.com/2020/12/17/costar-buying-downtown-riverfront-office-building-that-bears-its-name/which>) Probably means another building or more development. Alex said that Costar had been good a steward for Venture Richmond river events. Greg suggested that we involve them in riverfront efforts.
- **VA Scenic Rivers Program 50th Anniversary:**
 - Final Zoom meeting on December 16, 2020:
 - Field evaluations of the following rivers were reported: the South qualified, the James qualified, NF Shenandoah and Lower Rappahannock. These river designations should go forward in 2021 General Assembly.
 - The November 9, 2020 50th Zoom Anniversary Celebration was considered very successful. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCY9GAbHwnc>
 - The 50th Anniversary website will remain up for a while.
 - Suggestions were made that another film giving communities a tool as to how and why to declare their local stream or river Scenic, be considered using the abundance of video footage remaining from the 50th film.
 - The River Symposium has been moved to April 13-15 2021 and will be virtual: <https://www.river->

management.org/symposium-rms

- **Scenic Virginia Photo Contest:** Leighton said the winning photos have been selected and will be featured in the Sunday, December 20, 2020 edition of the Richmond Times Dispatch.
- **BridgePark Proposal Restructure:** Jim Hill: No update
- **DPU Updates:** Jenn Clarke and Grace LeRose reported:
 - The Floodwall was closed for the 18' James River event last month. The Sewage Treatment Plant flooded but they were able to pump and treat significantly more overflow than ever before and are awaiting the final permit to implement the total new capabilities of the Treatment Plant to kick into action.
 - Green Infrastructure Master Plan working in conjunction with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and UVA the first of 2021 to finalize a short/long term plan for control of watersheds such as Shockoe Creek, Gillis Creek and the Manchester Canal. They are also continuing to work to educate all city offices and levels as to the challenges with regard to these watersheds. These areas were chosen because they contribute the most pollution of the James River.
 - As an aside, it was reported that the sewer leak in the Wetlands park had been stopped. Grace said to make certain to call 311 to report any such event. There was discussion as to how to notify park users of this information.
- **CRLC Updates:** Parker Agelasto
 - Parker reported that the Liesfeld Family: (<https://www.capitalregionland.org/news/>) has purchased and put a conservation easement on about 3 acres of land adjacent the Northbank Trail, JRP, from Texas Beach to Maymont. Great news!!! Because under current zoning, 16 homes could have been constructed on this land.
 - Parker also reported that a 5.2-acre land agreement along Dock Street which has been 2 years in the making, may be close to final agreement, with conclusion likely in April 2021. The Falls Committee was asked to submit letters of support for land grants toward this project when it's submitted.
 - Greg also said he would be sending letter of support for the Main Street parcel.
- **James River Park:** Bryce Wilk: On paternity leave. New daughter named Juniper!!!!
- **VDOT for I-95 James River Bridge sign:** VDOT has placed a sign in Scottsville. Tricia wrote a letter to Roy Burgess to see if such a sign might also be placed at both ends of the James River Bridge in Richmond.



New Business: None

Reports:

James River Park System: No report

JRA: Justin Doyle:

- Wrapping up virtual education this week. JRA has reached more students than ever.
- Green Street Project is breaking ground in 2021 near Hillside Court near Bellemeade Park to begin capturing storm water
- Also working with greening of certain Richmond City Libraries and RVA H2O to improve water quality by greening of library surrounds.

JRAC: The Christmas Parade of Boats was cancelled by JRAC, but went on anyway!!



JROC: Greg Velzy: December Project was to clear invasives from Tredegar Street and create a view. A good turnout and effort. Still much to be done. Also delivered gifts including Ralph Hambrick's book, 'Transforming the James' to Hillcrest residents. (Also it is with great disappointment and anger at the inefficiency of the Mayor's procurement office, that the Huguenot Access ramp project must be moved to 2021, because of lack of getting out bids in time for the winter work window.)

FOJRP: Shawna Shade: Still a few copies of Bill Draper's book: A Photographic Journey through the James River Park System - 1000 copies, all proceeds to benefit FOJRP. About 150 copies still available. (Available on Amazon in late January 2021.)

Open discussion: Happy Holidays

Adjourn: 12:55PM

Next Public Meeting: January 21, 2021 via Zoom

Meetings begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5th floor of Richmond City Hall or on Zoom. 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. If you would like to be removed from the list, so indicate at the above e-mail address.

Tricia Pearsall – Secretary