



MINUTES OF THE EMBARK RICHMOND HIGHWAY ADVISORY GROUP

On June 27, 2016 the Embark Richmond Highway Advisory Group (AG) held its eighth meeting at the South County Government Center, Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22.

AG members present

Carlos Heard, acting chair	Earl Flanagan
Rodney Lusk	Dale Johnson
Frank Cohn	Rebecca Todd
Chris Soule	

AG members absent

Walter Clarke, co-chair	Tim Sargeant
Richard Knapp, co-chair	James Migliaccio
Vernon Lee	
Bruce Leonard	

County Staff and Guests Present

See attached sign-in sheet.

Call to Order

Mr. Heard called the June 27, 2016 meeting to order at 7:10 p.m., followed by Advisory Group and county staff introductions.

Administrative Items

Approval of meeting minutes from May 23, 2016

Mr. Heard suggested the administrative items be held to allow time for additional Advisory Group members to arrive. This item was revisited at the end of the meeting. Mr. Cohn requested one clarification to the minutes, to recommend that fiscal planning be instituted immediately, since funding is critical to achieving the desired land use changes and the widening of Richmond Highway. Concern was raised about the timing of development versus the road widening project and the introduction of multimodal alternatives.

A motion was made **to approve the meeting minutes for the May 23, 2016 Advisory Group meeting.** A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

Items for consideration from flip chart

Ms. Garcia, Department of Planning and Zoning, stated the draft meeting minutes will now include a table at the end of the document containing the comments or questions recorded on the flip chart, staff's response, and whether additional follow-up is needed. This ensures all items are tracked and available for the AG and public to review.

Project schedule and status

Ms. Garcia, Department of Planning and Zoning, provided a progress report including recent Advisory Group and Fairfax County staff activities.

The final staff recommendations and Planning Commission public hearing are scheduled for the end of 2017. The environmental assessment as part of the Richmond Highway widening from Jeff Todd Way/Mount Vernon Memorial Highway to Napper Road is ongoing. Continuous public engagement is also integrated into the project timeline.

A number of recent activities were mentioned, including: review of the BRT Project Management Consultant bids that were received in June; VDOT's completion of traffic counts; staff BRT workshops; the county's completion of an application for a transit oriented development pilot program grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); initial development of the land use alternative; ongoing meetings with developers about site-specific zoning applications and Comprehensive Plan amendments in the corridor; the selection of a transportation analysis consultant and community outreach efforts that include a podcast interview, advertisements and additional internal coordination for the July 25 community meeting, and the Spring Bank community meeting.

Transportation Analysis Introduction

Mr. King, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, summarized the transportation analysis that will be conducted in support of the Comprehensive Plan amendment. A question was raised as to whether the traffic counts were taken during the school year and staff affirmed they were.

The transportation analysis of the land use alternative will estimate transit ridership and BRT performance, assess level-of-service at intersections, and evaluate whether additional north/south road capacity is needed. The transportation analysis will also include a review of the multimodal cross sections, street network, and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. Mr. King also explained the multi-step transportation modeling approach that includes a travel demand model, traffic operations model, and traffic simulation model.

Mr. Pikora, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, summarized the proposed goals, objectives, and measures of effectiveness (MOE) of the transportation analysis. A suggestion

was made that additional MOEs include bus safety and affordability. Ms. Garcia requested that any additional feedback on the transportation analysis and goals, objectives, and MOE be provided to her by July 11, 2016.

Revised Areawide Guidance, Planning Objectives, BRT Definition

Ms. Garcia reviewed the latest working draft of the proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Plan text and the summary matrix listing all suggested modifications received by the public and the AG. The suggestions were evaluated by staff and one of three actions were taken: the text was incorporated as submitted, the text was modified and incorporated, or the text did not need to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan guidance for the reasons stated in the matrix.

Mr. Lusk suggested the matrix be updated to include workforce housing in addition to affordable housing. Mr. Heard requested that any additional comments be provided to Ms. Garcia by July 11, 2016. Ms. Garcia advised that there will be additional opportunity to provide feedback throughout the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

Street Grids

Mr. Pikora discussed the transportation related benefits of street grids. Mr. De Lorenzo, Office of Community Revitalization, discussed the societal and economic benefits of street grids. Mr. De Lorenzo then discussed the approach to proposing street grids on the Richmond Highway corridor, including concepts for the Woodlawn, Penn Daw, Beacon Hill/Groveton, and Hybla Valley Community Business Centers. Mr. Flanagan suggested that if Fordson Road is extended that the name of the new road be Audubon.

Advisory Group Members Update on Community Feedback

Mr. Soule suggested the public be reminded of the history of this project. He also suggested staff highlight the enhanced park connections surrounding the Woodlawn CBC area when explaining the concepts to the community as a way to emphasize the benefits of the proposed plan.

Mr. Cohn reiterated the need for a financial plan.

Public Comment

A representative from the First A.M.E. Church of Alexandria asked what would happen to the area between Cooper Road and Lukens Lane. Staff advised that the road widening project would likely have community meetings and that there would be opportunity to provide comment on that project.

A community member suggested at the next community meeting, time should be given for a public question and answer session. Staff responded that they expect to have this at the next community meeting.

A community member stated that the conceptual grid of streets graphic for the Woodlawn CBC inaccurately depicted the water feature. Staff acknowledged this and advised the color was chosen to represent a water feature.

A resident of the Spring Bank community requested that neighborhood streets off of Richmond Highway be considered as part of the transportation analysis, especially in the Penn Daw area. There are safety concerns due to the lack of sidewalks. Staff responded that they will attempt to assess traffic impacts along the corridor as part of the transportation analysis.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Comments and questions recorded on the flip chart

Item	Response
Caution is suggested, based on environmental concerns, with a proposed avenue shown through the Dogue Creek / floodplains area (north side of Richmond Highway)	Noted; staff will further evaluate this proposed new connection.
What are the potential impacts of the road widening project?	Staff advised that the road widening project would likely have community meetings, and encouraged the community to attend to learn more about the widening and provide comment on that project.
Recommendation for 'group-wide' Q&A during/following the presentation at the July Community Meeting	The community meeting on July 25 will include a question and answer period following the presentation.
The conditions of the existing street networks should be given greater attention, particularly in communities adjacent to the proposed street grids.	Staff is evaluating whether this can be included in the transportation analysis for the Plan amendment.
Recommendation to provide an additional goal of ensuring bike and pedestrian facilities are also attractive and safe.	Noted; staff will consider this as part of the MOEs for the transportation analysis.