

HISTORIC JACKSON WARD ASSOCIATION MONTHLY PUBLIC MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2015

Jackson Center – 501 N. 2nd Street

Jay Som, President of the HJWA Board, called the meeting to order at 6:05. Marilyn Milio, Julius Richardson, Vicki Mollenauer, Zach Jesse, Janet Armstead and Lorenza Coley were present. Also present were Barry Russel, Deputy Director of Parks and Services, and two representatives from the Timmons Group.

Police Announcements

Lt. Greene gave the Richmond Police Department report. There was no violent crime in the past month. There was also a slight reduction in non-violent crime, with only 14 incidents reported which included 2 breaking and entering charges and several drinking in public charges from Abner Clay Park. He also introduced the neighborhood's new midnight officer, Jamaica Jones.

Greg Felton's report was short. There were only two VCU-related incidents over the past month, both of which were resolved. Greg was thanked for his quick work in contacting the correct people at VCU to have the trash removed at the corner of Belvidere and Leah Streets.

Timmons Group and Abner Clay

The Association discussed how best to proceed with the Abner Clay Park redesign given the project's expanded budget and the limited funds available.

Scott Wiley of the Timmons Group gave an overview of the history of the process of the Abner Clay redesign. In doing so, he discussed some of the design changes that could potentially be postponed until a "phase II" of the project, to prioritize funds that we currently had (e.g. holding off on landscaping or installing expensive rubber surfacing in the playground).

The Association voiced a few concerns.

Several members of the Association voiced their frustration with the inclusion of the water area currently envisioned as part of the park. These members recalled that the water element of the part was specifically voted against during the design

voting many years ago.

The proposed version of the playground is not protected by a fence, which many have cited as a safety issue especially considering the heavy use of the playground by the nearby daycare.

Whether or not the pavilion area would have sufficient lighting for safety.

In terms of cost, a Timmons-proposed "Phase I" would require approximately \$1.5 million. Craig Bieber insisted that \$638K "is there" in the city budget for the park; however, it was unlikely that any additional funding for the project could be gotten from the city. Even then, by the time the city was financially able to direct funds toward the project, there were concerns that the price (approximately \$3M currently) would increase. A brief discussion ensued about alternate sources of revenue for the project, although no official action was taken on behalf of the Association.

Delegate McClellan

Jennifer McClellan gave a rundown of recent General Assembly enacted laws. These included:

An increase in funding for Virginia education, including a 2% pay raise for K-12 workers and a 3% pay raise for higher education workers.

An increase in mental health care service funding

While there was still no Medicaid expansion, Medicaid money is now usable for drug treatment

A bi-partisan gun control measure which

Required a party under a protective order to surrender weapons

Allowed non-federally licensed gun dealers at gun shows to run voluntary background checks

Provided for reciprocity with all states regarding concealed carry permits

School resource officers are no longer responsible to enforce school codes of conduct

Delegate McClellan can be reached via email ([HYPERLINK](mailto:info@jennifermcclellan.com) "mailto:info@jennifermcclellan.com" info@jennifermcclellan.com) or via phone (804-698-1171).

Meeting adjourned at 7:30

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Zach Jesse

Zach Jesse

HJWA Board Secretary

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