

Pantops Community Advisory Committee
MINUTES
January 23, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dick Ruffin at 6:17 PM

CAC members present:

Stephanie Lowenhaupt – Anne Oliver - Dick Ruffin - Louis Falzer - Judith Joyce - Henry D. Light- Ida Lee Wootten - Michael Fraser - Michael Spatz - Ron Brownfield

County personnel present:

Bea LaPisto-Kirtley, Board of Supervisors, Donna Price, Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Tim Padalino, County Parks and Recreation

A quorum was confirmed to be present.

Introduction of Emily Kilroy, Assistant to County Executive, Khalilah Jones, Community Connector for Pantops, and new PCAC members, Henry Light and Michael Fraser

The Minutes of the November 28, 2022 were unanimously approved as previously distributed.

Guests:

Jessica Hersh-Ballering - County Transportation Planner

Free Bridge Lane Presentation: The main purpose of the presentation was to discuss the two design concepts to improve Free Bridge Lane. A link to the presentation is below.

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Learn-About-the-Free-Bridge-Lane-Design-Concepts.html?soid=1101145461433&aid=QPAndTuFzzY>

The Chair thanked Ms. Hersh-Ballering for the excellent presentation and noted the improvements that are proposed in both options, such as improved parking at both

ends (including better access), space for picnics, public art and for play and exercise areas. One option allows automobile traffic one way South and the other converts the lane to a promenade.

Public Comments/Questions: Over fifty community members were in attendance, several of whom are residents of Riverside Village which backs on Free Bridge Lane. No one spoke in favor of the option allowing vehicles. The one person who actually lives on Free Bridge Lane said he preferred the promenade option, and added that as far as he can see VDOT has in fact already abandoned the Lane. Several expressed concerns about safety. One spoke of the benefits of noise reduction if traffic is excluded, and another expressed serious doubts about the safety of having a one-way bike path going in the opposite direction of an adjacent travel lane. Other considerations were raised, including about utility lines, maintenance, traffic following Saturday morning games in Darden Towe, access for fire and safety vehicles and eventual connections to mass transit.

Pantops Trails

Stephanie Lowenhaupt, Vice Chair, spoke about creating a Pantops Trail Crew modeled on what is now done in Crozet, and asked for volunteers. The plan would be to launch the Trail Crew in the Spring.

Liaison Updates

Donna Price expressed appreciation for the community participation and spoke about the increased real estate assessment and the upcoming budget discussions. The real estate tax rate will be considered in light of the increased property values.

Bea LaPisto-Kirtley suggested an Albemarle County Parks Foundation to allow non profit donations for parks and other Rivanna related amenities that may not otherwise be affordable.

Other Business:

Emily Kilroy spoke about the February 27 agenda - Phase II of the Comprehensive Plan

Dick Ruffin said it would be helpful to have occasional updates on projects previously discussed and that remain of interest to the PCAC.

The next meeting will be held on February 27, 2023 at 6:15 pm at the Kessler Conference Room at Martha Jefferson Hospital Outpatient Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM by Chairman Ruffin.

Minutes taken and transcribed by Anne Oliver, Secretary