

Redistricting Commission Public Meeting
 City of College Park
 Hybrid Meeting – Davis Hall and Zoom
 Thursday, September 1, 2022
 7:00 p.m.
 Final Minutes

Members	Present	Absent
Betty Colonomos	X	
Val Graham	X	
Alan Hew	X	
John Krouse	X	
Delmar Nelson	X	
Nathan Rickard	X	
Marilyn Yang	X	
Fritz Leopold		X
D.W. Rowlands	X	
Jordan Dewar	X	
Robert Day	X	
Staff and Others		
Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager	X	
Jacob Vassalotti, City GIS Analyst		X
Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney	X	
Sam Mathur, ARCBridge Consulting		X
Priti Mathur, ARCBridge Consulting		X
Carleveva Thompson, Contract Secretary	X	

I. Call to Order

Mr. Day called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Review and Approval of the Agenda

The Commission reviewed the agenda and Mr. Day asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Ms. Rowlands motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Mr. Hew. All members in favor, no opposed. Motion carries, 10-0.

III. Introduction of Commission Members

Mr. Day introduced each Commission member to the audience.

IV. Presentation of the Commission's Charge from City Council

Ms. Ferguson presented the charge of the Commission, which is to review the combination of population and voters to determine whether reapportionment is necessary. The Commission is to hold at least two public hearing to receive views on the reapportionment and develop three redistricting plans to submit to the City Council.

The reapportionment criteria is the sum of the population and actual voters shall be substantially equal in each district.

V. Presentation of Draft New District Maps

Ms. Rowlands presented the current district populations and the estimated population in 2024. Districts will be outside of range based on projected 2024 data and the Commission concluded that the districts need to be reapportioned.

Proposal 1 – Based on the 2020 census population with no consideration of new construction.

Proposal 2 – Based on 2022 population, including new buildings that have opened.

Proposal 3A – Based on proposed summer 2023 population, including new student housing.

Proposal 3B – Based on 2023 population, keeps the Northern part of the City similar, but moves student housing around in districts 3 and 4.

Proposal 3C – Based on 2023 population, moving Mazza grand mark into district 2 and moves Courtyards into district 4.

VI. Public Questions and Comments

1. How did the Commission make sure it was not racially discriminatory?
Mr. Day stated race was not a factor in the Commission's findings or map drawings.

2. District 1 has changed drastically, and it appears to lose Daniels Park and is gaining a strip of Route 1. How does that meet the redistricting requirements?
Ms. Rowlands explained the large strip doesn't contain many voters and it mostly contains student housing. It was added because students have a low voter rate and in order to maintain the population + voters requirement, District 1 needed to have more student housing than it currently has.
3. Will the Commission review the redistricting when the upcoming construction on Route 1 is completed?
Mr. Day stated that redistricting is based on the census population, which is counted every 10 years. The Commission voted on a cutoff date of Fall 2023 and would not consider any construction after that date. Ms. Rowlands stated the City Council can request for new redistricting based on newly completed construction.
4. Based on the deadline of Fall 2023, does a developer just need to have the application in, does the application have to be two-thirds completed, or what was the Commission's process?
Mr. Day stated the criteria for Fall 2023 was that developers would need to be open and accepting leases.
5. Are the candidates for City Council planning on visiting student housing?
Mr. Day stated the Commission cannot answer this question.
6. How were the projected voter rate estimated?
Ms. Rowlands explained that since the Commission could estimate population, the Commission could not estimate voter numbers, so no voters were estimated in the new construction, since most construction is new student housing.
7. Based on the maps, the student area which includes fraternities and sororities, includes the most voters when a student runs and the drafted maps carve up the downtown area which would make it difficult for a student to get elected to the City Council.
Mr. Day stated the Commission could not address voters as students, they had to be addressed as voters. The City charter requires the Commission to keep the population + voter criterion.
8. On one hand, you state the Commission cannot categorize students and on another hand you keep talking about the dorms and which District they will be in, so it's kind of hypocritical.
Ms. Rowlands explained the Commission is to keep communities of interest together, including neighborhoods and dorms. Fundamentally, the Charter requires us to treat populations that don't have many voters.
Ms. Ferguson explained the main view of the Charter is the population and other options can be considered, as long it doesn't throw off the population.

9. District 1 is being penalized as it is now divided into district 2, however, there will be an impact on Council members and voters.
10. Did the Commission consider the lack of voters in any District because they were not excited to get out and vote?
Mr. Day explained that the Commission did take this into consideration. The Commission had to consider the last Federal or State election numbers, not the City election.
11. A resident that lives in district 2, North of 193, commented that historically this portion of district 2 has been separated and it feels like we are an afterthought. The resident wished the district 1 line was moved down so this section would be less of an afterthought if included in district 1.
12. The criterion used does not feel good as the students are not counted in the redistricting process.
13. It was suggested for the Commission to change to six 2-member districts and 2 At-Large districts.
14. What would the implications be if the voter element was taken out?
Ms. Rowlands explained that all of College Park would be one district.

VII. Adjournment

Mr. Krouse motioned to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mr. Hew. All members in favor, no opposed. Motion carries,

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carleveva Thompson, contract secretary