

INDEPENDENT REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 2022

12:00 PM

In Person Conference with Microsoft Teams Video Conference

Present:

Patrick Blanchfield

Donna Cisek

Mona Kleinberg, *appeared virtually*

Taneisha Means, *appeared virtually*

Alyson Miller, *Vice Chair*

Gregory Rakow, *Chair*

Lewis Rose

Christian R. Cullen, Chief Assistant County Attorney

Eoin Wrafter, Commissioner, Dept. Planning and Development

Devin Rigolino, Senior GIS Project Coordinator, Dept. Planning and Development

Item 1. Greetings

Chair called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. Five members appeared in person, two members appeared virtually, one member absent.

Item 2. Continued Discussion re: Benjamin Center Contract

Eoin discussed the scope of work, which was for review, summary and comments and analysis. Additionally, the request was not for a report. If desired, the scope of work would have to be amended. The Agreement's 'not to exceed' amount is \$10,000.00. Chair asked if the members want to make any modifications? Right now, he is working on an hourly rate. If there is a fixed set of things a flat fee makes sense. Hourly rate for general consultant work, but a flat fee for a report. Hourly wages with professionals, normally don't want an independent contractor as an employee but he could be considered a professional. Cumbersome to process as an hourly rate.

Patrick suggests making clear what the Commission wants Joshua to do. To be sure he's not wasting time and money on things that he shouldn't be doing as well as to determine a timeline. Devin offered that Version B was to be forwarded to Joshua for his analysis, however based on yesterday's meeting perhaps the Commission has changed its mind. That decision will be delayed for the end of the meeting.

Discussion turned to having Joshua prepare a report and what within the report will he be addressing. Patrick reviewed having Josh start with the Skyline Report table of contents.

Lewis offered the Local Law requires to have a plan, population of each district, map, meets and bounds, evidence compliance with Voting Rights Act included with the draft plan, compactness in proposed districts. Not sure there is a need a report with exception of the Voting Rights Act.

Chair concerned about not having more detailed information. Patrick discussed a justification regarding the changes. “Independent Audit” on the work we did, in debate or in discussion, what he refers the Skyline offered. Confirming the Commission has addressed all the criteria and any.

To Alyson it would provide a peace of mind including the justifications made.

Eoin evaluation and analysis of draft plans, answer questions under the current scope of work. The question is he going to preparing a separate report above and beyond the scope of work?

Considering all of the factors, a report would provide support of the work justification. Taniesha looking for a guarantee that he is not going to provide a strongly worded report against the steps the Commission makes. Can they even dictate what a consultant can write in a report?

Chair is satisfied with the agreement in its current form. Does anyone want a motion to add a report?

Item 3. Revise & Refine Map Version A

Using all of the knowledge and experience Commission has gained through previous exercises and the consultant

The Commission viewed Version A against the suggestions provided by The Benjamin Center and started in the City of Poughkeepsie and discussed the changes and the evaluations of Joshua concerning the majority/minority district. Patrick asked, as one of the principles why change things if not needed. Using the consultant’s advice, is the defense to the (Patrick’s) principle.

Lewis Rose moved to move Districts 9 and 10 from Josh’s suggested map into Version A, Alyson Miller seconded. Discussion to review the changes and make sure the math works. Motion withdrawn.

Devin Rigolino offered that implementing the changes for Districts 9 and 10 may only impact District 8.

The Commission moves to the eastern part of the County. Everyone that Alyson Miller spoke with, when she asked what other municipalities best share a district with, mentioned the 22 corridor. Other background searches Alyson Miller found Millerton seemed to share commonalities with the 22 corridor. Suggesting Pine Plains, North East and Amenia, taking northern part of Dover. Chair discussed changing the districts in such drastic ways, whether such changes would do legislators and/or constituents justice. Alyson Miller asked if it is better to have 2 representatives or 4 representatives. The present map keeps the townships together. Taniesha Means added that collectively the community is echoing in such a way, that is what a legislative is, representative of their interests.

Alyson Miller described Pine Plains, Amenia and North East and taking less from Dover as a revised District 19. Alyson Miller suggested amending district 25 to include Stanford,

Washington and Union Vale and taking from Pleasant Valley, up to the creek and parts of Route 72.

The Commission moved to Districts 20 and 11 as proposed by The Benjamin Center. They discussed rearranging blocks between northern Rhinebeck and southern Red Hook but chose to leave suggested arrangement with discussion about properties owned by Bard College, avoiding a split of the college property.

The Commission moved to the City of Poughkeepsie, the new District 9 and 10 as proposed by Joshua Simons and correcting the numbers and compactness of District 8. Discussion of inclusion or exclusion of Vassar College with District 8 versus 6. Taneisha offered her knowledge about how focusing on compactness between the Town of Poughkeepsie and the City of Poughkeepsie will create concerns for the community. She went further to explain how Vassar College is viewed as a community of interest and the City of Poughkeepsie community focuses on policies. Further discussion on where Vassar College should be districted. The Commission then created a District 2, kept District 1 from Version A, District 3. The Commission stopped there to allow Devin to fill in the remaining current Version A Districts.

Mona Kleinberg offered her thoughts (as being away for the next two meetings). She has heard from someone from Beekman – two Chelsea Cove, Dolton Farms wish not to be split. Mona Kleinberg prefers to create 2 districts of the City of Beacon that mirror each other. Eoin Wrafter confirmed that each of the communities/neighborhoods should not be split and fall within the same district.

Discuss Monday and Tuesday agendas. Carve out time to consider preparations for public hearings. Lewis Rose mentioned who is speaking, who else has a speaking role regarding what, whether there will be exhibits, how it will be presented.

Item 4. Public Comment

The meeting was opened to comment from the Public.

Karen – Town/City of Poughkeepsie and Vassar College issue. Urban area/core with Suburban areas surrounding which may be more elongated. It seemed odd to force compactness, dealing with areas of the town of Poughkeepsie. Will be generally less compact. Everyone who speaks up, should be allowed to speak, without question or issue.

Adjournment.

Alyson Miller moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Donna Cisek. Without opposition the motion passed, with one member absent. The meeting concluded at 2:52 p.m.