

Town of Riverdale Park
Redistricting Committee Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2022

In Attendance

Mayor Alan K. Thompson
Chris Fike, Committee Member
Ifiok Inyang, Committee Member
Kate Kelly, Committee Member

Jessica Barnes, Director of Administrative Services

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the Redistricting Committee Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fike made a motion to approve the Redistricting Committee Meeting agenda for October 19, 2022, as revised. Ms. Kelly seconded the motion. Vote: 3-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstain
Chris Fike: Aye
Ifiok Inyang: Aye
Kate Kelly: Aye

Discussion:

Mayor Thompson discussed changes to the October 19th agenda. There were no stated conflicts of interest.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Inyang made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2022, Redistricting Committee Meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fike. Vote: 3-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstain
Chris Fike: Aye
Kate Kelly: Aye
Ifiok Inyang: Aye

Discussion Items

The Pilot House

Mayor Thompson discussed a recent article in the *Diamondback* regarding the redistricting process in College Park. Mayor Thompson stated that after reading the article, he discussed with Town Attorney Sussman the 2020 Census count and the Pilot House (located in Riverdale Park Station) which was not included in the 2020 Census count. Mayor Thompson provided an overview of the discussion.

Mayor Thompson discussed his calculations related to the approximate population of the Pilot House. Mayor Thompson asked the Committee if they wanted to adjust the 2020 Census count to include the Pilot House and if so, what approximate population should be used.

Mr. Inyang stated that he was supportive of including the Pilot House and asked if it was possible to get a head count from the developer. Mayor Thompson stated that he was not sure if the Pilot House or the developer would have an accurate head count.

Ms. Kelly noted that all of the draft ward boundary maps that were previously discussed by the Committee would be invalid with the addition of the population of the Pilot House. Mayor Thompson replied in the affirmative and stated that minor adjustments to the current draft ward boundary maps would not be enough.

Mr. Fike asked about the impact of not including the Pilot House and Mayor Thompson discussed the potential impacts.

Mayor Thompson stated that the ideal ward size would be 1,277 with the population of the Pilot House included. Mayor Thompson noted that the Pilot House was currently full and was nearly full in the fall of 2020.

Mayor Thompson stated that he felt that 300 was likely the low end of an estimate for the population of the Pilot House.

Mr. Fike noted that the population in Riverdale Park Station would increase over the next several years due to additional development. Mayor Thompson stated that the new buildings in Riverdale Park Station were projected to be completed by 2029.

Mr. Fike stated that it was reasonable to incorporate an estimate for the population of the Pilot House. Ms. Kelly agreed with Mr. Inyang and Mr. Fike.

Ms. Kelly discussed the other potential developments in Town and the related impact on the Town's population.

Mayor Thompson stated that he would like to have the Committee agree upon the population estimate for the Pilot House. Mr. Inyang suggested that the Committee consider an estimate of 350 or 400.

Mr. Fike stated that he felt that 350 was a more accurate population estimate. Ms. Kelly agreed that 350 was a reasonable estimate. There were no objections to using 350 as the population estimate for the Pilot House. CM Smith stated that the estimated population seemed reasonable.

Resident Lora Katz asked if there was an opportunity to change the number of wards, perhaps fewer but larger wards. Mayor Thompson stated that a Charter Amendment would be needed.

Ms. Katz suggested incremental change over time as another consideration.

CM Smith stated that it was important to consider the rapid pace of development. CM Smith suggested, with regard to the number of wards, having more wards rather than fewer wards and cautioned against at-large seats due to court findings.

Draft Ward Maps

The Committee discussed the aspects of the previous draft ward boundary maps that they liked and considerations for the drafting of new ward boundary maps.

Mayor Thompson stated that he would work on further adjustments based on the new population. Mr. Fike stated that he agreed with Mr. Inyang and appreciated the concept of incremental change.

Ms. Kelly asked about places in Town where the ward boundary was one side of the street and Mayor Thompson provided an overview of the current ward boundaries.

CM Smith thanked the Committee for their work on redistricting.

Mr. Fike and Ms. Kelly stated that it would be beneficial to talk more about changing the number of wards after the redistricting process. Mayor Thompson stated that he would ask Town Attorney Sussman if mid-cycle redistricting was possible. Mr. Inyang stated that it was a worthwhile discussion.

Mr. Fike discussed voter participation and the need for a voter engagement initiative.

Mayor Thompson stated that he would generate two or three new draft ward boundary maps and he would seek feedback from the Committee via e-mail. Mayor Thompson stated that he wanted to have several draft ward boundary maps for the community to provide input on at the Community Conversation on November 12th.

New Business

There was no new business to be discussed.

Next Meeting

Mayor Thompson stated that the next Redistricting Committee meeting was scheduled for November 16th at 7:30 p.m. and a community input session, Community Conversations, would be held on November 12th at 9:30 a.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Inyang made a motion to adjourn the Redistricting Committee Meeting at 8:26 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fike. Vote: 3-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstain

Kate Kelly: Aye

Ifiok Inyang: Aye

Chris Fike: Aye