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Venture Richmond Receives City Approvals to Proceed with Black Lives Matter Street Mural

RICHMOND, VA – Venture Richmond has received approval from two City commissions to bring a Black Lives Matter street mural to Downtown. This approval follows nearly two months of work on this project by the Downtown organization, artists Hamilton Glass and Ed Trask, and various community groups. The project received unanimous approval from the Public Art Commission on Friday and unanimous approval from the City Planning Commission today.

“We know there are those who will say we are late with this project,” said Anedra Bourne, deputy executive director for Venture Richmond. “And, admittedly, we wish it could’ve happened much sooner but the process is important. There will undoubtedly be a variety of perspectives and sentiments. However, as an organization we believe that this most basic of statements - that all Black Lives Matter - deserves to be embraced. We don’t see this as a moment lost, but as an ongoing, powerful movement.

“We began working on this project in June, and by choosing to follow the appropriate guidelines for approvals and permitting, working with properties adjacent to the mural site, and talking to community groups and artists, we hope that the mural will continue to have an impact.”

“We should also say that we are fully cognizant of the pain that portions of Richmond have suffered by some of the recent events that have been outside this peaceful movement,” Bourne said, “and we will continue to create and support programs to assist those who have suffered economically.”

Bourne said the group is pursuing plans to involve more community members and artists in the process, and the hope is that rather than simply mimicking other solid yellow murals in other communities, Richmond’s will be unique.

Business leaders, artists, and others have offered letters of support for the effort, which is privately funded. Supporters include Councilwoman Ellen Robertson, the Rev. Benjamin Campbell, Carmina Drummond (Martin Agency), Moses Foster (West Cary Group), artist Hamilton Glass, and the Downtown Neighborhood Association.

The mural is to be painted on the 800/900 block of E. Grace Street near St. Paul's Episcopal and St. Peter Catholic Churches and the Barbara Johns Building (the site of the Commonwealth’s Office of the Attorney General).

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Venture Richmond, Inc., is a non-profit organization formed to engage business and community leaders in partnering with the City to enhance the vitality of the community, particularly Downtown, through economic development, marketing, promotion, advocacy and events. Venture Richmond provides enhanced property management services for both the Downtown and Riverfront including; the Clean & Safe program, beautification and landscaping projects and management and maintenance of Brown's Island, the Canal Walk and Belle Isle parking lot.

Venture Richmond Events, LLC, produces Friday Cheers, the 2nd Street Festival, the Richmond Folk Festival, and partners with Sports Backers to produce Dominion Energy Riverrock.

Riverfront Canal Cruises, LLC, operates historically narrated boat tours and private charters of the James River and Kanawha Canal.

Both Venture Richmond Events, LLC, and Riverfront Canal Cruises, LLC, are subsidiaries of Venture Richmond, Inc. For more information visit www.venturerichmond.com.