

City of Hyattsville — 2022 Redistricting Committee

August 10, 2022, 7 PM–8:30 PM — Virtual

MINUTES

In attendance: Leland Dudek, Jennifer Gafford, Greta Mosher, T. Carter Ross (Recorder), Andrew Sayer (Chair), Krystil Smith. **Staff:** Shakira Louimarre, Cindy Zork. **Regrets:** Sekour Mason, Cliff Mayo, Alicia Sanchez Gill Freemyn, Cynthia Totten. **Guests:** David Marshall.

1. Roll Call

A quorum was noted, and Chair Sayer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Attendance was registered, and guests and staff introduced themselves.

2. Minutes

Minutes from the July 27, 2022, meeting were approved on a voice vote.

3. Review Demographic Data for the Wards under the Equal Population Map

Zork showed a new map highlighting the racial population densities on a map with near-equal population-size Wards. The data is broken down by Census block with Census racial categories, as well as the Hispanic or non-Hispanic ethnicity question. Chair Sayer noted that population density by breakdown per Census blocks varies greatly, so shifting Census blocks can have a large impact on racial/ethnic make up of a given Ward.

More similar racial/ethnic breakdowns among Wards may have a greater impact than is immediately obvious. We don't have the data yet to say exactly yet. Ross asked if the current break downs disaggregate answers from the Census's ethnicity questions from answers to the Census's racial questions. Sayer said that it seems the data is in two separate groups (ethnicity and racial).

Louimarre noted that population density is not the only consideration of equity. It is also worth looking at other communities of interest.

Mosher asked if the maps account for future planned growth. Zork noted that the current maps show only the 2020 Census numbers without consideration of future growth. Dudek asked if the planned new development would still be within the allowable +/-10% variation. Ross noted that the variation is based off 2020 Census numbers, not future growth. Mosher noted that the Board of Election Supervisors would appreciate if consideration of future growth potential is considered. Sayer noted that +/-10% is about 423 people in each direction.

Zork noted that, from the equal population map, when considering future development, Wards three and five will have the greatest growth, which may mean pushing more people into Ward four. Although Dudek noted that such changes would still leave the Wards imbalance in terms of population with future development.

Sayer noted based on current density of neighborhoods, natural barriers, like the Metro line, might complicate shifting Census blocks and communities of interest.

4. **Equity considerations, revisited**

Smith asked about how to make sure neighborhoods with distinct identities, for example the Arts District or the future Suffrage Point development, were not divided between wards. Sayer asked if a map showing HOA or other community association boundaries was available; Zork said that Mason could be asked if such a map was available or could be developed. Questions were raised about the connection between Editors Park and the rest of Ward 3. Mosher noted that entire wards may not have a single affinity or connection; the important concern is making sure neighborhoods/communities within a ward aren't divided between two wards.

Louimarre noted that when it comes to community outreach, making sure that the committee is conscious in its decision-making and outlines its thinking in a transparent can help in ensuring that people can understand the rationale for the offered maps as well as focus any concerns. She also noted the importance of making sure materials were made available in Spanish, as well as English.

5. **Community outreach next steps**

Looking ahead to next steps, the committee would like to see the impact of a new change, using the equal-population map as the starting point:

- Moving the section of Ward 3 southeast of Queens Chapel to Ward 2
- Moving the section of Ward 3 south of East–West Highway to Wards 4 and 2
- Making sure Suffrage Point is not divided between Wards 1 and 2
- Making sure the Arts District remains in a single ward

Sayer noted that it looks like three maps for consideration could be developed, keeping in mind the prior comments and ensuring each map remains compliant with the $\pm 10\%$ population difference and trying to skew the difference in a way that accounts for planned future development:

- Map #1 Five Wards with Equal Population
- Map #2 Extending Ward 4 South and rebalancing
- Map #3 Extending Ward 4 North and rebalancing

Once these maps are devised, we can look at the racial/ethnic breakdowns, along with other available community of interest data points to understand the impact of the new maps and consider how to adjust them.

6. **Timeline**

Currently proposals of new maps are set for presentation to the City Council on Sept. 19, 2022, followed by a public hearing on Oct. 3, 2022.

Zork noted she would like to have the city's new web interface ready to accept public comment on the redistricting proposals in place ahead of the Sept. 19 presentation to Council. Given this, she suggested the committee plan for a meeting the week of Sept. 12 to finalize the maps and presentation. Working backwards, this gives the committee four weeks to devise the maps and ensure they meet its aspirations for new ward boundaries.

Dudek asked if one or more maps would be presented to Council. Sayer said it might make sense to offer a single map, but that showing the public three maps at this point in the process and getting feedback made sense. Mosher recalled that in the last round of redistricting five maps were presented, saying that presenting three maps and explaining the rational and tradeoffs behind each would be reasonable.

Gafford reemphasized the need to make sure we have input from neighborhoods that will be shifted and to include that feedback in the presentations.

In response to a question, Zork noted that there are multiple options for seeking input, including city events like Summer Jam and events lead by council members, such as the upcoming Wards 2 and 5 check-ins. Louimarre noted need to make sure we have bilingual outreach, as well as opportunities to reach out to community partners, back to school networks, etc., to get the word out. Zork noted we could reach out to parent engagement specialists at schools, faith community groups, age-friendly groups, etc.

7. Assignments and Next Steps

Zork will relay to Mason the desired maps. Once the lines are drawn, demographic data about each potential ward can be assembled for consideration.

Hopefully at least some first-stage maps and materials will be available prior to the August 17 Summer Jam (5–7 p.m.) and for Back-to-School events on August 27 (1 p.m.). Ross said he would be available to help staff a table about redistricting at Summer Jam.

The committee plans to meet again virtually on Wednesday, August 31, at 7 p.m., although an additional meeting may be needed prior to then. Zork and Sayer will discuss meeting timing after speaking with Mason about the timeline for developing new maps and associated demographic data.

8. New Business

`No new business was presented.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Sayer called for motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m., which was approved on a voice vote.