



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes

### BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**LASHAWNDR A VERNON, CHAIR**

**Raynetta Hill, Vice-Chair**

**Theresa Garrison, Anthony Smith, Baboonie Tatum,  
Rayhainio Boynes, Terrence Moore, Sr.**

**Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,  
clee@milwaukee.gov**

**Legislative Liaison, Ted Medhin, 286-8681,  
tmedhi@milwaukee.gov**

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**Monday, September 18, 2023**

**9:00 AM**

**Virtual Meeting**

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**This will be a virtual meeting conducted via GoToMeeting. Should you wish to join this meeting from your phone, tablet, or computer you may go to <https://meet.goto.com/917007037>. You can also dial in using your phone United States: +1 (872) 240-3212 and Access Code: 917-007-037.**

**1. Call to order.**

*Meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m.*

**2. Roll call.**

**Present** 6 - Vernon, Boynes, Smith, Tatum, Hill and Moore,

**Absent** 1 - Garrison

**Also present:**

*Amy Turim, Dept. of City Development Real Estate  
Matt Haessly, Dept. of City Development Real Estate  
David Misky, DCD and RACM  
Mathew Reimer, DCD and RACM  
Ald. Milele Coggs, 6th Ald. Dist.*

**3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from July 10, 2023.**

*Meeting minutes from July 10, 2023 were approved without objection.*

**4. Overview on the City's environmental review process of properties and sites.**

*Appearing:  
David Misky, DCD  
Mathew Reimer, DCD*

*Mr. Misky and Reimer gave a presentation overview. They worked in the real estate and environmental development divisions of the Dept. of City Development and also presented the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM). They were presenting in response to general inquiries made regarding sites in Bronzeville. For the City, their office would try to address City-owned brownfields that the City would receive. They would work to receive funding to test and clean up brownfield sites and challenged properties, such as on MLK Dr. and North Ave. RACM was part of City government but was an independent corporation created by State law. RACM's mission was to eliminate blighting and slum conditions that inhibit neighborhood reinvestment, foster and promote business expansion and job creation, and facilitate new business and housing development. RACM would operate to manage property and investigate and remediate environmental issues associated with brownfields.*

*Brownfields were abandoned, idle or underused commercial or industrial properties, where the expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination, and can range in size, location, age, and past use. Brownfield redevelopment process would include site identification/site inventory, review of historical uses of site, history check, historic land use investigation, phase 1 environmental site assessment, phase 2 site investigation, soil and groundwater sampling, remedial action planning, site cleanup, and redevelopment. Brownfields could be City-owned, privately owned mothballed, or privately own tax delinquent properties. Positives to City-owned brownfields would be control of the property/site and cheaper cleanup costs at construction. Negatives to City-owned brownfields would be hesitancy for testing, responsible party status, and waiting times for deals. Current City-owned brownfield examples in Bronzeville would include 5th, 6th, and 7th Streets along North Ave. Formerly City-owned brownfields that have been redeveloped would include the sites located at America's Black Holocaust Museum, and King Drive Commons. A positive to mothballed brownfields would be that they tended to be more marketable. Negatives to privately owned mothballed brownfields would be the lack of control, approaches, transaction facilitation over them as well as using cost recovery as a threat, condemnations, redevelopment plan for the area, and communication with developers and BIDs. Tax delinquent brownfields were on the Do Not Acquire list and consisted of over 150 properties with millions of dollars in back taxes. Positives to these brownfields would be possible testing if given access and possible grants. Negatives would be that these were often boarded up buildings or vacant lots, having no development done until after testing, and inability for cleanup. Examples would include the former CYD Building and former auto repair at 2532 N MLK Dr.*

*They worked with the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources (WDNR) to track contaminated sites and resulting outcomes of those sites through a WDNR BRRS database and mapping tool. The BRRS system was a comprehensive online database that provided information on contaminated properties, other cleanup, and redevelopment activities in Wisconsin. There were a number of contaminated sites in Bronzeville that showed in the system. Brownfield resources could be found through State Statute 75.106 that spoke to the foreclosure process, resolving of back taxes, and the cleanup process. There were brownfield financial incentives through the City's Brownfield Site Assessment Matching Grant, Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Grants, and USEPA Brownfield Grants. There were some revolving loan programs in Bronzeville, such as at FivePoints and at 6th St. and North Ave.*

*Additional inquiries can be made to them at RACM, via email at [brownfields@milwaukee.gov](mailto:brownfields@milwaukee.gov), and visiting their website at*

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/DCD/>.

*Members inquired about the average number of properties on the Do No Require list, disclosing of environmental engineers who RACM consults with, increasing racial equity and inclusion for those environmental engineering consultants, ability to stop corporations from leaving their sites contaminated, concentrated of brownfield sites, and exploration to install urban agriculture and/or hemp plantations at brownfield sites.*

*Mr. Misky and Reimer replied. The list was at 350 or more properties when they first started but has now been around 150 properties for many years. They would RFP for 3-4 local environmental engineers on their properties every 3 years and could share that list. Their contracts would have SBE human resource requirements and would work with the Office of Equity and Inclusion on the listing of those firms. The list was shrinking but they were working with OEI to improve the list and to engage the Chambers of Commerce and engineering schools. Some corporations do take the responsibility to clean their sites but many do not. Corporations would insulate themselves from liability. The City would work with the EPA or others to clean up contaminated sites to the best of their ability. Policy changes were needed at the state and federal levels, and they were successful in a lot of cases. Brownfields were more prevalent in urban city centers, which is the case for the City. The City's brownfields were attributed to its physical nature and infrastructure of railroads, rivers, and industrial sites. Suburbs also played a role in the higher concentration of brownfields being in the City. Regarding urban agriculture they have planted poplar trees to absorb soil contaminants. A problem for the City was that much of the soil was clay, which would limit water from traveling far. There were scientific concerns with contaminated plants after absorption of contaminants. Also, a lot of surface area would be needed for viable agriculture to occur.*

**5. Bronzeville RFPs, listings, projects, initiatives, events, grants, activities, plans, or other aspects for update, discussion, review, and/or approval.**

**A. DCD Commercial Corridor Grant updates**

*Member Moore, Sr. gave an update. There was a facade grant for the mixed-use property at 2659 N. MLK Dr. Dream Social Lounge at 1806 N. MLK Dr. was progressing with their internal and exterior renovations, and opening was anticipated for next year.*

**B. DCD Real Estate RFPs and/or listing updates**

*Ms. Turim gave an update. The 2673 N. MLK Dr. RFP was still open, and there were some interest. They were still looking for high quality proposals. There were no other RFPs in Bronzeville. Also, DCD was doing due diligence for the RFP awarded to Michael Adetoro's team regarding 3116 N. MLK Dr. They were looking at project design, zoning, and improvements. Tax credits would be applied for after site revisions, site control approval would follow, WHEDA tax credits would be applied for, and financing would be refined.*

**C. Bronzeville Week recap**

*Ald. Coggs gave a recap. Bronzeville Week was from August 5-12, 2023. It was the most attended year with more vendors and attendees than past years. All events, including the run/walk, went well. There was a recap video available on the FaceBook Bronzeville page. There were visitors from all over the country. Next year's dates would be determined soon. Committee members were engaged in the*

*event in a variety of ways. She thanked the planning team, partners, and sponsors in making the event a success.*

*Member Boynes said that there was great turnout, great weather, and vendors were able to sell the day of.*

*Vice-chair Hill said that the BID helped with the trolley ride, art walk, and business breakfast; there were visitors from Arizona; and the trolley rides remained popular.*

*Ald. Coggs commended Akuwa Dantzler, Deborah Moore, and Terrence Moore, Sr. as the organizing team; thanked various sponsors; and said that there may be new venues to utilize for next year.*

*D. Other*

**6. Public comments.**

*There were no public comments.*

**7. Announcements.**

*Cydney Key, ThriveOn Collaboration, announced a block party for September 20, 2023 from 5-7 p.m. at Vel Phillips Ave., between North Ave. and Lloyd St.*

*Ald. Coggs announced a joint 1st and 6th Ald. District Town Hall meeting for September 27, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at Messmer High School regarding the City's 2024 budget.*

*Member Moore, Sr. announced those interested to contact him regarding available Commercial Corridor grants.*

**8. Next steps.**

*A. Next meeting date and time (Monday, November 20, 2023)*

*B. Agenda items for the next meeting*

*To be determined.*

**9. Discussion on the Bronzeville Advisory Committee RFP review process.**

*The Bronzeville Advisory Committee may convene into closed session, pursuant to s. 19.85(1)(g), Wis. Stats., for the purpose of conferring with the City Attorney who will render oral or written advice with respect to litigation in which the city is or is likely to become involved.*

*Member Smith moved that the committee convene into closed session, pursuant to s. 19.85(1)(g), Wis. Stats., for the purpose of conferring with the City Attorney who will render oral or written advice with respect to litigation in which the city is or is likely to become involved. Seconded by member Boynes. There were no objections.*

*The meeting convened into closed session at 10:06 a.m.*

*Present 6 - Vernon, Hill, Smith, Tatum, Boynes, Moore, Sr.*

*Absent 1 - Garrison*

*Also present:*

*Atty. Peter Block, City Attorney's Office*

*Ald. Milele Coggs, 6th Ald. Dist.*

*Amy Turim, Dept. of City Development Real Estate*

*Matt Haessly, Dept. of City Development Real Estate*

**10. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.*

*Chris Lee, Staff Assistant*

*Council Records Section*

*City Clerk's Office*