



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

VACANT, CHAIR

Rhonda Manuel, Vice-Chair

*Fidel Verdin, Theresa Garrison, Christopher Perceptions,
Clifton Crump, and Lashawndra Vernon*

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Thursday, May 11, 2017

9:00 AM

Room 301-B, Third Floor, City Hall

1. Call to order.

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. Roll call.

Present 2 - Manuel and Crump

Absent 1 - Verdin

Excused 1 - Perceptions

3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from April 19, 2017.

Member Crump moved approval, seconded by Member Garrison, of the meeting minutes from April 19, 2017. There were no objections from those members present.

4. RFPs, listings, projects, activities, or updates.

a. National League of Cities Bronzeville Tour and Equitable Economic Development Fellowship update

Individual appearing:

Ken Little, Department of City Development

Mr. Little gave an update.

Last June, Milwaukee was one of six cities selected to participate in the Equitable Economic Development fellowship, developed by the National League of Cities (NLC). The purpose of the fellowship is to provide technical advisory assistance to one another concerning equitable economic development initiatives in each city. Equitable economic development is defined as unlocking the full potential of local development by dismantling barriers and expanding opportunities for low income communities and people of color through accountable public action and investment to yield quality jobs,

entrepreneurship, ownership, wealth, and a competitive city. DCD staff had traveled to tour other fellowship cities and gave feedback on those cities' initiatives. Milwaukee, led by DCD staff, held its tour and showed its model program from April 17 to 19 of Lindsey Heights and Bronzeville followed by stakeholder community meetings without city staff present, viewing of an ACRE class, and an impressive luncheon panel inclusive of a feedback presentation from the technical advisory team. The City's program for the fellowship is the CROP program, which is focused on strengthening neighborhood ownership both physically and mentally by making city-owned tax foreclosed commercial real estate in concentrated disinvested areas available to ACRE students to redevelop, revitalize, and create a pipeline of businesses to fill those areas.

Equitable economic development is a national issue as revealed by a NLC survey and statistics. A NLC national survey of state of city addresses by mayors lists the top five economic development categories with issues: jobs, arts and culture, business growth, downtown development, and workforce development. 6 out of 10 prisoners are black or Latino. 35% black or Latino men will not graduate from high school. The unemployment rate is 2 times that of white. 57% black or Latino income is spent on housing costs. There is medium wage disparity for people of color in the City. The percentage of owner-occupied households is 60% for whites and 30% for blacks, which is the least of any ethnic group in area.

The luncheon panel made several observations, some of which came out of stakeholder meetings. The City has a track record of success with neighborhood development partners and foreclosed properties and has invested in additional staffing and projects. There is substantial opportunity to leverage more resources and relationships. There are weak market economics and pipeline for foreclosed properties in the City. The City is perceived as a micromanager in slowing development and diverting resources to downtown and not neighborhoods. The ACRE program can evolve to meet the needs of program participants once they enter the real world development. The City needs a more cohesive strategy approach to metric and measurement. The CROP program is a beginning of a more ambitious effort. The City should do more comprehensive development zones as opposed to small individual sites. The City has funding challenges, needs more public and private sector financial partners, and should look at a more diverse spectrum of resources such as historic tax credits.

The technical advisory group had suggestions: envision city-owned land as an opportunity, city staff and stakeholders to increase economic development in low income neighborhoods, focus on neighborhood blocks rather than single sites for broader vision, have a more comprehensive process as development is slow and not immediate, and engage the community. Other suggestions that were made relates to how the City looks at its properties and assets: engage more partners, look at night markets, be more flexible and decrease red tape, take more risks, make development easier, and make development zones.

DCD was assigned some tasks to do: begin a community asset mapping exercise; form a youth engagement program; hold commercial block parties; create a catalog of community development partners; develop a development comprehensive strategy; and develop popups, maker spaces, and incubators to fill in spaces in the interim.

Mr. Little addressed the panel observations, suggestions, and assigned tasks. Success has been more on the residential side. The commercial side is picking up.

The City has \$150,000 in commercial foreclose property funds for two projects in Bronzeville: the former Stella's and Ja'Stacy restaurants. DCD is trying to reserve dollars for the ACRE program and has formed an advisory board. The ACRE program is about getting people of color involved in real estate from management to development, collaboration with neighborhoods, and equity to the CROP program. The City's disinvested community piece is to address weak market economics. The City's property tax levy goes to the police department. DCD had presented 2451 W. North Avenue and the Bader Philanthropies office vacant land sites to the technical advisory team. There is conversation to hold a charrette for the Bader site and think about a focal development area from King Drive and Keefe Avenue to North Avenue to 27th Street. BID 32 is looking at doing night markets. Other cities have more red tape than the City has. The City is already doing some things that were mentioned by the technical advisory team but did not get the chance to respond to the team. The team did not quite get what the City is doing. The City already has a consortium of community assets (including for Bronzeville), will engage youths this summer in Lindsey Heights on North Avenue, has various BIDs organizing commercial block parties, is working to create a catalog of community development partners, and are thinking about a comprehensive strategy with development pink zones. The DCD team will put responses together and report at the final fellowship meeting in Washington D.C. this June.

Member Garrison said that Bronzeville is proudly making progress despite taking time. Examples include Pete's Fruit Market and Welford Sanders Lofts.

Member Crump inquired about physically protecting commercial buildings once acquired by the City and other fellow cities having a redevelopment authority entity to hold properties.

Member Crump said that the City's Local Business Action Team had recommended reducing regulation in the zoning code and reducing appeal cases, which mostly come from depressed areas.

Mr. Little replied. His office only deals with the disposition side and the real estate division of DCD can best answer the maintenance of the commercial properties that the City acquires. The City is unique in having a redevelopment authority and owning properties. Other fellowship cities have different approaches, such as land banks, auctions, co-ops, and employee-owned corporations. The City of Houston has been initializing huge development areas. Reducing special uses were mentioned and is a good idea.

Chairman Hollmon invited Mr. Little to provide another update to the committee after the final fellowship meeting.

b. Artist housing program update

Individuals appearing:

Sara Daleiden, MKE LAX

Vedale Hill, Jazale's Art Studio

Mikal Floyd-Pruitt, Jazale's Art Studio

Carl Quindel, Strong Block

Ms. Daleiden showed a 5-minute video called Rise and Shine, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQmis7uNhAM&feature=youtu.be>, which looks at

the cultural development change and synergy in Bronzeville.

Ms. Daleiden gave an update. The program is about artists owning live-work spaces in Bronzeville. All those appearing today, including herself, were identified to be prospective property owners under the program. The tax foreclosure city-owned properties for artist housing consists of 4 and 1 mixed-use buildings on 6th Street and North Avenue, 2 buildings on 4th Street and Meinecke Avenue, and 1 building on 6th Street. There will be \$25,000 in matching funds per property for rehabilitation. They are working with Ald. Milele Coggs. Financial support will be through Strong Block. The duplex on 4th Street will be the first house, and it is for Mr. Hill. Financing is being confirmed for the rest of properties. The program is a creative way for rehabilitation and development. She is excited about being a part of the redevelopment project.

Mr. Hill commented. He is interested in stability and longevity for his studio business and residence. He grew up in the area and wants to invest in the community by being a home owner. As the first home owner under the program, he wants to inspire, motivate young people, and expand the opportunity to other artists.

Mr. Floyd-Pruitt commented. The presence of artists will increase value and longevity for the area. It is important for artists to have stake and ownership in the community where they have presence in, especially for a hub of young people to experience art and entrepreneurship. The cluster housing will provide an environment of different resources working in harmony together.

Mr. Quindel commented. Strong Block's role is to implement its 21-month rent-to-own program to prospective buyers. The program is for those who cannot obtain traditional bank loans and resources to repair homes. The idea is for a prospective buyer to be part of the subcontractor group to create the product, structure, and acquire financial support. Within 21 months a tenant will be able to get ownership. A detailed buying program will be done for each prospective owner prior to purchase. Strong Block will work first with local community banks to acquire a 30-year fixed loan for a buyer.

Member Garrison inquired about the 4-plex on Meinecke Avenue.

Ms. Daleiden replied. The duplex on Meinecke Avenue, which is for Mr. Hill, is linked to the 4-plex next to it. The 4-plex is the second property under the program, will have its lower floor be an open art and workshop space, and its upper floors as two apartment units. The other duplexes will be for housing as well. Financing and design for the properties are being fine-tuned. Some artists are in need of rental space prior to entering the ownership program.

Chairman Hollmon questioned prospective buyers who fail to own a home after the rent-to-own program ends.

Mr. Quindel responded. A 6-month extension will be added to a contract along with an additional \$2100 to the purchase price. His company has yet to encounter someone who was not able to complete the program. His company is built on creating a family community, willing to make adjustments, find new buyers, have options, and has no pressure to sell immediately.

Chairman Hollmon invited Ms. Daleiden and her team to provide another update to the committee in the future.

c. 2370 N. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Drive project update (former Ja'Stacy restaurant)

Individuals appearing:

James Gardner, Rockford's Bluewater Grill LLC

James Phelps, Jr., JCP Construction

Mr. Gardner gave an update. The project is going well with many aspects in place such as financing and an architectural team. Ald. Coggs has been updated and is in favor. Budgeting has been an issue due to much disrepair to the old building, which had been vacant for 10 years. There is some water damage to the building. An elevator is needed for the building. The business theme and goal is the same, and the business will open.

Mr. Phelps, Jr. added that there is one change in the project. A new entity, MLK 2368 LLC, will purchase the building as opposed to the original entity under Mr. Gardner. The new entity will enable the financing and capital to work. DCD is aware of the new structure. A revised plan will be submitted to DCD.

Members questioned about the acquisition of a liquor license, cost concerns due to installing an elevator, parking, and timeline.

Mr. Gardner replied. The liquor license was obtained. The main issue is figuring a right budget due to the disrepair in the building. The business will be a casual fine dining restaurant and will set a presence in the area.

Mr. Phelps, Jr. replied. The elevator is a cost concern, a requirement for ADA compliance, and an ongoing process. There is anticipation to use the gated, adjacent parking lot owned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and there have been preliminary conversations with DNR. Valet parking is already included in the budget for the ungated parking portion. Closing is anticipated this August or September, and opening is anticipated for spring next year. They would like to bring awareness to the community by being a part of Bronzeville Week and setting up a booth.

Chairman Hollmon added comments. Friends of Bronzeville, via member Jayme Montgomery Baker, should be contacted concerning Bronzeville Week. Mr. Gardner and Phelps are invited to give another progress report to the committee in the future.

Member Crump added that Bronzeville Week is from August 5th to the 12th and vendors can set up booths on the festival day of the event, which is August 5th.

d. Historic Garfield School Redevelopment project update

Chairman Hollmon said to reschedule this item for a future meeting when the developer can appear before the committee. Ms. Manual is to coordinate with the developer, possibly for a June or July meeting.

e. Other

Amy Turim, Department of City Development, appeared and commented. She is aware, has the new proposal from Rockford's Blue Water Grill, and wants to see it move forward. She recently took part of a tour, for visitors from the City of Cleveland,

in Bronzeville concerning equitable development. The tour was inclusive of the new arena area and TOD grant.

Vice-Chair Manual added that the tour was a great opportunity for DCD colleagues to get into the community and she was impressed by the Victory Park open space.

Chairman Hollmon said that Ms. Turim should inform the committee accordingly should any major issues regarding Rockford's Blue Water Grill arise.

5. Committee internal RFP recommendation evaluation process.

Chairman Hollmon said to hold this item until member Montgomery Baker can be present.

6. Announcements.

Member Crump commented. 502 Garfield has a lunch special. He recently went to lunch there and saw many construction workers also come to eat lunch there from the Garfield school redevelopment site - an indication that the Garfield school project is coming along.

7. Agenda items for the next meeting.

Chairman Hollmon suggested Garfield school redevelopment update and BAC internal RFP evaluation review process as potential agenda items.

Member Garrison suggested a discussion on Juneteenth Day with the focus to engage Northcott and artists.

Chairman Hollmon commented. The committee has not done anything formally for Juneteenth Day, which is June 19th; however, he and vice-chair Manuel can reach out to Northcott and member Perceptions to inquire about involving some artists for Juneteenth Day, perhaps in conjunction with the Bronzeville artists who will be engaged with a Milwaukee Bucks block party on June 10th.

8. Set next meeting date and time.

Possibly Tuesday, June 7 or Wednesday, June 8, 2017 based on a majority of members attending.

9. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

*Yashica Hayes and Chris Lee
Staff Assistants
Council Records Section
City Clerk's Office*