

Monday, January 11, 2020

To the Mayor, DCD, BOZA, and Common Council:

I write in support of the 5 Points Anti-gentrification and Displacement Plan. For decades our leaders have fought against redlining, discriminatory practices in homeownership and renting, and have pushed homeownership as a means to close the wealth gap, own a piece of the “American Dream”, and a right as a productive citizen of the United States of America.

In our civics classes and other types of learning, one of the goals is to add to a society and community not to subtract. Milwaukee has several plans in theory that are aimed to help neighborhood, citizens, residents, homeowners, and businesses; however, in practice many of the elements do not manifest. We find that the NSP plans are geared toward individuals and certain areas are left out of initiatives and not even invited to the table.

It appears the same with the current Anti-gentrification plan. It is limited in its scope and outreach and has not effectively taken into consideration areas that are undergoing rapid expansion and business development, BID actions, and the fallout of higher assessments on residents despite incomes. The financial limits placed on assistance, especially given the pandemic and its aftermath, do not help individuals. There are residents affected beyond the downtown area and this plan does not provide assistance. We have residents losing homes and falling into foreclosure rather quickly. It is quite evident that if a person cannot make incremental tax payments for a year and get caught up in the waiting three years or REM and falling into a cycle of balloon payments, penalties, and interest which inevitably leads to foreclosures, etc, there is a need for more immediate mediation and resolution.

For example, recently it was announced that there was an unfound \$44 million of Cares Act funding. This is not the only funding sitting and waiting for use by the end of the year. The pandemic and other economic conditions, including being replaced by automation, has forced many into psychological distress and the continued stigma that follows Milwaukee as a community practicing new forms of engendering poverty and isolation.

It is my hope that with this letter, the attached blank copy of the 5 Pts Anti-gentrification plan, and ideas of working with people and communities that the funding reaches across city limits and many areas.

Finally, issues of this sort, need greater publication through the television media, papers, and facebook so that citizens can have input.

Yours truly,

Sy Smith (esign valid)

5PNA member/5 Points resident