



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

LASHAWNDRA 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,
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Monday, September 23, 2024

9:00 AM

Virtual Meeting

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/423304797>. You can also dial in using your phone United States: +1 (312) 757-3121 and Access Code: 423-304-797.

1. **Call to order.**

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. **Roll call.**

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

Absent 1 - Garrison

Also present:

Matt Haessly, DCD Real Estate

3. **Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from July 22, 2024.**

Meeting minutes from July 22, 2024 were approved without objection.

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

a. HomeWorks: Bronzeville project update

*Appearing for HomeWorks: Bronzeville:
Sara Daleiden, Context Aligner*

*Lexi Brunson, Media Agent
Mikal Floyd-Pruitt, Creative Curator
Vedale Hill, Neighborhood Liaison*

Representatives from HomeWorks: Bronzeville gave introductions and presented an update on their artist housing cluster development. Each of the team members have their own businesses. The objectives of their project was to create artist live-work cluster in Bronzeville and Harambee, produce programming, and connect to community assets. Ms. Daleiden, Ms. Brunson and Mr. Hill are co-owners of the HomeWorks: Bronzeville LLC which owns the 322 W Meinecke property. Ms. Daleiden, Ms. Brunson, Mr. Hill and Mr. Floyd-Pruitt are co-directors of the HomeWorks: Bronzeville initiative, which the HomeWorks: Bronzeville LLC is an aspect of. Ms. Daleiden was the founder of her MKE LAX company. Ms. Brunson was the owner of her CopyWrite Magazine and has experience in interior design, journalism, media, teaching, and changing social narratives. Her business received the Historic King Drive BID 2024 Business of the Year Award. Mr. Hill was now a licensed general contractor and able to work on future projects.

The first phase of the project entailed demotion of the QUAD complex into two dwellings and greenspace. The first building at 2408 N. Vel R. Phillips had finished. Renovations was commencing for the second building at 322 W. Meinecke Ave. with renovation completion anticipated in autumn 2024. The greenspace has been activated for outdoor programming use, such as a SPLASH artmaking (water balloon painting) game show on August 12, 2023.

Funding for the project entailed \$25,000 forgivable ARCH loan from the City, philanthropic donations through the Wisconsin Preservation Fund, and the Wisconsin Preservation Loan Fund.

Future goals include securing additional live-work dwellings (especially for Mr. Floyd-Pruitt), continuing creative placemaking, honoring creative and culture ignighters (America's Black Holocaust Museum, Jazale's Art Studio, others), welcoming new community institutions (such as Bronzeville Center for the Arts), and participating (with recognition and pride) in various national initiatives, events, interviews, or activities.

Member Boynes said that he liked the expansion of CopyWrite Magazine for local artists.

Vice-chair Hill asked for a more concise description of HomeWorks: Bronzeville to be given.

Mr. Hill and Ms. Daleiden replied. Their project was about creating live-work legacy homeownership opportunities for creatives to become anchors in the community, to combat gentrification in building a community together, and to establish a best path forward together.

Chair Vernon said that see was pleased to see the project expansion, Mr. Hill becoming licensed as a contractor, additional ownership opportunities, and that the group should explore cooperative ownership through the arts (a powerful movement).

b. Habitat for Humanity residential housing projects update

Appearing for Habitat for Humanity:

*Beth Van Gorp, Director of Advocacy & Government Relations
Merilla Reyes, Homeownership Program Manager
Eric Neeb, Real Estate Development Manager*

Representatives from Habitat for Humanity gave introductions and presented an update. They were recommended by Ald. Coggs to present to the committee. Habitat offers services in affordable homeownership for first-time home buyers, affordable home repair for existing homeowners, and preparing families to be successful homeowners. Plans for 2024 include constructing 32 new homes and repairing 65-75 existing homes. Homeowner program qualifications require all applicants to be first-time homebuyers, have ability to pay, meet credit requirements, and be willing to partner. Credit requirements include \$500 or less in collections, no late payment history, no liens or judgments, and two years after bankruptcy discharge/dismissed date.

There were five overall steps to become a Habitat homebuyer. Step 1 entails the assessment and application qualification process for a first-time homebuyer. Step 2 entails a homebuyer to contribute in building their own home and other homes. Step 3 entails a homebuyer to receive financial education and home maintenance courses via in-house workshops or with HUD agencies. Step 4 entails the closing process, financial lending, and receipt of keys for a homebuyer. Step 5 entails a homebuyer owning their own and paying an affordable mortgage no more than 30% of their annual income.

Their Critical Home Repair Program would be affordable for existing homeowners, cover up to 80% of project costs, and offer free lead remediation throughout the entirety of a house.

They have an inventory of about 30 new houses overlapping in Harambee and/or Bronzeville to be done in the next 3 years. For this year 9 homes will be constructed with 6 on the 2600 block of Vel R. Phillips Ave. and 3 on the 2600 block of Dr. William Finlayson St. Remaining lots have been approved for future development. All homes will be 2 stories. Habitat would select lots that were not on busy commercial corridors, would have close proximity to other Habitat lots (establish a cluster), were not near corner stores, have a house plan that fits, have off-street parking capability, and were recommended from the City and/or local alderpersons.

Chair Vernon inquired about any financial assistance or education that can be offered to the creative community to qualify and/or participate in Habitat's programs. She added that there were financial barriers for creatives and challenges with the City's ARCH artist housing program.

Ms. Reyes and Ms. Van Gorp replied that they followed traditional financial guidelines and did not offer any pre-education. They can connect homebuyers to others, such as WWBIC, for self-employed status assistance and Take Root Milwaukee on homeownership issues. Their home renovation program was self funded and available to any existing creative homebuyer to utilize.

Chair Vernon said that DCD or the City should start partnering with organizations to works towards improving the ARCH program and that the discussion should continue on finding ways to get creatives into the corridors.

c. DCD Commercial Corridor grants update

Member Moore, Sr., gave an update. There were no new applications approved since the last meeting. Interests have been received on an ongoing basis via the BID. The year's end was fast approaching. New applications should be made as soon as possible.

d. DCD Real Estate update

Mr. Haessly gave an update. The Bronzeville Arts and Technology Hub development, a 60-unit residential project with 29,000 sq. ft. commercial space, had its closing on September 13, 2024. The project site has been fenced in and taking shape.

e. Bronzeville Week recap

Vice-chair Hill commented on events hosted by the BID. The BID hosted a Bronzeville Business Breakfast at ThriveOn featuring a panel discussion, moderation by Lexi Brunson, networking, and utilization of the new space there. There were 3 trolley tours with 2 that were open to the public. The tours featured a historical telling of the past, present, and future of the area. The Art Walk had 10 artist works displayed at 10 different businesses, voting, and a capstone gallery event at the end announcing 2 scholarship artist winners. The capstone event had over 100 attendees and had creatives both current and new utilized.

Chair Vernon said that she did a live stream on the topic of the political environment.

Member Tatum said that her business hosted Poetry and Pancakes, Comedy and Karaoke, and was one space that featured art.

Member Moore, Sr. said that the cultural event was a success and was pleased with volunteers and assistance from the Milwaukee Police Department for that event.

f. Other

Vice-chair Hill said that a concern for everyone to collectively think about was addressing the vulnerable homeless population in the commercial corridor that was becoming more prevalent. Organizations that she has been trying to work with were limited in capacity. Their corridor care ambassadors would help identify vulnerable individuals resulting in calling out to 2-1-1 and Milwaukee Crisis.

Chair Vernon said that she has experienced this issue with sending creatives into the field to paint, that this was an issue in many corridors nationwide, this issue cannot be policed or legislated away, and that the new Bronzeville Safety and Traffic Task Force could work with the committee to help address this problem. The new task force will be focused on addressing safety and traffic issues stemming from the new developments that have come into Bronzeville. Existing crisis care resources should be used to help address the issue, such as the Medical College or Wisconsin and Street Beat (David Nelson).

Members further discussed that homeless individuals were migrating from one area to another due to new developments, the City should put more focus on the issue, and squatting could potentially become a problem especially for commercial buildings.

Chair Vernon said that members should continue to think about the issue and to connect with Ald. Coggs.

5. Public comments and/or announcements.

LaRisha Lynch, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, inquired about Habitat for Humanity homes in Bronzeville and whether the growth in homelessness occurred due to the installation of benches in the corridor.

Chair Vernon said for Ms. Lynch to acquire the contacts for Habitat for Humanity via clerk staff to respond to her inquiry offline.

Vice-chair Hill replied that benches did not spark those homeless persons and that those persons were coming from other areas, such as the bus stops. They try to not police these persons.

6. Next steps.

a. Agenda items for the next meeting

Conversation with the Bronzeville Safety and Traffic Committee on the prevalence of homelessness in the corridor.

Member Smith inquired about the former Leadership Baptist Church building where positive repairs (facade) were being done.

Members did not have any information on the church building.

Other items to be determined.

b. Next meeting date and time (Monday, November 18, 2024 at 9 a.m.)

7. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

*Chris Lee, Staff Assistant
Council Records Section
City Clerk's Office*