



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RALPH HOLLMON, CHAIR

Rhonda Manuel, Vice-Chair

Jayne Montgomery Baker, Fidel Verdin, Theresa Garrison,

Christopher McIntyre, and Clifton Crump

Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,

clee@milwaukee.gov

Legislative Liaison, Jeffrey Osterman, 286-2262,

joster@milwaukee.gov

Wednesday, September 10, 2014

9:00 AM

Room B-1, Basement, City Hall

1. Call to Order.

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

2. Roll Call.

Present 6 - Manuel, Hollmon, Verdin, Crump, Garrison and McIntyre

Excused 1 - Montgomery Baker

Individuals also present:

Matt Haessly, Department of City Development

Mario Higgins, Mayor's Office

Current members and participants present gave brief introductions and comments.

Ms. Manuel said she works for the Department of City Development (DCD). She has been involved with the Bronzeville area for many years, helped initiate the Tax Incremental District (TID) there, and serves as vice chair on the committee.

Mr. Verdin said that he is an artist, lifetime Bronzeville resident, and a member on the committee.

Mr. Agee said that he is a project manager in DCD, has worked with the Bronzeville area for the last 7 years, and serves as staff support to the committee.

Mr. Haessly said that he works in the real estate division in DCD dealing mostly with commercial property sales, the marketing of those properties, brown field sites, and cleanup of brown field sites.

Mr. Higgins said that he appeared today to learn about new initiatives and projects in the Bronzeville area. He is the Housing Outreach Director in the Mayor's Office and is currently involved in a workgroup for artist housing. In the past, he has made accomplishments in the Harambee area and assisted with the start of the Commons

1 through 4 projects.

Mr. Hollmon said that he is the head of the Milwaukee Urban League. The league is in its 95th year from 1919 and located within the heart of the Bronzeville area since 2006 at 435 W. North Ave. The Urban League provides various services to the community, such as assisting people to acquire skills and tools for self sufficiency. The Urban League hopes to be a catalytic force for the revitalization of the Bronzeville area. He serves as the chairman on the committee.

3. Introduction of New Members.

Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Crump, and Ms. Garrison were introduced, and each gave brief comments.

Mr. Crump said that he would like to use his current and past experiences with work within the City for the last 15 years to assist the Bronzeville area, such as his involvement in the opening of the Garfield 502 restaurant in the Bronzeville area. He is currently a liaison officer for the Mayor's Office and previously worked in the Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA).

Ms. Theresa said that she would like to provide input on what developments should take place in the Bronzeville area. She is a retired practical nurse and a resident of the Bronzeville area.

Mr. McIntyre said that he would like to bring flavor and see art revitalized in the Bronzeville area. He has been a local professional artist for the last 5 years and owns his own business called "CM Perceptions, LLC".

4. Review and Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2014.

Mr. Verdin moved approval, seconded by Ms. Manuel, of the meeting minutes of March 4, 2014. There was no objection.

5. Review of August Bronzeville Week Activities.

Mr. Agee gave a summary of the second annual Bronzeville Week. The event was very successful with a full eight days of activities. A few members, such as Mr. McIntyre and Mr. Verdin, participated in the activities. A kickoff festival was done for the first time, drew several thousand people, and drew more vendors to the event than the previous year. There were three stages and several partners for the festival. Core DJ was the most notable partner, brought in its own stage and equipment, and brought in national artists. DCD assisted with the costs of chairs, tables, tents, stages, and equipment. There were poetry, dance groups, and various other kinds of entertainment. Other activities of the week included a successful paint and sip event, poetry night, Bronzeville art walk, business events at the Milwaukee Urban League, and a Bronzeville discussion at the BMO Harris Bradley Center. The paint and sip event will likely occur again this year. DCD, Ald. Milele Coggs, and Friends of Bronzeville worked together to coordinate the event. Many pieces were able to come together to highlight the Bronzeville area: new business development, artist community, festival, and night life.

Mr. McIntyre said that Bronzeville week brought momentum to the area, brought many good people to surround around the community, and showed opportunities for economic growth and sponsorship. Perhaps dollars can be tracked to generate a

report in some capacity.

Ald. Milele Coggs, 6th Aldermanic District, appeared and gave comments. The event attracted a few thousand people compared to a few hundred last year, and it is expected to grow exponentially going forward. Three new businesses have come into the area as a result of the event. Success came from the partnerships of her office with different groups to cross promote and alleviate some of the work. Planning for Bronzeville week for 2015 will begin next month in October. Her office will likely put the responsibilities and activities of Bronzeville Week out of her office into Friends of Bronzeville in conjunction and partnership with other Bronzeville groups to handle the event as it becomes larger. The City can then focus on tracking dollars, new businesses attracted, real estate sold, residential interest, and other data from this event to help acquire greater sponsorship, tourism dollars, and grants. There is a Bronzeville week survey online on the DCD website. Much constructive feedback on improving the event has come in. She is hopeful that many activities of the event will continue throughout the year to put a spotlight on the area.

Mr. Hollmon said that the event was an example of many positives occurring in the Bronzeville area contrary to naysayers.

6. Presentation Regarding Friends of Bronzeville.

Ald. Coggs said that Friends of Bronzeville is a close-knit group that came together to assist Bronzeville week last year. The immediate plan is for the group take on the coordination of Bronzeville week and other events within the next several months, such as a paint and sip event. The intention is for the group to grow, expand membership in the community, engage in artistic ventures, and work with other art groups to bring greater opportunity to the area.

Mr. Hollmon said that this discussion should continue at the next meeting for Ms. Montgomery to be present and to give more details of the group's activities.

7. Status Report on Bronzeville RFP's.

Mr. Haessly gave updates on two recent Requests for Proposals (RFP).

The former gas station and sandwich shop on 3070 N. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Dr., advertised three months ago, was sold. From three submittals a developer, Valerie Daniels Carter, was chosen. DCD supported the sale through the BOZA and Common Council process. The sale has closed and work will start momentarily. A carry out restaurant will be installed there, and the building will be refurbished.

The former Ponderosa and Stella restaurant at 2730 N. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Dr. is currently advertised for sale. Listing for the property went public on August 25, 2014. It was closed due to delinquent taxes in June 2013. The asking price is \$330,000, but lower prices can be considered. The site has 40 parking spaces. Any potential buyer must restore the building façade, maintain clear glazing on the street frontage, and provide landscaping on the street frontage. It is recommended that some screening is put up towards the east across the alley to block car lights. A sit down restaurant is the preferred use, but general service or specialty office use is acceptable. Many resources are available to a buyer to help offset costs. Examples include a façade grant, white box grant, retail investment fund, business financing, and the business improvement district. City sale conditions include: submittals evaluated on price, prospective use, impact on the business community and adjoining residential neighborhood, extent and quality of renovations, contribution to

tax base, and financial viability. The submittal date is October 16, 2014. There is interest already in the property. Open showings of the building will occur today from 12 to 1:30 p.m. and again on Friday, September 12th from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Haessly responded to questions from members. The building is in good shape; however, there has been some water seepage due to holes left by the removal of air conditioning units on the roof. A property manager will put a tarp over the holes as a response. The City is self insured but will not replace the ac units since the units were already gone before the City took possession of the building. Due to the long foreclosure process, which may be one to two years, properties are in disrepair oftentimes by the time the City takes title. By City policy the City cannot sell a property back to the former property owner, however, there may be situations where the City can work with a former owner who wants the building back. If a property cannot be sold after a period time, the price can be reduced. The City's objective is not to hold property. For the former Ponderosa restaurant, the asking price may be reduced if no submittals are received by October 16th. The former Ponderosa property listing is an example of others that would require public hearings and Common Council approval. Also, there must be evidence of improvements, timeline, and funding.

Mr. Agee responded to questions from members. The building still contains the equipment of the former Ponderosa restaurant. The asking price can be adjusted to make properties more affordable. No one attended a showing on the property this past Monday.

Members inquired about adequate publicity to the community concerning the RFP for the former Ponderosa restaurant, such as through the Bronzeville website and community newspapers?

Mr. Haessly replied that the RFP can be listed on the Bronzeville website, Ald. Cogg's newsletter, and community newspapers.

Mr. Agee responded that emails go out to the broker community and different interested persons. He will add the former Ponderosa RFP information on the Bronzeville website and will email to the Bronzeville list today.

Ald. Coggs said that she is willing to hold community meetings on the former Ponderosa restaurant sale if it becomes controversial.

Mr. Hollmon asked if an RFP was imminent on the former Garfield School site? He added that due to the Urban League's close proximity to the former school site, the Urban League is very interested in being a part of the bigger development picture there and does not want to be an impediment.

Mr. Agee said that an RFP will come out soon on the former school site probably in September but no later than October. The site will consist of the block up to the Urban League, the former restaurant there, and the former Black Holocaust Museum site. The charette process earlier in the year resulted in some ideas for the site, such as a mix of housing and community space use. The RFP will be brought to the committee for review when ready.

Ms. Manuel said that the final draft of the RFP is being reviewed and will probably be posted this week. She added that outreach will be done to the Urban League.

Mr. Agee added that the project on W. North Ave. and 5th St. involving a retail space with housing above it, mentioned last year to the committee, encountered some

financial issues; however, Melissa Goins of the project wanted to still move it forward. Although not an RFP, he would like to possibly bring Ms. Goins and give the committee an update in the future.

8. Discussion on the Mission and Activities of the Bronzeville Advisory Committee.

Ald. Coggs said that the intent is to amend the original resolution creating this committee to obtain another level of vetting. She added that she had to leave the meeting and could not give more input on the matter.

Mr. Hollmon said that this matter should be held so that Ald. Coggs and members can have an extensive discussion.

Ms. Manuel moved to defer this agenda item to the next meeting and for staff to forward to members a copy of the resolution that created the committee. There were no objections.

Mr. Verdin moved that any comments about the next meeting, concerns, or questions be directed to staff, who will then forward to Ald. Coggs' office or the appropriate party. There were no objections.

9. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.

Mr. Hollmon said that the committee had decided to meet quarterly, but members can rethink the frequency of meetings. Staff can poll members on a few suggested dates and times. Future meetings will be scheduled based on acquiring a majority of members who can attend based on those suggested dates and times.

Mr. Verdin moved that the committee should meet next month in October, if possible. There was no objection.

Mr. Crump said that City budget hearings in October may make it difficult to schedule a meeting.

Mr. Hollmon said he will work with staff to find possible dates for a meeting in October.

10. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m.
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant