



# 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,**

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**Legislative Liaison, Jeffrey Osterman, 286-2262,**

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**Wednesday, April 13, 2016**

**9:00 AM**

**Room 301-B, Third Floor, City Hall**

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**1. Call to Order.**

*Meeting called to order at 9:10 a.m.*

**2. Roll Call.**

**Present** 7 - Manuel, Hollmon, Montgomery Baker, Verdin, Crump, Garrison and McIntyre

**Individuals also present:**

*Matt Haessly, Department of City Development*

*Kenneth Little, Department of City Development*

**3. Review and Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes from March 10, 2016.**

*Mr. Crump moved approval, seconded by Mr. McIntyre, of the meeting minutes from March 10, 2016. There was no objection.*

**4. Bronzeville RFPs, Listings, and Projects**

*-2368 N. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Drive Listing*

*Ms. Manuel said that due to a number of inquiries on the property since the last meeting, the plan is to list the property effective next week after communication with DCD real estate staff and Ald. Milele Coggs. A pop up and business competition will be explored and made applicable to other city owned properties.*

*Members inquired about viable opportunities for the property, price adjustment for the property, update on the property, and business competition.*

*Ms. Manuel replied. A restaurant may be a possibility, but the use will not be known until the property is listed and inquiries are reviewed. The business competition location is being explored with the Historic King Business Improvement District (BID).*

*Mr. Haessly replied. The asking price can be reduced if necessary and offers less*

*than the \$15,000 asking price will be considered. One interested party for the property is in attendance at the meeting today. An update on the property can be given to the committee.*

*Mr. Crump moved approval, seconded by Mr. McIntyre, for DCD to list the property at 2368 N. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Drive. There was no objection.*

*-Other*

*Chairman Hollmon said that the announcement of Pete's Fruit Market at the corner of North Avenue and Martin Luther King Drive (MLK) is a catalytic project for Bronzeville. The new retail grocery will offer the fresh food and products that the community had wanted. There was opposition to the Dollar Tree store previously there.*

*Ms. Manuel concurred and said that the deal for the grocery is being finalized. The grocery will be the second location. The first location is at 17th Street and Greenfield Avenue. The DCD Commissioner can perhaps provide more details when he appears before the committee in the near future.*

## **5. Discussion on Commercial Property Rehabilitation Programs.**

*Mr. Little gave an overview on the commercial revitalization programs through the DCD Commercial Corridor Team that he manages. There are five active commercial property grant programs: signage grant, façade grant, white box grant, retail investment fund (RIF) grant, and commercial foreclosed property fund (CFPF). There is one new program proposal for an arts and community resources fund (ACRF). The purpose of these programs is to enhance the commercial corridors relative to appearance. Most grants are reimbursable and require upfront spending. All programs require an approval process before work is done.*

*The signage grant program requires a commercial property to have a signage project with a budget that exceeds \$2000. The grant matches 50% of a project can go up to \$2500. There are rules for design. A design review team reviews and approves signage designs. Cool Beauty salon's signage was a recent sign awarded this grant in Bronzeville despite a struggle with the design with the signage.*

*The façade grant program is for the façade renovation of a commercial property. Project budgets must exceed \$2000. The grant matches 50% of a project and can go up to \$5000 per storefront. Examples of façade work include windows, doors, awnings, and some landscaping.*

*The RIF grant program is for tax paying and for-profit commercial properties in commercial corridors due to the use of tax payer money. Nonprofit organizational properties are excluded from the program. Applicants can be tenants or property owners. The program is based on job creation and may award \$5000 for every full time equivalent city resident employee who is hired. Employment must be for at least 45 days. The grant can go up to a total of \$50,000. Eligible project elements for the grant include interior repairs, equipment purchase, and start up inventory. The RIF program cannot be used hand in hand with the white box program, but can be combined with the other programs. This is a good program for restaurants.*

*The white box grant program is for interior repairs of commercial properties. The original focus of the program was on attracting tenants to downtown. The grant may go up to \$25,000 and cannot be combined with a RIF grant. The grant is limited by*

*the size of the property at \$10 per square feet. The grant is based on 75% of a project.*

*Ineligible properties and businesses for the programs include any that have tax delinquency, code violations, litigation, and religious or nonprofit use. Also excluded are day care centers, residential buildings, and schools. Also excluded are predatory businesses such as currency exchanges, taverns, liquor stores, gun shops, and pawnshops.*

*Program submission requirements include submission of a completed application, lease consent from the property owner if applicable, visual documentation of the project, and two competitive bids. The two competitive bids serve to acquire market prices. There are Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements on some programs, and DBEs involvement are encouraged on projects. Applications and program information can be accessed and found online at [www.milwaukee.gov/DCD](http://www.milwaukee.gov/DCD). Applications are vetted by a business resource committee.*

*The grants have increased and been successful over the last few years. In 2015 there were 126 grants awarded totaling about \$1,800,000 and two significant private investment projects from the Germania Building and an Asian market. There has been good distribution of the grants all over the city. His office makes presentations and outreach to BIDs and neighborhood improvement districts (NID) regarding the programs. His office has oversight of the BIDs and NIDs. There are 28 active BIDs and 3 active NIDs, and the City has the third largest amount of BIDs in the country. There is a push to get the grant dollars into the neighborhoods where it is needed the most and away from downtown and the Third Ward.*

*The CFPF program is a new pilot program created in 2014 with \$500,000 to incentivize the sale of tax foreclosed commercial properties in the City. It is active with five projects in the works. The criteria include community stakeholders support, close proximity to other City investment, and close proximity to significant private investment. The goal is to follow the interest and cluster projects. The fund is a forgivable loan with a minimum amount of \$5,000 to a maximum amount of \$75,000. The fund is limited to one-third of a project's total renovation cost and requires proof of two-thirds funding. A project must be part of a complete renovation project. The loan is forgivable after issuance of an occupancy permit after 18 months. An amortization interest is applied if an occupancy permit is not obtained after 18 months. The fund can be used to satisfy code violations. Work must be completed within 6 months of being awarded the grant. There must be two competitive quotes. There is a 25% DBE requirement. Prohibited uses from the program are similar to the other programs.*

*The ACRF program is a new pilot program being proposed to fund the renovation and reuse of tax foreclosed mixed-use properties as live-work spaces for artist studios or community resource centers. \$100,000 was put into the 2016 City budget for the program by Ald. Milele Coggs and Russell Stamper, II. The program is being reviewed by the alderpersons and has yet to be approved relative to its structure. There is opportunity for committee members to provide input on the program. The program would entail a ten year \$25,000 loan that requires matching dollars from an applicant. The funds can be used along with funds from the CFPF program. Loan payments are deferred until the residential renovation is completed. The loan interest rate is based on the City's cost of funds, which is at 3.5%. The funds can also be paired with rental rehabilitation program funds.*

*Mr. Little added that his office is in the process of revamping and streamlining the programs for the programs to be easier and more efficient for neighborhoods. There*

*should be one application with options to select programs accordingly. Perhaps some of the prohibited uses, especially day care centers due to their frequency in neighborhoods, should be included in the programs when the programs are being reevaluated in order to positively influence them. Also, the website regarding the programs is close to being redesigned for easy access.*

*Members inquired about Bronzeville banners, Cool Beauty signage, the ACRF program with respect to its implementation and target areas, program promotion and outreach, and delinquency criteria.*

*Mr. Crump commented. There should be ways to inform, incentivize, and elevate buyers with these programs. Residential buildings, such as duplexes, can be eligible for the ACRF if certain zoning and capacities are met.*

*Mr. McIntyre said that the ACRF program should target impoverished areas, especially to curb youths.*

*Ms. Montgomery Baker commented. The ACRF program is an opportunity to create a cluster of artist live-work spaces in Bronzeville and for Maures Development to take advantage of with its artist housing project in the City. There was a 2007 study for universal façade and themes for Bronzeville. Any signage with different color and design themes, such as the one for Cool Beauty, should be avoided.*

*Ms. Manuel commented. There are current plans to install new outreach signage on residential properties and on vacant lots. There is a branding concept for signage in Bronzeville, and the branding will be part of infrastructure improvements that will occur in 2017. There will be conversation with the Historic King BID to promote or enhance the gateway signage. More allocation will be done on public art components when the Bronzeville TID is expanded. There are plans to access the ACRF funds to install a cluster of art space projects. There has been discussion about the eligibility of the Maures Development's artist housing project for these funds.*

*Mr. Little replied. The anticipation is that the ACRF program be approved and made active soon. Perhaps those properties eligible for any of the programs can be identified in such a way, such as with a special notice or sticker on the property, to inform the public of the availability of the commercial revitalization program funds. Most of the programs and resources are mentioned in outgoing RFPs. Of importance is to inquire with prospective buyers and verify their legitimacy in order to prevent property slumlords from taking advantage of the programs, which is frequent regarding commercial foreclosed properties. The 6th and 15th aldermanic districts may very likely be target areas under the ACRF program in terms of need and be reflective of areas from the aldermanic sponsors of the program. Delinquency criteria that are considered involve the negative property indicators of tax delinquencies and code violations. Personal delinquencies are not considered. The design review team did its best to make the Cool Beauty signage be more palpable while being mindful of Bronzeville design and color schemes. Similar to reinstituting the Menomonee Valley showroom district façade grant program, perhaps a signage and façade grant program for Bronzeville can be created. He can go into the community to make presentations.*

*Mr. Crump added that the committee should review the Bronzeville redevelopment plan, and signage requirements can be put into the plan to prevent subjective opinions and unwanted signage.*

*Chairman Hollmon commented. The commercial revitalization programs are vital*

*resources. Informing others of these programs and resources is important. Members can assist to convey the information to others and contact Mr. Little of any groups who may want the information.*

**6. Bronzeville Week 2016 Update.**

*Ms. Montgomery Baker gave an update on Bronzeville Week 2016 relative to its inspiration, activities, partnerships, and opportunities.*

*The inspiration behind Bronzeville Week in Bronzeville was and is the desire to assist in a commercial corridor, significant redevelopment, energy, new possibilities, entertainment, art, culture, youth activities, and contribution to the legacy of the City. The event is not a fix to the area but is to inspire and bring people to the spaces in the area. The Friends of Bronzeville (FOB) is the team behind the event.*

*There will be eight days full of activities with some days having multiple activities occurring at the same time. Continuing activities from previous years that will reoccur include an arts and cultural street festival on North Avenue on the first day, run walk on the first day, art walk, popup art galleries at Gee's Clippers and Jazale's Art Gallery, art walk from Garfield Avenue to Best Friends, business summit, poetry, paint and sip, and walk against violence. New activities include a Solomon Baptist Church activity on the last day, promotion of First Stage's "Welcome to Bronzeville" theatrical play, inclusion of the Africa Diaspora from the community, and exposure to ancillary aspects of fashion such as hair and make-up. Another new activity is an elders walk on opening day, and members are encouraged to inform her of any interested participants.*

*Ms. Manuel left the meeting at 10:17 a.m.*

*Major partnerships for the event include various artists, community stakeholders, businesses, and the City. There has been much contribution in the form of in-kind and discounted prices. The desire is to support artists at their pay rate in the future.*

*Further involvement, volunteerism, donation, partnerships, and sponsorships are encouraged in whatever capacity and monetary amount. Involvement has been based on personal connections and relationships. There are opportunities for more vendors. For more information, contact [info@BronzevilleWeek.com](mailto:info@BronzevilleWeek.com).*

*Chairman Hollmon said that the event is becoming bigger and more successful every year.*

*Mr. Crump said that perhaps important and retired local African American public safety employees, especially those who held rank and were one of the first African Americans to serve locally, can be incorporated into the event and he can assist with making connections through his position on the Fire and Police Commission office.*

**7. Black Male Achievement Advisory Council My Brothers Keeper Action Plan Update.**

*Mr. Crump gave a brief update. The draft plan is available for further input and feedback online at [www.milwaukee.gov/BMA](http://www.milwaukee.gov/BMA). BMAAC will look at implementing the plan and acquiring involvement from more partners. There has been feedback for early youth involvement and addressing young girls, and that input will be incorporated into the plan. The plan is a 15 year vision and will be finalized soon. Updates can be provided to the committee periodically.*

*Mr. Crump said that he is working with the police department and judges to target first time joy riders and car thefts in addressing the first time offenders about their futures.*

*Ms. Garrison said that youth violence is a major problem. Ways to address troubled youths should perhaps include graphic displays of coffin, jail, or prison to those youths for them to see those negative consequences that will result from their current behaviors if left unchanged.*

*Mr. Hollmon said that every effort should be made to collectively reach young people and another display can be a funeral procession.*

**8. Old Business.**

*There was no old business.*

**9. New Business.**

*There was no new business.*

**10. Agenda Items for the Next Meeting.**

*Mr. Crump said that perhaps First Stage can come back to the committee to discuss ways that the committee can support them and their theatrical play. They are looking for partnerships, sponsorships, promotion, and support.*

*Ms. Montgomery Baker said that FOB is working with First Stage on reading a scene and having a historic panel as part of Bronzeville Week. The panel will focus on elderly and perhaps public safety involvement.*

*Possible agenda items for the next meeting:*

*-Discussion with First Stage again on its "Welcome to Bronzeville" play and a possible vignette. Ms. Montgomery Baker is to confirm with First Stage.*

*-Forthcoming RFPs or projects. Ms. Manuel is to confirm.*

*-Update on the Garfield School project regarding tax credits. Ms. Manuel is to confirm.*

**11. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.**

*May 11 or May 12, 2016 at 9 a.m. based on a majority of members attending.*

**12. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.  
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant*