



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

## Meeting Minutes

### BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*Clifton Crump, CHAIR*  
*Christopher Perceptions, Vice-Chair*  
*Rhonda Manuel, Theresa Garrison, Lashawndra Vernon,*  
*Eve Hall, and Rayhainio Boynes*

*Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,*  
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*Legislative Liaison, Ted Medhin, 286-8681,*  
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Wednesday, April 18, 2018

9:00 AM

Room 301-A, Third Floor, City Hall

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#### 1. Call to order.

*Meeting called to order at 9:01 a.m.*

#### 2. Roll call.

*Members Vernon joined the committee at 9:26 a.m. during item 5, a., and member Boynes left the committee at 10:42 a.m. during item 5, c.*

**Present** 6 - Manuel, Crump, Garrison, Perceptions, Vernon and Boynes

**Excused** 1 - Hall

#### 3. Election of a chair and vice-chair.

*Mr. Lee said that the committee may discuss and move forward with selecting a new chair and vice-chair at its discretion.*

*Vice-chair Manuel said that she will not seek either position going forward having already served 7 years as the vice-chair.*

*Member Manuel nominated member Crump as chair and member Perceptions as vice-chair. Member Boynes seconded. There were no objections.*

*Members commended both nominees for their expertise, experience, care for the community, and likeminded cooperation.*

*Members Crump and Perceptions elected as the new chair and vice-chair, respectively.*

#### 4. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from March 7, 2018.

*Vice-chair Perceptions moved approval of the meeting minutes from March 7, 2018. There was no objection.*

5. **Bronzeville RFPs, listings, projects, programs, initiatives, events, activities or updates.**

a. *Clear Channel billboard plans at North Avenue and Highway 1-43*

*Individuals appearing:*

*James Bernklau, Clear Channel Outdoor*

*Michael D'Amato, consultant*

*Mr. Bernklau gave an overview.*

*Clear Channel has met with the Dept. of City Development (DCD) to explore possibilities with the existing back to back printed billboard sign at the corner site of North Avenue and 7th Street, south of North Avenue, west of 7th Street, and east of Highway I-43. The sign is on a rectangular strip of property owned by Clear Channel. The original request to DCD was to raise the height of the sign and convert the sign from print to digital. DCD had conveyed its sentiment to not obstruct future development on the site. Discussion has taken place on possibly developing on the site, including the piece owned by Clear Channel, by moving the sign. Moving the existing sign is not economically feasible for Clear Channel. Clear Channel wants to remain having good sign sightlines with the highway.*

*There is a proposal to open up the sight for future development while not interrupting Clear Channel's business by doing a land swap with the City and erecting a digital billboard sign closer to the highway. Clear Channel's would give up its property, via a perpetual easement, to the City and obtain ownership of the City's northwest property to erect an off-center sign there. The existing sign has many pylon poles holding it up. The goal is to put a single pole with back to back digital boards that are closer to the highway by less than 100 feet. Corporate approval is still needed on this proposal.*

*Digital billboards run advertisements for 8 second intervals and run 24 hours a day for the length of time an advertisement is purchased. The digital signs can run do public and community service digital displays on a case-by-case basis, which cannot be done with physical boards. Examples of public service displays include ones for Veterans Crisis Line, the opioid crisis, and amber alerts. The boards are controlled by a central computer and can be simply updated from the main office as necessary.*

*A billboard can remain in its current location, but that would not provide the best value, not be in the best interest for everyone, and can present issues if a development comes along. The latter would result in an unfavorable legal condemnation process for all and compensation to Clear Channel for its loss via eminent domain. Moving the billboard and digitalizing it, as offered, may be the best case scenario. Conversation with the local alderwoman has been only on improving the existing billboard structure and not about relocating a new digital billboard.*

*Members inquired about condemnation, timeline for relocating a billboard, employment opportunities for the community, and marketing campaign opportunities for local businesses in Bronzeville, origin of signage manufacturing, consideration to erect a sign on top of a building (a previous proposal), height of the billboard, DCD opinion, and setback concerns with a relocation.*

*Member Vernon joined the committee at 9:26 a.m.*

*Mr. D'Amato replied. Condemnation is a long, confrontational, and tedious process. Clear Channel wants to cooperatively work with the City to find a win-win situation. There are efforts to do displays for Bronzeville Week in working with Ald. Coggs. Clear Channel has done public service announcements at 8 second clips and can continue to do so in working with Ald. Coggs. The matter should not be open-ended. Moving the billboard creates a better site even if development does not occur.*

*Mr. Bernklau replied. The process to get a variance for raising the billboard height is not known. If final approval is obtained on everything, the project can be constructed within 60 days. Perhaps the project can materialize by the end of the year. He is unsure of any employment opportunity for the community. Erecting a billboard is highly sophisticated, materials are manufactured out of state, engineering is done by Clear Channel construction crew in Chicago, local staff is used to repost current boards, and local attrition is used for electrical work. Doing ads for specific businesses would be difficult and would have to be taken up with Clear Channel's marketing and sales division. Community service announcements are realistic possibilities, are done now, and are done on a case-by-case basis with local communities. The billboards are made in Utah, and poles are manufactured in Chicago. A billboard can be erected on top of a building, has been discussed, but would not be ideal due to the uncertainty of a development there. A pole can be put in close proximity to a building. The ideal proposal is to move the billboard now and create space for a developer to come in the near future. The billboard is 40 feet tall now, and the desire is to go up another 20 to 25 feet. A setback concern would be to not have a billboard hang over the Dept. of Transportation fence.*

*Ed Richardson, DCD, appeared and commented. There have been discussions with Clear Channel. No decisions have been made. The desire was for Clear Channel to discuss its plans with the advisory committee first before moving forward.*

*Ald. Milele Coggs, 6th aldermanic district, appeared and commented. The vacant parcel should now be put up for RFP to produce more surety. Charrettes for the district have all recommended moving the billboard. She is requesting DCD to do an RFP. There will be interest from developers. She will keep Clear Channel updated.*

*Member Manuel said that an RFP will take 30 days, she will check with the DCD commissioner, and will update Ald. Coggs.*

*Member Crump said that the committee will withhold issuing a recommendation until seeing what the next steps are.*

*b. Facade grant review*

*Individual appearing:  
Sierra Starner-Heffron, DCD Commercial Corridor*

*Ms. Starner-Heffron gave a PowerPoint presentation and grant updates. 2730 N. MLK Dr. (King's Fresh Market) was approved for commercial foreclosed property funding in the amount of \$75,000. 1947 N. MLK Dr. (Signature Sweets) was approved for RIF grant funding in the amount of \$10,000. 2230 N. MLK Dr. was approved for a \$25,000 white box grant and was denied a \$5000 façade grant due to the Historic Preservation Commission recommending different windows. The façade grant can be reapplied.*

*Member Manuel commented. Projects being considered should be brought to the*

*advisory committee prior to being approved or final decisions being made. The projects presented today were approved prior to review by the advisory committee. The*

*Ms. Starnier-Heffron replied. The projects were vetted through the local BID and can be brought to the advisory committee for review prior to final decisions being made going forward. Her team meets once a month to review projects and wants to move them forward on a timely manner.*

*Member Manuel said that advisory committee meets monthly, is separate from the local BID, and that at a minimum projects should be brought before the advisory committee for informational purposes prior to final approvals or decisions being made.*

*Ald. Coggs commented. The advisory committee has operated historically to review projects beforehand, but the ordinance limits official review by the advisory committee to RFPs only. The ordinance is silent on grant projects and other types of projects. The grant projects presented today were private ones. An amended legislation to better clarify the review processes of the advisory committee should be an agenda item for the next meeting.*

*Member Vernon questioned the difference between King's Fresh Market and Pete's Fruit Market.*

*Member Crump commented. The site for King's Fresh Market was a city foreclosure, involves a MEDC loan, and had its process started before Pete's Fruit Market. King's Fresh Market had presented to offer hot and soul foods.*

*Deshea Agee, Historic King Drive BID Executive Director, appeared and commented. King's Fresh Market is anticipated to come back to the advisory committee to provide an update. There has been much work done inside of the building. There will event space, meeting space, catering, and a place for eating with about 50 seats. The market is designed to be a hot food carry-out with limited grocery, will uniquely highlight local food vendors, be health conscience focused, and be different from and complement Pete's Fruit Market. Pete's Fruit Market is a more full service grocery store. The process for King's Fresh Market has been a long process and was promoted 5 years ago. The slow process can be attributed to knowing what Pete's Fruit Market had to offer so that both stores would not be in competition with each other.*

*Mr. Agee further commented. About 600 people were surveyed and responded in wanting most in the area restaurants. Other than KFC and Burger King, restaurants gained or will be gained on MLK Drive include Mi Casa Su Café, Rise and Grind, Pete's Fruit Market, King's Fresh Market, and The Jewels Caribbean. A recent article in Milwaukee magazine highlighted 12 businesses on MLK Drive, and some of those restaurants were included. There is good energy supporting these businesses. Regarding the DCD commercial corridor grants, there can be ways to align the commercial corridor team's meeting schedule with the advisory committee's schedule to better review grant proposals as discussed. The DCD commercial corridor team has standing meetings every fourth Tuesday or Wednesday of every month.*

*c. Anti-displacement plan update*

*Individuals appearing:  
Nolan Zaroff, DCD*

*Vanessa Koster, DCD Planning Division*

*Ms. Koster gave opening remarks. The plan was initiated by Ald. Coggs and Perez to look at indicators for displacement and gentrification.*

*Mr. Zaroff gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview.*

*The Common Council had directed via a resolution for DCD to develop a plan to address gentrification and displacement concerns in neighborhoods surrounding downtown while balancing the increased downtown development. Development of the plan focused on prioritizing choice and equity alongside traditional DCD development goals. Prioritizing choice means recognizing that as development occurs, policies and programs should be crafted to minimize the potential of displacement for existing residents and businesses that want to remain in their communities. Prioritizing equity means that anti-displacement and related policies and programs should be intentionally designed to ensure that historically disadvantaged groups are able to benefit from and gain access to the wealth-building opportunities provided by development occurring in city neighborhoods.*

*The plan is not the only initiative looking into the issue, and there are other existing initiatives. Examples include Moving Milwaukee Forward, MKE United, TOD study, eviction and landlord/tenant initiatives, Turning the Corner, and LISC Equitable Development Symposium. Analysis development goals of the plan include developing consistent definitions, setting indicators, identifying areas where trends might be occurring in order to target strategies, and basing on other cities' work and local conditions.*

*Gentrification is defined as a market-driven racial and socioeconomic reconfiguration of urban communities that have suffered from a history of disinvestment. Indicators of gentrification, in general, are reduction in the percentage of households of color within a neighborhood, while at the same time see greater than city average increases in household incomes.*

*Displacement is defined as the involuntary relocation of established residents or businesses. Indicators of displacement are an increase in rents or home sale prices greater than the city average for a neighborhood, while also seeing a decline in the number of low income households.*

*Regarding key findings from the plan analysis, a majority of neighborhoods in the greater downtown are not exhibiting trends associated with gentrification or displacement. In some cases the opposite is occurring with an increase in the population of people of color, stable median household incomes, stable property values and rents, and increase in the concentration of low income households. Data that was analyzed were that from the 2000 to 2016 census tracts. Presence of one indicator and not the other for either gentrification or displacement may not necessary indicate that either is occurring. There needs to be an overlap of the indicators to indicate that gentrification or displacement is occurring. From an overlap of indicators found, gentrification may be occurring in tracts 1859, 108, 112, 141, 81, 106, 107, and the southern portions of Harambee and Riverwest. From an overlap of indicators found, displacement may be occurring in tracts 1859, 97, 99, 137, 79, 80, 106, 107, 165, and 1856 (Bronzeville). Where gentrification or displacement is occurring, it is street by street or block by block.*

*Bronzeville, within the census tract 1856 between 2000 to 2016, saw a 24% decrease in residents of color opposite a 16% increase for the city as a whole and saw a 24% increase in median household income while the city saw a 14.9% increase as a whole. These indicators were not strong enough to flag that gentrification is occurring in the Bronzeville tract. For displacement both indicators are present in the Bronzeville tract. Residential assessed values in the tract went up to almost 130%, between 2000 to 2017, whereas the city as a whole increased by 29%. Low income households in the tract decreased by 42% whereas the city as a whole increased by 38%.*

*There was additional work done within the plan around equitable Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). A consultant was acquired to develop a market analysis for the MLK Dr. neighborhood, including Bronzeville and Walker's Point on the south side.*

*Other data that were analyzed include educational attainment, owner and renter occupancy, elderly home owners, median rents, and existing affordable housing. There are some racial and social economic reconfigurations in the study area that seem to indicate that gentrification and displacement is occurring. Areas include Brewers Hill, Westown, Haymarket, Harambee, and others. Overall, only eastern Harambee is there evidence of displacement with the African American population and share of the population falling substantially. The Bronzeville and MLK Dr. neighborhoods have a higher proportion of natural occurring affordable housing compared to the city as a whole; however, with current and oncoming development and real estate, natural occurring affordable housing are anticipated to be decreased in these neighborhoods.*

*A number of strategies were formed to manage and mitigate changes due to gentrification and displacement. Recommendations include to educate and engage residents on displacement and related issues, monitor local market conditions and adapt strategies as needed, assist existing home owners to retain their homes, help existing neighborhood renters become home owners, preserve existing affordable rental housing and protect tenants at risk of displacement, prioritize affordable and mixed-income housing in neighborhoods at risk of displacement, and preserve neighborhood character and build community health. Residents should be engaged, informed, and empowered to push back predatory buyers trying to buy their properties. DCD will update data and the plan on an ongoing basis going forward. A resident resource sheet about displacement issues was developed to educate homeowners or renters about predatory soliciting and available resources.*

*In conclusion, the plan is an initial step to the process. Next steps would include engaging with communities, educating residents, hold town hall meetings, work with stakeholders and various entities, monitor conditions, moving strategies forward, finding creative solutions, and balancing development and its impact to residents.*

*Member Perceptions inquired about detailed strategies, naturally occurring affordable units, and active strategies to slow down the process of gentrification or certain kinds of unwanted investments.*

*Mr. Zaroff replied. The strategies presented today were summarized ones. There are 27 overall strategies that are further detailed in the final report, and members are encouraged to review them in further detail. Units that are affordable for the average median income population without needing a subsidy in an area are naturally occurring affordable units. Regarding active strategies to prevent or slow down gentrification, the city is limited in many ways by the state. Other states allow the freezing of property*

*taxes for the elderly and vulnerable who are on fixed incomes, but Wisconsin precludes its cities from doing that along with rent control and inclusionary zoning. There is internal discussion to find creative ways to indirectly and legally do those same things. Many existing city programs can be better utilized to help stabilize home owners.*

*Member Perceptions said that the sentiment is not to slow development down but rather to see the proper development occur.*

*Member Vernon commented. The plan may not be received favorably by residents due to racial inequity. There is a lack of people of color in doing the plan. Going forward, it is important to have racial equity and include people of color to produce the plan in order to be more favorably received, build trust, help make job numbers to be where they should be, and help empower people of color and businesses of color who may dominate the area. Racial equity and empowerment should be a goal of the committee. The term anti-displacement may not be the best term to use as it seems to indicate that displacement is occurring and power is being taken away from residents. Much of the data used is outdated being from 2016. Trends currently may be different, and the plan needs to be revisited. There is not much new data in the plan. Much of the datasets used in the plan are the same numbers from other datasets, such as those for infant mortality.*

*Member Garrison said that racial inclusion in producing the plan will make communities of color feel more comfortable.*

*Ms. Koster said that DCD staff will attend tomorrow's town hall meeting at Hillside Community Center to present the plan.*

*Mr. Zaroff added comments. The plan was given a short period of time to be produced. With more opportunity to do the plan on a larger scale, an important aspect would have been community engagement. The outdated data is a shortcoming. More information will be sought and incorporated from another separate and private gentrification study being done by Katie Pritchard from Turning the Corner. She will be doing community interviews and focus groups at the street level block by block.*

*Member Vernon added that although the additional private study being sought is laudable, there would be concern about racial equity since the additional study is not being done by a person of color.*

*Member Boynes commented. There are already a few investors camping, who have acquired properties in the area in anticipating of new development stemming from the arena and streetcar. There should be review of the original Bradley Center arena development, which drastically had changed the character of Brewers Hill, to avoid the displacement and gentrification that may have taken place back then. The new arena development and potential streetcar extension may increase property values and the market on MLK Dr. and North Ave. Development is occurring fast and residents may not have the proper time and resources to respond. The City should be mindful of the residents and ensure that there is adequate time and resources given to local residents and businesses to better prepare or protect themselves.*

*Mr. Zaroff added comments. It has been observed in other cities that streetcars do raise property values, cause development pressure, and attract investors. Prior to that happening on MLK Dr. and North Ave., of importance is to mitigate or balance those*

*issues to ensure that people and businesses do not get pushed out. The streetcar project is overall a good thing that will connect people to jobs and places.*

*Chairman Crump commented. The foreclosure crisis has offered opportunity for property ownership. The City should look at creative ways to acquire properties and make them affordable, perhaps capping the rent rate or do rent-to-own programs. Other than sales, other success indicators should be measured for the area, such as human capital and affordable housing. Going forward the study should include the study of crime as a gentrification indicator since crime reduction does bring people not of color to downtown and the surrounding areas. His office (Fire and Police Commission) can offer data on crime.*

*d. TOD study update*

*Individuals appearing:  
Monica Wauck-Smith, DCD  
Vanessa Koster, DCD Planning Division*

*Member Boynes left the committee at 10:42 a.m.*

*Ms. Wauck-Smith gave a PowerPoint presentation and an overview.*

*There is equitable growth TOD planning for the streetcar extension to Bronzeville along MLK Dr. to the north and Walkers Point to the south. The Federal Transit Administration gave the city a grant to do the TOD study. Funding for the extension has not been approved yet, and the extension timeline is unknown. The study is looking at land use, housing, and development issues that can accompany high quality transit such as the streetcar. Development pressure does accompany streetcar projects, which can be both a good and bad thing. The study is important to safeguard for equity for the local residents and businesses.*

*The study is midway through its process. Of primary focus is to do the study through an equity lenses. Goals of the study are to extend the streetcar investment from downtown, connect neighborhoods both physically and economically, enhance places based on local character, and benefit existing community through equitable and inclusive strategies. Objectives are to create a road map for equitable growth and development through TOD development; create a framework for investment decisions, zoning code updates, and practical implementation strategies; and meet community and stakeholder goals and aspirations.*

*There will be community informed planning and engagement. There are 5 large community workshops. 3 workshops have occurred. One workshop is coming up in May where there will be a preview of activities related to zoning, development, and recommendations. Other engagement has or will involve community partners, 10 one-on-one key stakeholder interviews, 3 PAG meetings, 2 community meetings in each neighborhood, summer festivals, artist workshop, and community dinners. The plan team is made up of DCD staff, outside consultants like P3 Development, and community partners inclusive of the Historic King Drive BID, Westcare, Halyard Park Association, and Historic Brewers Hill Association. Community partners are being paid through the grant. Staff has tabled events, such as at Bronzeville Week. There will be two community dinners with informal discussions with residents next week in the north and south sides. There is an advisory group, an online survey, and a flyer done by Westcare.*



*Community feedback thus far include having more sit down restaurants, affordable housing options, walkable streets, connection to jobs, eating options, places to relax, shopping options, greenspace, unique character, development on vacant lots, youth recreation, and open engagement process.*

*A framework was developed out of community feedback to advance TOD. Included are the typical TOD themes of inclusive of commuting, mixed use, density, public realm, feasibility, and value capture. Also included are equitable TOD themes of people, economy and jobs, places, and change. For density, there is interrelated process among transit, housing, people, and retail.*

*A mapping exercise was done with the community that identified key development opportunity sites inclusive of vacant buildings, vacant lots, underutilized parking, City real estate, key main street and side street connections, and potential street car stations. Potential development would include retail closer to downtown, residential throughout, and office space. There are areas that will remain unchanged and keep their historic character, such as the area between Vine St. and Lloyd St. Sites most subject to change and sites of focus include the DNR building (will be vacant by 2020), C.H. Coakley building, vacant sites on North Ave., MLK Dr., and the area closer to Schlitz Park. The DNR building, which is not in good shape and owned by the State, on the corner of North Ave. and MLK Dr. can potentially be a 4 to 5 story building with residential, civic, museum, office, retail, and plaza space. The intersection and surface parking for United Way on Walnut St. and MLK Dr. can potentially develop into retail, residential, office, and greenspace. Meetings have been done and will be ongoing with the stakeholders of the various private spaces of focus.*

*Mr. Agee commented. The potential sites of development were selected in consultation with the Historic King Drive BID. The potential museum at the DNR building is for a Black Historical Museum. The veterans building will be unchanged. For the United Way surface parking, there could be perhaps a new building with multi-level parking.*

*Member Vernon commented. She previously worked at United Way, and the corner of Walnut St. and MLK Dr. is a catalytic corner and another gateway. Traffic at this intersection should be improved.*

*Ms. Wauck-Smith proceeded further. One of the next steps is looking at streetscape and highway traffic at Walnut St. The area at McKinley Ave. and MLK Dr. would be the best area for taller buildings, perhaps 6 to 7 stories tall, due to its close proximity to downtown and already having some downtown character. Use would be for office, retail, and some residential. The public art strategy, which members Vernon and Perceptions have been a part of, was formed due to the Bronzeville community wanting to involve local artists. She has worked closely with member Manuel, Ms. Genyne Edwards (P3 Development), and Joshua Kelly to look at various public art opportunities along MLK Dr. and creatively engage residents. The community workshop is May 22, 2018 at the Welford Sanders Enterprise Center from 6 to 8 p.m.*

*e. Other*

*There was no other discussion.*

## **6. Announcements.**

*Ald. Coggs made announcements. This week is Black Restaurant Week, and 4 restaurants on MLK Dr. are recognized. There is a district town hall meeting tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. at the Hillside Resource Center that will feature presentation and discussion on DCD's anti-displacement plan for the City. The plan was requested by herself, Ald. Stamper, and Ald. Perez due to all of the downtown development and its impact on the surrounding neighborhoods.*

*Mr. Agee made announcements. Live on King Drive event is for June 30, 2018. The event will promote local businesses and Pete's Fruit Market at the parking lot and space in front of the market. There will be live music, family activities, and food vendors. The event will lead to and not compete with Bronzeville Week. There were 3 neighborhoods in the MLK Dr. and Bronzeville area that were selected via the Ramp Up program to do pop ups with assistance from LISC, Chase, WWBIC, and African American Chamber of Commerce. Details are being worked on. The pop up idea came up years ago, and this is the first opportunity to do it with funding. A building may come before the advisory committee perhaps at its next meeting where a whitebox grant is being sought to allow businesses to come into the building and get a jump start. MLK Dr. from Locust St. to Walnut St. was designated a Wisconsin main street district last year. A main street committee will be formed to engage residents, businesses, nonprofits, and creators.*

*Member Vernon questioned the selection of performers for Live on King Drive.*

*Mr. Agee replied. Information on performing was shared at the TOD artist gathering. The first step would be to contact him, and he will take it to the event group. Details are still being worked on. There will be a gospel theme and more engagement with spiritual and worship centers in the neighborhood compared to years past.*

**7. Next meeting date and time.**

*a. Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 9 a.m.*

**8. Agenda items for the next meeting.**

*Possible agenda items include review of legislation amending the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee and revisiting Clear Channel billboard plans and RFP at North Avenue and Highway I-43.*

*Members and staff to forward agenda items to clerk staff.*

**9. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.*

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