



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RALPH HOLLMON, CHAIR

Rhonda Manuel, Vice-Chair

Jayme Montgomery Baker, Fidel Verdin, Theresa Garrison,

Christopher McIntyre, and Clifton Crump

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Thursday, May 14, 2015

9:00 AM

Room 303, Third Floor, City Hall

1. Call to Order.

Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Roll Call.

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

Excused 1 - Verdin

Individuals also present:

Deshea Agee, Department of City Development

Janet Grau, Department of City Development

Matt Haessly, Department of City Development

Samuel Leichtling, Department of City Development

Mark Doremus, Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service

Mario Higgins, Mayor's Office

3. Review and Approval of the Previous Minutes from January 9, 2015.

Mr. McIntyre moved approval, seconded by Mr. Crump, of the meeting minutes from January 9, 2015. There were no objections.

4. Review and Approval of the 2014 Bronzeville Advisory Committee Annual Report.

Mr. Hollmon said that an annual report of the committee should be filed as a standing procedure to the City Clerk as required by the City ordinance. Mr. Lee has created the report. The substance of the report is the committee's minutes from 2014 along with a summary of those minutes.

Mr. Crump moved approval, seconded by Mr. McIntyre, of the 2014 Bronzeville Advisory Committee Annual Report. There were no objections. Mr. Verdin excused.

Mr. Lee said that the annual report will be filed with the Common Council once approved by the committee.

5. Discussion regarding the Bronzeville Redevelopment Plan.

Ms. Janet Grau, Department of City Development, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Bronzeville Redevelopment Plan relative to its history, concept, target area, purposes, action goals, identification goals, support, and implementation.

The plan was produced ten years ago. The PowerPoint provided is the original actual plan presented to the Redevelopment Authority (RACM) of the City of Milwaukee. Much of the original concept of Bronzeville started twenty years ago with Michael Morgan, who saw potential to bring back the blocks of Bronzeville that were lost due to the Park West freeway. The Department of City Development implemented several powerful tools to the project. A redevelopment plan was created and is one of the most powerful tools that the City has to transform the character of an area. Other powerful tools implemented were Brooks Target Investment Neighborhood program (TIN) and a tax incremental district (TID).

The concept of the plan is to bring new life into the existing renewal plan and support the City's efforts to create a district to celebrate African-American life and cultural heritage. The area of focus is the four blocks of the North Avenue Commercial Corridor from King Drive to 7th Street. Idea is to also improve the northern neighborhood in the area that had become spotty.

The purposes of the plan are to create a Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District that will be a focus for African-American arts, entertainment and culture; create a year-round tourist destination offering authentic ethnic music, art and cuisine; offer gallery space, specialized retail opportunities, and regional theater; improve the physical character of the commercial district and the surrounding residential neighborhood; and create investment and employment opportunities.

The actions of the plan are to assemble, prepare and market sites; encourage substantial rehabilitation of basically sound structures; foster redevelopment activities in the project area; preserve historically significant buildings; create a cultural center; provide year-round entertainment venues; and establish design guidelines that create a district identity. At the time, the desire was for a broad, family appeal.

The plan identifies land use opportunities for infill, new construction, and rehabilitation; expansion of the LB2 commercial zoning to support uses within the district; historic preservation opportunities; and preferred and prohibited uses. Preferred uses include sit-down restaurant, theater for small venues, jazz and blues club, cultural institution, broadcasting or recording studio, artist studio, and outdoor café. Prohibited uses include social service facilities, automotive services, drive-through business, and other uses that do not fit in.

The plan may be supported by city initiatives and financial support. Examples include façade grants, streetscape improvements, TIN and TID. Bronzeville has benefited with some of the City's most powerful tools but does not have a business improvement district.

Implementation of the plan is ongoing. There have been some watershed moments, such as a visioning session, charette, and the former Garfield School redevelopment.

The PowerPoint can be found within Common Council File Number 111665.

Mr. Crump made comments. A Bronzeville market analysis district plan recommended that there be a parking study done and revealed the issue of foreclosures in the 6th aldermanic district. The redevelopment plan should revisit some of the prohibited uses since some of them, such as social service facilities and high-end secondhand sales, may have a positive impact. The plan should also revisit the best location to have bars since there has been a perpetual cycle of the community denying liquor licenses for current bars in the area. The redevelopment plan appears strict and selective; perhaps, it needs review and revision. He questioned a parking study, outreach to property owners of City tools to address the issue of foreclosures, expansion of the Bronzeville district boundaries, and review of the redevelopment plan.

Mr. McIntyre said that advertising of mixed-use properties to artists will help them come since many like to live where they work. He inquired about zoning and tax benefits for mixed-used buildings with commercial space at the bottom and residential space at the top.

Ms. Manual, Mr. Agee, and Ms. Grau replied. A parking study was conducted resulting in a better understanding of the traffic dynamics of the area. The study is available on the Bronzeville website and can be forwarded to members. Some areas have a higher need for parking, some require traffic controls, and other areas have deficiencies in parking. There is now a parking lot next to a retail space on King Drive. There will be off-street parking behind the former Inner City Arts Council building space on 7th and North Avenue.

Currently being extended for another year is the TIN. The Bronzeville district itself has some stability and does not have many foreclosures. Some new homes have been built in the area. New tools are available. DCD will work with the Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) to reach out to the community regarding those new programs or tools. DCD will plan to review and update the redevelopment plan accordingly by 2016. There has been discussion to expand the district boundaries to match the TID boundaries. There are no tax credits for mixed-use buildings. The LB2 zoning offers many of the use options.

6. Update on the Garfield School Redevelopment Project.

Individuals appearing:

Melissa Goins, Maures Development Group, LLC

Mark Ernst, Engberg Anderson Architects

Brad Pruitt, America's Black Holocaust Museum

Sara Daleiden, Greater Milwaukee Committee & America's Black Holocaust Museum

Ms. Goins and Mr. Ernst gave an update on the project. There has been due diligence on the architectural design. Original plans were to redevelop the school building and build a new construction apartment complex on 4th and North Avenue totaling 60 housing units. 8500 or more square feet of commercial space would be offered. The construction cost for the school is now very high at \$7 million, as opposed to the original estimate of \$3.5 million, and is about \$300,000 per unit. New cost estimate does not include soft costs. In order to apply for Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) High Impact Project Reserve (HIPR) program by July 31st and meet their threshold cap of \$244,000 per unit, plans and some creative restructuring have occurred to the project.

Current plans are for the school to be redeveloped as an artist, entertainment, and

regular housing complex with a total of 30 housing units. The new building on 4th and North Avenue will strictly be commercial and will provide no housing units. A townhome component may be considered if it becomes plausible in the future.

The current focus of the project is to submit a Historic Tax Credit Part 2 application to the State of Wisconsin prior to July 1st to be eligible and to avoid budgetary and competitive changes to the State's Historic Tax Credit program. Following this submittal the team will be able to focus on the design of the commercial building, identify the tenant population, and justify tenant credit worthiness to the debt.

If funded by July through HIPR, construction may start in spring 2016 lasting about ten to twelve months. If not funded by July, another opportunity to get funded is in January 2016. If funded in January 2016, construction may start in October 2016 with a ten to twelve month construction period.

There is a high priority to have community engagement; however, that will not occur until the project team thoroughly knows and understands what they will be doing.

Regarding design progress of the school, the team is still evaluating the specifics of the integrity of the school and focused on maintaining design integrity. The gym will have two housing units and will mostly be retained for amenity space. The non-historical wing will have walk-up units. Amenities will relate to artists and entertainments. The housing units will feature large windows, high ceilings, and open floor play. There will be wide corridors for large uses, durable concrete floors, community rooms for gallery or performance spaces.

Mr. Pruitt gave an update on America's Black Holocaust Museum. His organization has been engaged with outreach to the community, maintaining its virtual museum website, holding educational events, building relationships nationally and internationally, improving organizational infrastructure, reconfiguring how to increase commerce as an organization, and preparing to transition back to a physical space. The museum's rebirth can be catalytic to the area.

Ms. Daleiden added that she is helping to bolster national and international advisory networks, strategic fundraising, other revenue streams, and further organizational development for the museum.

Members inquired about the school's hardwood floors, plan to go back to 60 housing units, square footage of the museum, temporary museum space, rental space costs, low-income housing, artist involvement with design, construction schedule for the school and commercial annex, identifying commercial tenants, place-making in the Bronzeville area, lower level layout of the school, visiting the site, and future updates to the committee.

Ms. Goins, Mr. Ernst, Mr. Pruitt, and Ms. Daleiden responded. The plan is to save most of the floors of the school as opposed to the ceilings. There is no plan to go back to 60 housing units. The new building on 4th Street and North Avenue will strictly be leveraged as commercial space. The museum's rebirth to the site is important to the transaction and was originally proposed for a space of 8500 square feet; however, its location is in flux. The museum will be incubated in the lower level of the school temporary and will be about 3000 to 4000 in square feet. Once possible, the museum will relocate to a bigger space on the site, which is to be determined. If no longer required to be used by the museum, this temporary space may become a public community-type space for events and rentals. Revenue will not be assumed from this space.

Housing costs is to be determined. General estimate is \$700 for smaller units and \$1000 for larger units. There will be low-income units due to the WHEDA program. About 20 to 25% of the housing units will be offered at market rate. Artist input is open for the common spaces. Before going public, the team wants to solidify its plans to prevent uncertainties. Construction will be for the school and annex. The ideal scenario is to construct both buildings concurrently. The public outdoor spaces, such as green space, will also be improved. A market package will be developed. After the submittals to the State, the team will focus on the design of the commercial building, determining rents, and identifying tenants. The Bronzeville district is not a place-making target area of the Greater Milwaukee Committee, but there has been interest in the museum.

Regarding the school's lower level, the museum will have windows and require access. The technology resource center will resemble a business center. Amenity space has not yet been identified. There can be an artist area. For security, pass key access may be implemented for the different areas of the school. The project team is willing to provide updates to the committee once a month.

Ms. Manual said that a tour of the school occurred last year.

Ms. Montgomery-Baker said that perhaps the project team can give an update after the HIPR submittal.

Mr. Hollmon commented. There needs to be a balance going forward to keep the community informed while protecting sensitive information regarding the project. Perhaps a tour of the site can occur again. The committee will respond back to the project team regarding providing another update, but the project team should communicate with Ms. Rhonda and her office.

7. Update on Bronzeville RFPs and Projects.

Matthew Haessly, Department of City Development, gave an update on Bronzeville RFPs. The RFP for the former Stella restaurant at 2730 N. Martin L. King Jr. Dr. received four proposals. The uses proposed include a furniture store, restaurant, event services business, and grocery store. DCD is evaluating the proposals, and a decision should be made within the next week. The first round submittal for a restaurant fell apart.

Mr. Agee said the asking price was reduced from \$330,000 to \$250,000.

Mr. Hollmon asked about the RFP for a small restaurant at 3070 N. Martin L. King Jr. Dr.

Mr. Haessly and Agee responded. Out of three proposals received, Valorie Daniels Carter submitted the winning offer for a carry-out food store. Restoration of the building is taking place, ongoing, and slowly coming along. Ms. Daniels Carter has a sit-down restaurant on Oakland Avenue and Capitol Drive.

Ms. Montgomery Baker asked if the advisory committee will have an opportunity to look at the former Stella restaurant building RFP and proposal in detail like how the advisory committee was able to review the former Garfield school RFP and proposals.

Mr. Haessly responded that proposals for the former Stella restaurant are being vetted internally due to proprietary information. Once a proposal is chosen, the

department will come and discuss with the advisory committee further.

Ms. Manual said that going forward the advisory committee will need to explore whether to review and participate in the selection process of every RFP and RACM/City owned property in the district or just catalytic projects. Part of the review process for the RFP for the former Garfield school stated that the advisory committee be involved. The RFP for the former Stella's restaurant is a standard RFP for real estate property.

Ms. Manual announced that there are plans for a Bronzeville arts competition. Members should become involved and work with Friends of Bronzeville to establish the competition and a selection committee. Artists should be compensated. She has a draft framework and will contact members. Discussion about criteria, qualifications, budget, funding, and specifics is necessary.

8. Old Business.

Ms. Montgomery Baker said that the advisory committee should clarify its role in reviewing RFPs and possibly identify expanding its roles beyond RFP review going forward. From past discussions some suggestions included community engagement, raising profile, assisting in bringing redevelopment, and making parcels available.

Mr. Hollmon said that the topic of clarifying the advisory committee was deferred until Ald. Milele Coggs can back from her leave to attend an advisory committee meeting. It is important for the alderwoman to partake in the discussion since she created it and has a vision for it. The advisory committee was satisfied with being given summaries regarding RFPs during its infancy and inception. Over time the committee has evolved and appears to want more involvement in review of RFPs, presentations from proposers, and selection of projects.

9. New Business.

Mr. Agee announced that Bronzeville week is August 1 to 8, 2015. Ms. Montgomery Baker added that Friends of Bronzeville is in the process of scheduling the event. Some portions of the schedule are set and some are still open.

Ms. Garrison said that the committee or DCD needs to have a presence at Juneteenth Day.

Ms. Manual said that her office will share a booth with the Friends of Bronzeville.

10. Items for the Next Meeting.

From discussion, the next meeting agenda items may include a Bronzeville week update, Friends of Bronzeville update, discussion regarding the roles of the advisory committee, presentation from the selected proposer regarding the 2730 N. Martin L. King Jr. Dr. RFP, and Bronzeville public art competition update. Absent the alderwoman, the committee may discuss the current parameters of the committee.

11. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.

June 24 or 25, 2015 at 9 a.m. at City Hall based on the majority of members.

12. Adjournment.

*Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant*