



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes

### BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**VACANT, CHAIR**

**Rhonda Manuel, Vice-Chair**

**Theresa Garrison, Christopher Perceptions, Clifton Crump,  
Lashawndra Vernon, Eve Hall, and Rayhainio Boynes**

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

***clee@milwaukee.gov***

**Legislative Liaison, Ted Medhin, 286-8681,**

***tmedhi@milwaukee.gov***

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**Wednesday, February 7, 2018**

**9:00 AM**

**Historic King Drive BID Office  
Lower Level Ameritech Commerce  
Center Conference Room  
2745 N Dr. Martin Luther King Dr., Ste. 206  
Milwaukee, WI 53212**

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**1. Call to order.**

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

**2. Roll call.**

*Member Crump elected as chair pro tem in lieu of vice-chair Manuel's absence.*

*Member Vernon joined the committee at 9:18 a.m. during agenda item 5, A.*

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

**Excused** 1 - Manuel

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

*Mr. Lee said that the preference of Ald. Coggs is for all members to be present to elect a new chair and possibly vice-chair.*

*Member Perceptions moved to hold, seconded by member Garrison, making elections. There was no objection.*

**4. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from December 6, 2017.**

*Member Hall moved approval, seconded by member Perceptions, of the meeting minutes from December 6, 2017. There was no objection.*

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

*A. Environmental summaries for North Avenue / Bronzeville improved and vacant*

*parcels*

*Individuals appearing:*

*David Misky, Redevelopment Authority for the City of Milwaukee (RACM)*

*Matt Reimer, RACM*

*Amy Turn, Dept. of City Development (DCD)*

*Ray Hill, Historic King Drive Business Improvement District (BID)*

*Member Vernon joined the committee at 9:18 a.m.*

*Mr. Misky gave introductory remarks. He is the assistant executive director and secretary to RACM. RACM oversees many programs such as programs for home foreclosures to housing. Brownfields for environmentally challenged properties that exist in Bronzeville along North Avenue are common and treated no differently by RACM than other brownfields in the City. RACM generally looks at the history of a site, make a determination on taking ownership (most commonly via foreclosure), and tries to identify and initially addresses any pressing contamination. For cost efficiency, full site contamination remediation would occur once redevelopment of a site occurs.*

*Mr. Reimer gave an overview on specific parcels.*

*510 W. North Avenue was a former filling station and has a closed Environmental Repair Program (ERP) case site for the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources (WDNR). There is about a remaining 10 feet limited area of soil and groundwater petroleum contamination near the southeast corner of the site.*

*522 W. North Avenue used to be a pest control and extermination business. Numerous USTs, contaminated soil and free product have been removed. There is an open WDNR ERP case due to the near surface (0-4 feet) lead and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) impacts from historic fill. There is a closed WDNR LUST case for 6 leaking underground storage tanks (LUST). There is still a bit of contamination in the soil, groundwater, and potential vapor issues near the LUST areas.*

*530 W. North Avenue was a used car sales and auto repair business that also has a closed WDNR LUST case with remaining soil contamination at the southern portion of the site.*

*540 W. North Avenue was a tavern, junk store, and residential property. There is an open WDNR ERP case due to PAHs in fill material across the site.*

*2307-09 North 6th Street was a former filling station with an open WDNR LUST case due to soil and groundwater impacts. There is potential to do additional groundwater monitoring requiring an environmental consultant to be engaged.*

*2237-43 North 7th Street had historic uses including auto body work, auto repair, and auto painting operations. RACM had conducted limited investigation and found minor environmental impacts. Addition investigation may be warranted via an environmental consultant.*

*2309 North 7th Street is a small RACM owned site that is located near the highway on-ramp and appears to be within the highway right-of-way boundaries. Environmental information is not available for this parcel. There is the potential to remove the*

*billboard south of this parcel at 2233 North 7th Street, which is privately owned.*

*718 West North Avenue is an address that does not exist.*

*Open cases for all the brownfield sites can be addressed when redevelopment occurs there.*

*Members questioned dry cleaning contamination at 522 West North Avenue, pending redevelopment of the brownfield sites, lands uses under the current redevelopment plan for the brownfield sites, funding available for remediation, the function of RACM, and resources to market the sites.*

*Mr. Misky replied. Tetrachloroethylene or perchloroethylene (PCE) contamination from the former dry cleaner at 522 North Avenue had been addressed. Some sites on North Avenue should not be recommended for housing, but there are some that can be possible for housing. The brownfield sites are ready for redevelopment, and there are environmental funding resources that can be realized. DCD, RACM, the advisory committee, and the aldermanic office can bring attention to these sites with a cohesive market strategy. There must be retail or other uses that adds or brings density to the sites and is supported by the neighborhood. The redevelopment plan really calls for commercially zoned land uses. RACM is the real estate arm of the City, and its employees are no different than City employees. RACM acts as a creative tool and engine for DCD and the City to buy land, sell land, acquire funds, manage challenging properties, make development happen, and do tax incremental financing. RACM had become its own developer buying, owning, cleaning, and selling land in Century City and Menomonee Valley by default due to no private entity being willing to take on those areas. However, the desire is for the private market to take on developing land as opposed to RACM doing it. Any purchase of RACM property would require the extra step of approval from the RACM board prior to approval by the Common Council. Increased marketing efforts are warranted and should entail collaboration with the local alderperson, BID, and neighborhoods for input and strategy.*

*Ms. Turim replied. There was some interest for artist housing along North Avenue as part of the Art and Resource Community Hub (ARCH) program. One site has been selected at 2406 North 4th Street for Vedale Hill, and the Reader's Choice will be the new location of his shop. The ARCH program is only eligible on city owned tax foreclosure properties. The private market is also incorporating artist housing, such as through Reader's Choice. The Garfield school and Griot redevelopment project will be catalytic for the area. Ms. Manuel has been working on various marketing ideas with DCD staff and Ald. Milele Coggs. There is opportunity for the use of social media and websites.*

*Member Boynes commented. The first work-live ARCH site will be along MLK Drive and interest on the site at 6th Street and North Avenue for something similar to the former Malcolm X school redevelopment project. Marketing should be done to different types of artists since there are many kinds of artists. Artists are not developers and will need support to build infrastructure. There is a need to build an artist community and retain local talent.*

*Member Vernon commented. A concern is that redevelopment is occurring on MLK Drive and not on North Avenue. She envisions that North Avenue can be a place of shopping with mixed-use storefronts. Developers are going to MLK Drive naturally due to direct access to downtown development. More focus should be placed on North*

*Avenue to redevelop it, market it differently, and make people stay on the street despite its close proximity to the highway. Marketing should be intentional for artists, not for traditional developers, who really should become developers for these sites. Artists may then help to support each other.*

*Member Crump commented. All catalytic projects should come before the advisory committee before RACM makes a determination. The permitted land uses should be revisited, if they are no longer desired, and changed to uses that are desired on the frontend to lessen the obstacle of developers having to go through zoning changes.*

*Ms. Hill commented. The TOD study for the proposed street car recently showed increased density on North Avenue, the Hillside neighborhood, and Harambee neighborhood. The Hillside and Harambee communities are opposed to increased apartment building density along North Avenue but is open to more single-family and duplexes scattered in the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are open to mixed-use sites and want to maintain culture, entertainment, and art along North Avenue.*

*Ms. Turin inquired about a Bronzeville social media community hashtag.*

*Member Vernon replied that the community uses #bronzevilleproud (most popular), #bronzevillearts, #thisisbronzeville, #bronzevilleculture, #bronzevillecommerce, #bronzevillemke, and many others.*

*B. Historic Garfield campus update*

*This item was held as the developer, Melissa Goins, was unable to appear to provide an update.*

*C. Other*

*Individual appearing:*

*Matt Haessly, DCD*

*Mr. Haessly gave an update on the proposal for Rockford's Blue Water Grill at 2368 North MLK Drive. The deal is dead since the buyer, James Gardner, was unable to acquire financing. The site is the former Ja'Stacy soul food restaurant. The property is still under City ownership since 2015. The building was in poor shape when acquired, which is common for many properties acquired by the City due to tax foreclosure, and was eligible to be demolished then. Similar to many properties, the building continued to erode over time due to vacancy. The property did come before the advisory committee for submittal review and recommendations. The committee did recommend Mr. Gardner's submittal. In DCD's opinion, it is economically unfeasible to rehabilitate the building, which is in extreme disrepair both internally and externally, and it is time to move on from the building. The façade bricks are peeling away in the front and back. Mr. Gardner's budget was \$1.2 million. The building is small at about 3000 square feet with no parking. There was good effort to explore saving the building through redevelopment. It may be more advantageous to construct a new building at the site at lesser costs. DCD has made a recommendation to Ald. Coggs to raze the building and is awaiting her response. The site may likely become greenspace temporary. Perhaps the neighboring property, which is under bankruptcy and in poor condition, can be acquired and packaged along with this site to become a bigger and more attractive development site.*

*Ms. Hill remarked. The building to the south may also be acquired and be included as part of a bigger package for redevelopment. The Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources building may also be demolished. There are a number of restaurants coming into the area, such as Rise and Grind.*

*Member Vernon commented. The RFP process for the site was very open with many viewing opportunities. The property was an important soul food restaurant, attraction, and artist hub in the community. It would be challenging to redevelop the site if it was demolished due to the close neighboring buildings next to the site. Interested persons for the site had confirmed to her in the past that the building was in too much disrepair for their liking. Perhaps a bigger site, as suggested, can result in an eatery that is much needed to activate the area. There is opportunity to create a chain of restaurants in Bronzeville similar to that of Brady Street. An artist eatery hub and membership program, similar to the Hudson Business & Lounge Cafe, is needed along with artist live-work housing. The Hudson can be a model used to create a hub in Bronzeville.*

*Member Hall asked for there to be an update on eatery establishments in Bronzeville.*

**6. Discussion regarding Common Council file number 100626, Resolution creating a Bronzeville Advisory Committee.**

*Member Crump commented. Members are in possession of and should review the original resolution creating the advisory committee and a summary of committee recommendations, encompassing past meeting discussions, to expand the committee. A full discussion should be withheld until vice-chair Manuel and Ald. Coggs can be present, hopefully for the next meeting. In the meantime, members should review the recommendations and forward revisions or additional input to clerk staff. One recommendation to advocate for is to review the Bronzeville redevelopment plan every 5 years. The plan was last reviewed in 2010, conditions may be different presently, and disposition of properties along the district boundaries may be different now.*

**7. Announcements.**

*Member Vernon announced her birthday today.*

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

*Members recommended reviewing CCFN 100626 resolution creating a Bronzeville Advisory Committee, discussion on artist housing possibilities and the ARCH program in Bronzeville, Historic Garfield campus update, and discussion on prepping for Bronzeville Week.*

**9. Meeting frequency and schedule.**

*Members said that there should be a known monthly set meeting schedule for the rest of the year, at least up to August, so that members can better set their schedules to attend meetings. Wednesdays on the second week of every month would be ideal. Clerk staff is to develop a schedule in consideration of Ald. Coggs's schedule and avoiding Common Council meeting conflicts wherever possible.*

**10. Set next meeting date and time.**

*Clerk staff will poll members and set a date based on the majority of members.*

**11. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.*

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