



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

BRONZEVILLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

9:00 AM

Room 301-B, Third Floor, City Hall

1. **Call to order.**

Meeting called to order at 9:11 a.m.

2. **Roll call.**

Present 4 - Manuel, Crump, Garrison and Vernon

Excused 2 - Hall and Boynes

3. **Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from February 13, 2019.**

Member Vernon moved approval, seconded by member Garrison, of the meeting minutes from February 13, 2019. There was no objection.

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

a. *DCD Commercial Corridor grants for update, review, or approval*

Individual appearing:

Terrence Acquah, DCD Commercial Corridor

Mr. Acquah gave an update. There is a \$25,000 white box grant application at 2215 N. Martin L. King Jr. Dr. for the owner DASTAM, LLC, known as The Retreat. The application is anticipated for approval. It is the first one for the Brewcity match project. The building would serve as an event function space for community organizations. The lower level would serve the public with stress relieving activities. Total whitebox eligible amount is \$63,000. The owner is also seeking a signage grant. The building is the former Gee's Clippers building. Space will also be leased for a café.

b. *Other*

There was no other discussion.

5. **Discussion on the history of Milwaukee's Bronzeville neighborhood.**

Individuals appearing:

Luke Knapp, Legislative Reference Bureau

Terrence Acquah, DCD Commercial Corridor

Member Vernon commented. She had the opportunity to testify before the Wisconsin

State Assembly Community Development Committee regarding the history of Bronzeville. The Legislative Reference Bureau provided a history of Bronzeville that would benefit the committee and district. The study mainly consisted of a cause and effect information and needs improvement, which would be a process. The committee should consider how to move forward to improve the historical study, such as including pictures, checking for accuracy, having a timeline, and making comparisons between the new and original Bronzeville areas.

Mr. Knapp said that the study was based on books from the Municipal Research Library, and those books have photos that can be used.

Members further discussed. Further information about the Bronzeville area can be obtained from many studies that were done in the early 1990s by DCD as well as from developers in the area. Milwaukee Bronzeville may not be well known as Chicago Bronzeville. Chicago Bronzeville is more arts-based. Milwaukee Bronzeville is more based on economic redevelopment with the control and acquisition of properties for redevelopment. Sources of personal information about Milwaukee Bronzeville are Rueben Harpole and Clayborn Benson. An accurate history of Bronzeville should be included on the Bronzeville website. The Wisconsin Historical Society may have some historical photos of former officials from Bronzeville. An improved study can be a part of Bronzeville Week. A final study can culminate with a talkback session. There were a variety of shops on Martin L. King Jr. Dr. in the past that self-served the community.

Mr. Acquah commented. His office will redo the City's Bronzeville website and will come in the near future to survey the committee to work towards improving the website. The new website would incorporate an accurate history of Bronzeville.

Chair Crump said for Mr. Knapp and Acquah to work together to produce a final study of Milwaukee Bronzeville, as discussed.

6. Discussion on meeting parliamentary procedures, practices, and closed sessions.

Individuals appearing:

James Owczarski, City Clerk

Peter Block, Assistant City Attorney

Chair Crump said that the committee wanted to discuss how the committee can generally improve carrying out its meetings and business without violating Robert's Rule of Order (RRO) and the open meetings law.

Clerk Owczarski commented. RRO has many pages and is overly complicated, but only 6 pages of it really matters to most meeting bodies. A meeting body having common courtesy etiquette would adhere to RRO. RRO would never fix an unruly meeting body. Consensus voting is allowable. The main principals of RRO to consider would include respect for the majority (i.e. voting), protection of the minority (i.e. right to speak), and careful structure and common sense courtesy (i.e. making motions). A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Motions can be interrupted by other motions with precedence, such as a motion to hold, but is an exception rather than the rule. Seconding motions is a long standing habit but is not required. Government is perceived as slow but bodies must be patient with their proceedings. Motions made must be clear and deliberate.

Atty. Block commented.

The open meetings law requires for government meetings to be public, noticed, and have reasonable access. A valid meeting is one with a governmental purpose and a quorum. The committee should avoid having a negative quorum or a walking quorum. A negative quorum is a sufficient number of members to determine a governmental body's course of action if the group votes as a block. A walking quorum is a series of meetings, telephone conferences, or some other means of communication such that groups of less than a quorum are effectively meeting and can arrive at a consensus or understanding regarding governmental business that, collectively, would constitute a quorum. A meeting notice is the meeting agenda, and a meeting agenda must be publicly posted more than 24 hours in advance unless there are impractical situations. An agenda must contain the date, time, location, meeting items, and closed session items, if any. Meetings must accommodate the number of attendees and accessibility if known in advance. Notice to post an agenda must be given to the City Clerk's Office at least 48 hours in advance.

There are a limited 11 reasons that permit a meeting body to go into closed session. The closed session reasons that would be applicable to the advisory committee would be for pending or potential legal advance or litigation purposes [s. 19.85(1)(g), Wis. Stats.] and for public property purchase deliberations and/or public business with competitive or bargaining situations [s. 19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stats.]. Discussion on strategy, trade secrets, and proprietary secrets would be allowed in closed session under s. 19.85(1)(e). An agenda must contain the closed session language and identify the closed session topic. People can file against a meeting body for violation of the open meetings law. Going into a closed session must be a unanimous decision.

Members inquired about the allowable length of time to hold a matter, using personal devices for business purposes, discussing business via text or email, threshold to use closed sessions, providing a rationale for a decision in open session, and a conflict of interest.

Clerk Owczarski replied. The duration of a matter being held would depend on the person making the hold motion. Rescheduling a held item would depend on the original length of time specified to hold a matter. Otherwise, the chair of a body normally would have the discretion to reschedule a held matter without a specified hold time. The longest duration specified under a motion to hold would take precedence. A rationale for a decision is not typically required in open session. Meeting minutes are part of the narrative of a meeting. A conflict of interest primarily would involve a financial gain. The matter of abstention and recusing is not mandated and is convoluted. One should recused oneself and abstain if there is a financial gain. When in doubt, advisory committee members can utilize and consult with the City's Ethics Board to determine if there is a conflict of interest.

Atty. Block replied. Materials viewed in closed session may have to be disclosed, if requested, especially if the transaction under negotiation has been completed. Personal accounts and devices, if containing work related records, are subject to open records. Discussing business via text, emails, conference calls, and social media should be avoided. Holding meetings via teleconference is allowable if a body's bylaws allow for it, but the meeting should still be publicly accessible. A body has the discretion over when to go into closed session and who can be present. Normal business should be conducted in open session.

7. Discussion on establishing criteria, scoring, and evaluation guidelines for committee recommendations.

Individuals appearing:

Amy Turim, DCD

Matt Haessly, DCD

Terrence Acquah, DCD

Chair Crump inquired about the typical process of how DCD ranks, scores, and evaluates its proposals.

Mr. Haessly and Turim replied. They have standard criteria listed on their RFPs including economic, contribution to the community, employment, end use, and consistency with the area plan. They would have an internal committee made up typically of both City personnel with expertise (i.e. City Planning, Permitting) and non-City persons (i.e. community members) to evaluate the proposals. The results of the evaluation would then be shared to the applicable local alderperson. Most properties that are listed are not RFPs but are open listings. Responses are reviewed on a continual basis. RFPs are the preferred method for the Bronzeville district. Scoring of projects is not always done, but an example would include the scoring of historic property projects. A scoring template would include the criteria of financial feasibility, contractors involved, time table, end use, historic preservation experience, and compliance with historic guidelines. DCD staff has in the past both shared and not shared to the committee its actual proposal scores and rankings.

Members commented. The inquiry is about DCD's evaluation process to serve as a guide to the committee and not necessarily to share DCD's recommendations. It would be helpful for the advisory committee to know how DCD scores its applications and to get certain important information in advance, such as parking arrangements. It would be helpful to the committee to form its own evaluation and criteria scoring sheet if DCD can give insight to the committee on the aspects of a proposal that DCD would look for, questions that DCD would pose to applicants, and to forward DCD's scoring template. The advisory committee would then use the received template, insight, and questions as a reference and produce its own template accordingly for its own use. The questions and criteria that the committee would develop should be included in the RFPs that go out so that applicants may be able to better prepare themselves and address those questions in advance.

Chair Crump commented. Ms. Turim and Mr. Haessly should come back and submit to the advisory committee their RFP insight, questions, and template, as discussed. The goal would be to amend the advisory committee's review process procedure document by adding an evaluation scoring sheet addendum.

8. Announcements.

Chair Crump announced that the Fire and Police Commission is accepting applications for the position of police officer. The application period closes on March 18th. There is no age restriction. About 1600 applications have been received, and the goal is to obtain 2500 applications. Members are encouraged to share this opportunity to others.

Member Vernon announced that Howard University students are helping to reorganize her place of business today as part of their alternative spring break program.

9. Next meeting date and time.

a. Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 9 a.m.

10. Agenda items for the next meeting.

Members said that possible agenda items should include an update regarding the MLK Library Redevelopment Project and discussion with DCD Commissioner Rocky Marcoux.

Members are to forward other agenda item suggestions to clerk staff.

11. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

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