



Legislation Text

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150902
SUBSTITUTE 1

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Substitute resolution relating to the creation of a Westlawn Citizens' Advisory Committee. This resolution creates a Westlawn Citizens' Advisory Committee responsible for overseeing implementation of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee's (HACM) Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other statutory and regulatory requirements of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (Section 3).

The purpose of this body is to review and provide feedback on HACM's activities relating to the Westlawn Project and to report to the Community and Economic Development Committee its recommendations for the management and fulfillment of HACM's obligations under the VCA and Section 3.

The Advisory Committee is composed of 11 members, each appointed by the chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee. The Advisory Committee will be dissolved upon fulfillment of HACM's Section 3 and VCA responsibilities.

Whereas, In 2012, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) investigated the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee's (HACM) efforts to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (Section 3) relating to the Westlawn Redevelopment Project; and

Whereas, Section 3 requires that recipients of certain HUD financial assistance provide job training, employment and contracting opportunities for low-income residents in connection with projects and activities in funded areas; and

Whereas, HUD's investigation found that HACM was not in full compliance with Section 3, including the following findings:

1. HACM policies and procedures incorrectly exempted smaller contracts from the Section 3 contracting preferences.
2. HACM did not require contractors and subcontractors to post information about how to seek employment at the Westlawn Project site.
3. HACM failed to notify HACM residents of training and employment opportunities related to the Westlawn Project.

Whereas, In 2014, HACM entered into a 4-year Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) with HUD in order to fully comply with the requirements of Section 3; and

Whereas, As part of the VCA, HACM agreed to change its hiring and contracting practices and to seek public comment before submitting a revised Section 3 plan to HUD for approval; and

Whereas, HACM also agreed to expand its training and outreach activities, including the creation of a \$50,000 Section 3 Fund to be used for training, outreach and other purposes related to Section 3; and

Whereas, HUD has awarded Milwaukee a \$30-million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant to support the redevelopment of the Westlawn housing development on the city's Northwest Side; and

Whereas, The HUD grant will help fund the construction of 708 housing units, at least 394 of which will be set aside for low-income residents; and

Whereas, According to a September 28, 2015, article in the Daily Reporter, part of the \$30-million grant will be used to achieve various goals, including:

1. Reducing the harm caused by foreclosures.
2. Providing additional public transportation.
3. Improving nearby parks.
4. Reducing infant mortality.
5. Helping residents connect with job training opportunities, financial literacy classes and early childhood education programs.

; and

Whereas, It is imperative to the success of the Westlawn Project, specifically, and the city, generally, that low-income individuals are provided opportunities to have a say in how their neighborhoods are developed; and

Whereas, The Common Council is in support of efficient and transparent practices in local government, and oversight of HACM by a neutral entity will maintain public confidence in the government; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that a Westlawn Citizens' Advisory Committee is created to review and provide feedback on HACM's activities relating to the Westlawn Project and to report to the Community and Economic Development Committee its observations of and recommendations for the management and fulfillment of HACM's obligations under the VCA and Section 3; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Committee shall consist of 11 members, each of whom shall be appointed by the chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Committee shall select a chair and vice-chair from among its members at its first regular meeting by a majority vote of the Committee and may select other officers as it sees fit; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Committee may adopt rules and procedures governing its own internal organization and operation and to assist the Committee in carrying out its responsibilities; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Committee shall meet at least quarterly and may meet additionally as the Committee determines or the chair directs; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the City Clerk's Office and HACM shall provide staff assistance to the Committee; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Committee shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Common Council annually, and, upon fulfillment of HACM's Section 3 and Voluntary Compliance Agreement requirements, shall be dissolved.

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Andrew R. VanNatta
10/16/2015