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RESEARCH DIVISION**

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN

**Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

Location: Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall

In attendance: Council President White; Council Members Carrico, J. Carlucci, Gaffney Jr., Miller, Peluso, Arias, Salem and Carlucci

Also: Mary Staffopoulos, OGC; Phillip Peterson, Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

Meeting Convened: 10:00 a.m.

Chair Carrico convened the meeting and called for introductions. He said, in response to recent media stories, that this committee is not impeding DIA's work or slowing down downtown development. Council Member Joe Carlucci talked about some collaborative research (with developers, DIA, the Administration) he is working on related to focused on development in the central city core.

DIA Projects

Lori Boyer, DIA, gave a presentation about ongoing and imminent DIA projects. Ms. Boyer said that the Northbank CRA had \$18 million in revenue this year, \$7 million in financial obligations, \$1 million for overhead and roughly \$10 million in discretionary income to go towards capital projects and fund replenishment. The Southbank CRA had \$7.8 million in revenue and \$5 million in financial obligations this year.

Ms. Boyer mentioned 2 projects slated to be reviewed by MBRC, a high-rise project and the Rise Doro re-build post fire. The Rise Doro building will include 85 units of affordable housing, a \$3 million completion grant and \$1 million in compensation for the quick clean-up after the fire. She described numerous projects in various stages of construction: Artist Walk, Park Street Road Diet, Home2Suites in Brooklyn, One Riverside Ave., Emerald Trail LaVilla link, Lif Ev'ry Voice & Sing Park, JOHNSON

Commons, Performing Arts Center Musical Heritage Garden, Riverfront Plaza, Hogan Street Cycle Track, 2 way road conversions on Adams and Forsyth Streets, Gateway, Lofts at Cathedral, Union Terminal Warehouse, Shipyards West, MOSH, Four Seasons, Met Park, RiversEdge, Artea, St. Johns River Park and Friendship Fountain, and Related Multi-family Development. Ms. Boyer said there is an upcoming DIA workshop about riverfront property dispositions.

Councilman Peluso asked about new construction driving Tif dollars and about focusing on specific areas downtown like historic districts. He asked about a comprehensive plan for the riverwalk, and about the future of the Snyder Memorial Church building.

Council Member Salem asked about future project funding to be prepared for, specifically Gateway, Related and Doro. He asked about the increase in construction costs for riverfront parks.

Council Member Aris asked about penalties for developers who provide estimates for projects, don't complete them on time and then need more money because of increased construction costs.

Council Member J. Carlucci emphasized the need to focus on residential development downtown.

Linzee Ott, CEO Build Up Downtown, spoke briefly about the new organization that is a privately funded nonprofit resource and supporter of DIA and Downtown Vision, Inc. to reinforce Downtown as the City's unique epicenter for business, history, culture, education, and entertainment.

JTA Urban Circulator

Nat Ford, JTA, provided an overview of some current JTA happenings, such as the Urban Circulator and the Bay Street Innovation Corridor, and a partnership with FSCJ for technical training. Kiet Dinh, VP of Automation & Innovation, provided a detailed presentation about the U2C program. Mr. Dinh said that U2C program will modernize and expand the Skyway and introduce autonomous vehicles into JTA's transportation system, extending the reach within the urban core through the Bay Street Innovation Corridor and expanding beyond into adjacent neighborhoods. Mr. Dinh talked about expanding mobility options across the city. He highlighted the workforce development framework for JTA's program design.

Council Member Carrico asked how many vehicles will operate on Bay Street. Mr. Dinh said there will be 14 vehicles, running every 4 minutes, capable of carrying 10 passengers. Chair Carrico asked about game day transportation. Mr. Dinh said that there will still be the game day express service. Council Member Peluso asked about daily ridership, which is estimated to be 1500 per day.

Laura Street Trio

Jordan Elsbury, Ballard Partners, provided an overview of the history of the buildings. He spoke in support of the project and for Mr. Atkins. Steve Atkins, SouthEast, described the process for the project and negotiations with DIA. Mr. Atkins said the new proposal includes \$18.3 million in city loans and \$67.47 million in development grants totaling \$85.77 million to restore the buildings and, in combination with new construction, turn the Trio into a hotel, apartments (with some affordable/workforce units) and restaurants. He said that the new proposal includes an additional \$15 million in equity and a lower loan interest rate. Mr. Atkins noted that tax credits are not counted as equity.

Council Member Salem asked about methods by which to reduce the City's contribution. He asked whether the buildings are worth the cost of restoration, due to the deterioration and long-term exposure to the elements. Council Member Gaffney Jr. asked for a comparison of costs to restore vs. demolish and rebuild the Trio. Council Member Miller mentioned his issue with upfront City funding (\$8.3 million forgivable economic development loan, \$30 million development grant, \$10 million loan repayable over

the course of construction). Council Member Peluso spoke vehemently in opposition to demolition, noting the importance of the buildings and the significance of the building's architect (Klutho). Council Member Carlucci strongly concurred, noting the historical landmark status. Chair Carrico asked about the future of this project since DIA is no longer in negotiations. Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, explained the options for the pending legislation, 2023-876.

Public comment

There was not time for public comment, but Chair Carrico read the names from the speaker cards aloud for the record: John Nooney, Eunice Barnum, Wayne Wood, Lorrinn Woods, and James Schwartz.

With no further business, CM Carrico adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 12:02 p.m.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

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7.26.24 Posted 5:00 p.m.