



January 2019 - MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Downtown Residents Council

Date: January 8, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Place: Public Library, 800 Vine Street, Tower Room, 3rd Floor

Welcome: Sue Byrom, President

New Members:

Esther Wing

Paula Rose

Barbara Bell

Christine Sheehan

Christopher Daniels

Cynthia Gray

Alexa Didion

Cliff Lemke

Monica McCullough

Bonnie and John Bagwell

Sandra Wilder

John Hopkins

Jeff Westermeyer

Dan and Susi Delehanty

New Business Members:

AC Hotel by Marriott

Cozy's Café

Library Report:

David Siders, Civic Engagement Coordinator for the library, gave an update on building and programming matters. Redesign of the atrium continues, albeit slowly. A laptop rental kiosk was recently installed. Planned are a homework help area, a job information one-stop, and a similar one-stop for health information. A mechanism to facilitate connections with social services agencies is in the works. Community engagement sessions are planned. The North Building will not be sold. Members were invited to attend a State of the Library address by library director Paula Brehm-Heeger on February 1 at 7:30 a.m.

Speakers

Andrew Naab, retail specialist with **Downtown Cincinnati Inc**, presented a review of development and retail recruitment activities. He particularly recommended a resource on the DCI website (<https://www.downtowncincinnati.com/doing-business-downtown/developments>) that allows the user to explore the various development sites in the Central Business District (CBD), of which there are 89 now active. Overall, 75,000 sq. ft. of new retail space is in the pipeline, much of it in the area around the convention center. A lot of available small-business space will require upgrading.

A new initiative is the Downtown Business Grant Program, which will make funds available to refurbish small-business storefronts in select business corridors. Another new initiative is the Co-Sign Program, to be carried out in conjunction with the American Sign Museum, to produce new signage.

Perhaps the biggest news is that 3CDC has bought the Macy's store building. Plans for the space are yet to be finalized, but Naab spoke of a combination of office and retail use as part of a "reenvisioning" of 5th and Vine.

Naab also reported that a health care operator is looking for space for a downtown urgent care center. At issue are onsite parking and easy ingress/exit routes.

Melba Moore, new Health Commissioner for the **Cincinnati Health Department**, outlined a vision of improved health outcomes arising in part for greater attention to the social determinants of health (housing, food availability, access to health care, education, etc.). She used the uptick in infant mortality as an example, noting that it is key to connect with mothers for pre-natal care and post-partum follow-up.

Moore described the Safe Stations program operating in Massachusetts, where people can come to a fire station for needs assessment and connection to social services. She would like to use Cincinnati-area health centers in the same way, with a "strike force" team in each. The Health Department will partner with the Center for Addiction Treatment (CAT), Talbert House, and BrightView in bringing this about. She would also like to see opportunities for youth to be trained in public health jobs.

Old Business/Reports

Minutes of the November meeting were approved as moved by Andy Reiss and seconded by Christian Rahe. Sue Byrom appealed to members to consider service on the DRC Board. Those interested may contact Al Bunker (alanbunker@yahoo.com).

Mary Heimert invited all to the after-meeting social at Arnold's.

Treasurer John Stringer's report showed a 12/1 starting balance of \$15,502 and a 12/31 closing balance of \$13,366.

Monthly Reports

No Fire Department representative was available to attend the meeting.

Chico Lockhart reported on behalf of the DCI Ambassadors, saying that housing had been secured for 68 homeless people this year; many of these have also entered treatment. Engagements with people holding signs and asking for

money are sharply down. A Second Chance program has begun, wherein two formerly homeless people serve as ambassadors and encouragers to the currently homeless. A formal count of the homeless will occur January 22.

Sue Byrom announced with sadness that this would be Police Department representative **Captain Mike Neville's** last DRC meeting. He is retiring as of January 11, and will shortly take a new position with Cincinnati Children's Hospital. A Police Department replacement has yet to be named. Neville told the group that he feels he is going out on a high note, with property and violent crime in decline. Compared to a three-year average, and depending on category, such crimes are down 28-32%. Neville expressed his commitment to the DRC and all of our work together. He also paid tribute to his wife Cathy (in the audience) for her loving support over his career.

There being no announcements from the audience, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00.

The next DRC meeting will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 12th, at 6 p.m. in the Tower Room of the Library.