

## January 2021 – MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Downtown Residents' Council, Inc.

**Date:** January 11, 2021 @ 6:00pm

**Place:** Virtual via Zoom by Esther Wing, Interim Vice President  
And Corresponding Secretary

**Guests:** Carol Glotfelter  
Jim Benedict and Tracy Schwegman, Banks Community  
Authority



President Alan Bunker welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 6:01.

### **Items for Presentation, Discussion or Action:**

#### **1. Affordable Housing Proposal – Ashleigh Finke and Mary Rivers, Over the Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH) and Will Yokel, Urban Sites**

Ashleigh and Will gave the group some background on their organizations. OTRCH has a number of affordable housing projects in the city. All include in-house property management, resident services, and maintenance services. Urban Sites has overseen both market-rate and affordable housing projects. The project under discussion, known as the Barrister Apartments Project, is located in two buildings, at 214 and 216 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. OTRCH and Urban Sites are joint developers; OTRCH will own and manage the buildings and Urban Sites will serve as the renovation contractor. Funding sources include low-income housing tax credits, City of Cincinnati HOME funds, and federal and state historic preservation tax credits; additional investment will also be sought. Hamilton County currently has a shortage of about 40,000 affordable housing units, so waiting lists are long.

The Barrister Apartments will have 44 units, ranging from efficiencies to 3-bedroom units, with a price range of \$362 to \$1,188 per month. Potential residents will be assessed on the basis of their income, with rents pegged to 30 percent of income. As an example, a cashier earning \$11.13 per hour (\$23,525 per year) would be charged \$588 per month.

The project schedule calls for seeking community support and applying for funding in 2021, with a goal of obtaining permits and closing on financing in the first quarter of 2022. Construction is slated to begin in the second quarter of that year.

OTRCH and Urban Sites requested a letter of support for the project from DRC. Alan circulated a draft of such a letter prior to the meeting. Esther moved that the letter be sent on behalf of the Board, Lisa seconded, and all approved.

#### **2. Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) Proposal – William Weber, Chief of Staff, City Manager's Office and Gio Rocco, Department of Community & Economic Development**

This proposal would permit alcoholic beverages to be sold and consumed outdoors within the boundaries formed by the Heritage Bank Center, Mehring Way, Paul Brown Stadium, and Second Street. DORA-designated plastic cups would be a requirement. The plan also includes the creation of a pedestrian walkway by closing Freedom Way between Joe Nuxhall Way (Main) and Marian Spencer Way (Walnut). Funding will be provided by a small assessment on sales and a small charge for the official cups; donations will also be sought. Area merchants are reportedly enthusiastic, as are city officials. The Banks Community Authority, a business coalition in operation since 2019, has agreed to contract for additional security and trash control services.

City Council approval of the DORA proposal will be sought in February, with a completion goal of April 1 (Opening Day). When Alan asked whether a DRC letter of support would be desirable, William said yes. Jackie Bryson moved that a letter be drafted and sent, Mary Heimert seconded, and all approved.

**3. Review/approval of November Board meeting minutes** – Tricia Lynn made a motion to approve, seconded by Teri Boland, and all voted in favor.

**4. Review/approval of Treasurer's report** – There being no questions about the report previously sent out by Tricia, Jackie made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Christian Rahe and passed unanimously.

### **5. Reports of Committees:**

**A. Finance** – Tricia reported that all required end-of-year filings are in order and that we are still waiting for the city to release our approved NSP funds.

**B. Nominating** – Jackie said that she and committee members Tim Nolan and Christian (and anyone else who might like to volunteer) would be working to identify candidates to fill two Board positions, created by John Stringer's resignation and Tim's term limit being reached. Jan Hirlinger announced that she, too, planned to step down, bringing the vacancies to three.

**C. Membership** – Jan noted that she had sent Board members an outline of business member benefits, hoping that soon DRC would be in a position to get started on a recruitment initiative. She reported that new brochures and business cards are ready to go to press as soon as NSP funds are made available. Jan thanked Jackie and Carol Glotfelter for all their help.

**D. Outreach** – Jackie reported on the December appreciation breakfast for first responders, served at the police substation at the Banks and the 9<sup>th</sup> Street fire station. She said our offering was much appreciated, and expressed thanks to Taste of Belgium for making it easy to work with them on this. Jackie also spoke of holiday activities sponsored by FOUND,

including trees decorated by various city neighborhoods. Alan thanked Jackie for taking the lead on the tree representing downtown.

E. **Clean, Green & Safe** - Alan had previously emailed his report on this topic; there were no questions.

F. **Speaker Coordinator** – Cate Douglas asked for ideas for 3CDC activities to support downtown businesses in what is always a slow season, and more so this year.

6. **Announcements**: Alan reported that he attended the monthly virtual meeting with other community council presidents, and also a virtual meeting with the Economic Development and Housing Committee of the Over-the-Rhine community council.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

**Next Meeting: Monday, February 8, 2021, 6:00 p.m., (Location TBA)**