

JANUARY 2021– MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Downtown Residents' Council, Inc.

Date: January 12, 2021 @ 6:00pm

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



New Members: Jeff Matthews, Andrew Schoepflin

President Alan Bunker welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 6:02.

Monthly reports:

Captain Doug Wiesman of the Cincinnati Police Department gave an update on crime statistics. The city is fairly quiet these days. Doug said that CPD is monitoring threats in connection with demonstrations expected to occur around the country during the weekend before the inauguration; so far nothing has surfaced in Cincinnati. Doug noted that the two convenience stores near Piatt Park have closed, which may have a calming effect on park behavior. CPD is looking at a stronger police presence in both Piatt and Smale parks. CPD has met with the three bars (Chalet, Main Event, and PRVLGD) that have given rise to much complaint in the last year; he reports solid progress toward Good Neighbor agreements with all. **Officer Tim Eppstein** said that there has been little activity in the homeless population. Maslow's Army has opened a day center where people can come to relax and get warm. This is partly in response to space in the public library continuing to be unavailable.

DRC members raised concerns about the need for a "no skateboarding" sign at Schmidlapp Lawn and the disappearance of some street signs, such as the yield sign at 4th and Pike. Doug drew attention to the Cincinnati Citizen Service Request mechanism available online at <https://cagismaps.hamilton-co.org/csr/cincinnati/serviceRequest>.

Cate Douglas of 3CDC said that Ambassadors are engaged in regular cleaning activities and check-ins with downtown businesses. There is a push to increase Ambassador visibility, particularly on 4th Street, where there have been reports of aggressive panhandling. The team is prepared for snow removal. Behavioral health outreach is increasing. **Nicole Smith** reported contacts with 359 individuals, many of whom were referred for mental health and substance abuse services and 87 of whom were housed.

DRC Reports

Treasurer Tricia Lynn reported an opening balance of \$13,041.60 and a closing balance of \$13,109.13 for the month of December.

Jackie Bryson reported on a December appreciation breakfast for first responders, served at the police substation at the Banks and the 9th Street fire station. She also related that a Nominating Committee

would be seeking candidates to fill three Board seats in the spring; anyone interested is asked to contact Jackie, Tim Nolan, or Christian Rahe.

Old Business

Approval of previous meeting's minutes – Esther Wing's motion to approve the minutes was seconded by Sue Byrom and approved unanimously.

Speakers

Ashleigh Finke of **Over-the Rhine Community Housing** and **Tim Westrich** of **Urban Sites** described an affordable housing development project that their organizations are undertaking together. 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. 9th Street. OTRCH will own and manage the buildings; 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. When it is completed, retail tenants will be sought for the ground floors of the two buildings.

Alan explained that the DRC Board had voted the previous evening to send a letter in support of this project.

Announcements

David Siders announced that the Woman's City Club will sponsor a public forum on the topic of affordable housing on January 21. More information may be found at <https://womanscityclub.org/>. He reminded the group that the Public Library is now open 10:00 – 6:00 Monday through Saturday, and that patrons must enter through the Walnut Street door. Patrons may reserve materials online for later pick-up and make appointments for computer use, copying, or paperwork assistance. David then introduced Chico Lockhart in a new context; Chico is now working part-time at the library to coordinate outreach services.

Jackie Bryson said that both the city of Cincinnati and Hamilton County have opened a registration process for vaccines. David said that links were available on the library website under Services.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 6:00 p.m., (Location TBA)