

OCTOBER 2021 - MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Council, Inc.

Downtown Residents'

Date: October 11, 2021 @ 6:00pm

Place: First Financial Innovation Center, 4th & Vine Streets

Members absent: Cate Douglas, Kurt Grossman, Heidi Shenk

Guests: John Reisner and Rob Denham of the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), City of Cincinnati.



President Alan Bunker called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Items for Presentation, Discussion or Action:

- 1. Presentation by John Reisner and Rob Denham on the city's release of the surface parking lot at 31 Garfield Place** - John and Rob explained that the city has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in connection with a parking lot it owns at the corner of Garfield and Race. A similar effort a couple of years ago was not successful. The major constraint on the project is the lot size. RFP submissions are due at the end of the month. A selection committee with representatives from DCED and the Planning Commission will negotiate with interested developers and make a recommendation to the city. City Council as well as Planning Commission approval will be required. John and Rob reported that nearby property owners have no objections. They said they would welcome comments if board members wished to offer any.

John and Rob gave the Board a heads-up about the former Macy's site at 5th and Vine, and said that they would set up a virtual session with the New York-based developer as part of the November Board meeting. The plan is for apartments on floors 9-12, with parking below.

- 2. Review/approval of previous meeting's minutes** - Jackie Bryson made a motion to approve, seconded by Joan Meyer, and all approved.
- 3. Review/approval of August Treasurer's report** - Christian Rahe moved approval, Mary Heimert seconded, and all approved.

4. Reports of Committees:

- A. Finance** - Tricia Lynn reported on the Neighborhood Support Program budget that she is preparing for submission to the city. DRC is allowed to apply for \$7,638 in NSP funds. This is broken down in the following categories:

Council Business/Operations/Administration (includes Wild Apricot)	\$1,700
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Quality of Life (Activities Beyond Classrooms)	1,250
Neighborhood Improvement Activities (Beautification)	3,438
Neighborhood Services (GeneroCity)	1,250

Tricia reminded the group that we have also applied for funding under the Neighborhood Activation Fund for Zeigler STEM and Saturday Hoops.

David Ostrander moved approval of the NSP budget, Jackie seconded, and all approved.

B. Membership - Heidi Shenk, absent for this meeting, is now officially the Membership Chair.

Mary Heimert reported that she has been getting a lot of inquiries about when and where membership meetings are held. Alan agreed to send an email blast providing this information.

C. Information & Technology - Victoria Pershick reported on her conversations with the First Financial concierge, exploring the possibility of conducting hybrid membership meetings, that is, offering members the choice of in-person or Zoom attendance. First Financial's A/V infrastructure will not accommodate this. Since some members are still not comfortable with in-person meetings, or cannot arrive by 6:00, it was agreed to try out a simple laptop approach. It would be a one-way communication; members could watch virtually, but not ask questions. The plan is to try it for a couple of months and see how many members actually choose this method of participation.

D. Social - Mary shared two proposals from Prime for our holiday party, differing in price on the basis of food quantity. As the more expensive option is only \$500 more, the group agreed to go with that. She reported that Prime is recommending that DRC ask for proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test. All agreed that this was wise. We will have the whole restaurant for the party, so that those who wish to social-distance will have the space to do so. Guests will be charged \$30, and must bring a check with them. The party is December 6.

E. Clean, Green & Safe - Alan had previously emailed his report on this topic. He reported that this city is preparing to install new lighting on the Path to the Taft, though our full proposal for improvements is still awaiting a decision. He said that the annual decorating of Piatt Park is up in the air. Cappel's has been sold, and it is not yet clear whether we will be able to continue our arrangement with the new owner to store our decorations in the store and to use their truck and ladders. Alan will keep us posted.

- F. **Young Professional Recruitment** - Christian reminded everyone that the next event for this target group would be November 4 at Bar Pilar on Court Street.

New Business

- A. Jackie will once again head up the Nominating Committee. Christian volunteered to assist; she will still need one Board member and two at-large members. Jackie asked the group to think about how we might change the way we fill vacancies. Now that Board terms are two years instead of three, every other year will require many candidates if all seats are filled. There will be five seats to be filled in 2022, but there were 12 in 2020 and will be again in 2023.
- B. Alan reminded the group of emails he sent last week regarding the proposed redevelopment of The Barrister, a building on 9th Street. Tim Westrich of Urbansites has requested the Board's support for a change in funding for this project, proposed by the city. The change is to use TIF funds rather than the city's Notice of Funds Availability via HOME (NOFTA) financing mechanism, as originally contemplated. We sent a letter in support of the original proposal in January. Tricia suggested adding a sentence expressing our hope that Cincinnati Public Schools would get its proper share of the TIF funds. After discussion, the Board acknowledged that the new proposal was going to go through regardless of our input. Alan proposed that we amend our letter of support to specifically support the TIF financing, rather than NOFA financing for the Barrister Project. Teri Boland seconded the motion, and all approved.

Announcements

Joan suggested that we put together a DRC membership directory, to be sent to members only and not posted on the website. Members would be free to opt out altogether, and to choose whether they wanted to list phone and email information as well as name and building of residence.

Andrew Naab suggested that Alan introduce Board members at the next night's membership meeting, since we have new members and it has been awhile since the original introduction after last spring's election. Alan agreed to do this.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 8, 2021, 6:00 pm at First Financial Innovation Center, 4th & Vine.