

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Downtown Committee
of
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation**

**Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning
901 City Hall
Buffalo, New York
September 8, 2015
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

James W. Comerford
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Rev. Darius G. Pridgen
Steven J. Stepniak
Maria R. Whyte

Committee Members Absent:

Dottie Gallagher-Cohen
Benjamin N. Oblatz

Officers Present:

Peter M. Cammarata, President
David A. Stebbins, Executive Vice President
Brandye Merriweather, Vice President
Andrew Schoepfich, Treasurer
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary
Mollie Profic, Assistant Treasurer

Guests Present: Debra Chernoff, Buffalo Place, Inc.; Kaitlin Chmura, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp.; Michael Finn, City of Buffalo; Rebecca Gandour, City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning; Daniel Leonard, Buffalo Niagara Partnership; Michael Schmand, Buffalo Place, Inc.; and Gary Witulski, City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning.

Roll Call: The Secretary called the roll of Committee members at 12:05 p.m. and a quorum of the Committee was determined to be present. Rev. Pridgen joined the meeting during the presentation of item 3.0.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the May 12, 2015 Meeting** – The minutes of the May 12, 2015 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Stepniak made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Comerford and unanimously carried.
- 2.0 Downtown Committee 2016 Schedule** – Ms. Merriweather presented the 2016 Downtown Committee meeting schedule. With the exception of the meeting scheduled for December 6th, all meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month starting at 12:00 p.m.
- 3.0 BBRP Loan Program – Funding Recommendation Updates** – Ms. Merriweather updated the Committee regarding the proposed BBRP loans for the Phoenix Brewery Apartments project located at 835 Washington Street, the Our Lady of Lourdes project located at 1115 Main Street and the Alexandre Apartments project located at 510 Washington Street. Ms. Merriweather noted that the BUDC Board of Directors passed a resolution at its May 2015 meeting finding that each of these

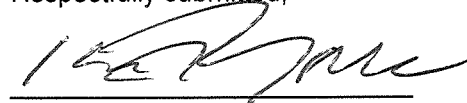
projects were consistent with Buffalo Building Reuse Project goals and directing that all three projects proceed to the loan underwriting process. The Phoenix Brewery project and the Alexandre Apartments project are currently in underwriting, with NYBDC serving as underwriter. The developer of the Our Lady of Lourdes project elected not to proceed with BBRP financing because better lending rates were available for that project from a conventional lender. In response to a question from Ms. Whyte, Ms. Merriweather outlined current BBRP loan program application fees and rates. She also indicated that the next loan fund RFP will include additional detail regarding BBRP loan program fees.

- 4.0 BBRP Loan Program – Capital Campaign Update** – Mr. Leonard provided an update to the Committee regarding the capital campaign for the BBRP loan program. Discussions with lending institutions have been productive, and more details regarding commitments to the program are expected soon. Mr. Leonard commented that the process has advanced due to an effective coalition of public and private sector leaders.
- 5.0 Downtown Infrastructure – CFA Applications** – Ms. Merriweather reported that the CFA application includes funding requests for two downtown infrastructure improvement projects. One of the projects is a “pedestrian friendly greenway” from Shelton Square/Fireman’s Park to the waterfront. If awarded, the funding for this project will be utilized for design and planning work. The second project involves infrastructure improvements to Franklin Street, which are intended to connect the Chippewa entertainment district and the Convention Center. Ms. Merriweather noted that both of these projects were identified in the downtown infrastructure master plan. Mr. Finn then provided an update regarding multiple ongoing infrastructure projects, including Cars on Main Street, the Pearl Street conversion to two-way traffic, and the Genesee Gateway and Niagara Street improvements.
- 6.0 Downtown Development Guide Update** – Ms. Merriweather reported that the Downtown Development Guide is expected to be released this fall. It will include information on development projects, demographics and development tools for downtown. The guide will be marketed to local and national developers, with an emphasis on minority developers. The goal is to initiate, build and strengthen relationships with developers and educate them regarding development opportunities in downtown Buffalo. Ms. Merriweather also updated the Committee regarding other marketing initiatives, including an article and full-page being developed for the Business First Core Strength publication. The Committee then discussed the marketing initiatives and other downtown matters, including the One Seneca Tower auction and the 201 Ellicott Street RFP process.
- 7.0 Buffalo Place Updates** – Mr. Schmand updated the Committee regarding Buffalo Place matters. Buffalo Place recently applied for a Main Street grant in the amount of \$500,000 for improvements to the 400 and 500 blocks of Main Street. Mr. Schmand reported that the farmer’s market had a strong year. He also noted that Buffalo Place will have a larger operational budget than the prior year, some of which is attributable to an increased budget for security. Ms. Chernoff then presented a report regarding pedestrian activity in downtown Buffalo during the mid-day lunch hour period. She circulated a map of downtown showing the concentration of pedestrians at various downtown locations. Main Street continues to be the primary location for pedestrian traffic during mid-day. The Committee discussed the report, with Mr. Mehaffy commenting that a similar report for pedestrian traffic during the evening hours would also be helpful.
- 8.0 Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp. Updates** – Ms. Chmura updated the Committee regarding Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp. matters. ECHDC estimates that 150,000 people attended Canalside concerts this summer, and estimates overall attendance for all programs at 500,000. ECHDC is turning its attention to winter programming soon, with ice skating scheduled to begin on November 13th. Ms. Chmura then reported on the construction of the permanent extension of the boardwalk and the grain elevator illumination project. She noted that the Marriott Hotel at Harbor Center is now open, and that an announcement regarding the Explore & More children’s museum is expected soon. New retailers at Harbor Center have opened their doors, and the Pizza Plant is scheduled to open by mid-October. Rev. Pridgen commented on the need to increase diversity of the visitors to Canalside and for greater diversity in the performers and entertainment offered at Canalside.

9.0 Buffalo Green Code & Brownfield Opportunity Areas – Mr. Mehaffy presented a brief update regarding the Buffalo Green Code and Brownfield Opportunity Areas, noting that these items are expected to be filed with the Common Council on October 22nd.

Adjournment – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Comerford, seconded by Mr. Whyte and unanimously carried, the Downtown Committee meeting of September 8, 2015 was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin J. Zanner', written over a horizontal line.

Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary