

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

**65 Niagara Square
920 City Hall
April 19, 2023
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Catherine Amdur
Daniel Castle
Nathan Marton
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Kimberley Minkel
Karen Utz

Committee Members Absent:

Darby Fishkin
Dottie Gallagher
Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President
Mollie Profic, Treasurer
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: Katie Campos, Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy; Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Kelly Maloney, Gilbane Building Company; Antonio Parker, BUDC Project Manager; Mike Schmand, Buffalo Place; and Christine Scott Thomson, MIG (via Zoom).

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was present.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the March 15, 2023 and January 18, 2023 Meetings** – The minutes of the March 15, 2023 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Minkel made a motion to approve the March 15, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Utz and unanimously carried (6-0-0). The minutes of the January 18, 2023 meeting of the Downtown Committee were then presented. Ms. Minkel made a motion to approve the January 18, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Marton, and (with Ms. Utz abstaining) carried with five affirmative votes (5-0-1).

- 2.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – Project Update Presentation** – Kelly Maloney presented the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park project update. Ms. Maloney provided an overview of the bridge, park core and marine bid packages. The bridge steel package will be awarded in the next week and will be the first package awarded due to long lead times for steel. The park sustained considerable damage from the November and December 2022 winter storms and safety fencing has been installed around the park. A decision was made to close the park during construction and Gilbane is taking over safety logistics for the park. Descoping of the bid packages will take place before the guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for the contract with the City is determined.

Ms. Merriweather then introduced Katie Campos, the Executive Director of the Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy for an update. Ms. Campos provided background regarding the Conservancy and her role

as Executive Director, which includes community engagement and fundraising. Ms. Campos noted that the Conservancy is hosting a community meeting on May 9th at Waterfront Elementary.

- 3.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – Downtown Waterfront Improvement Plan Project Update by MIG Consulting** – Ms. Merriweather introduced Ms. Scott-Thomson, project manager for MIG on the Inner Harbor Public Realm study, for a presentation regarding the project. Ms. Scott-Thomson provided an overview of the project and components of a great public realm plan. The MIG team has been reviewing past documents and plans, including the BOA, Niagara River Plan, and Greenway Plan, in order to shape its Public Realm to be issued. Ms. Scott-Thomson also reviewed the public and stakeholder engagement efforts being undertaken, which has include meetings, presentations, open houses, and surveys, and also addressed equity aspects of the project. The next meeting will be held at the end of May, and the project team’s work will be completed by mid-June.
- 4.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo’s Race for Place. A test run of the lighting system for the library underpass was conducted last week. Counsel is preparing a memorandum of understanding for BUDC and the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library regarding the matching funds being provided by the Library for the underpass lighting project. Ms. Merriweather also commented on BUDC efforts to assist the small business community, and plans to engage a firm to complete a marketing and engagement strategy for downtown.
- 5.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Schmand provided the Buffalo Place partner update. The Downtown Farmers Market is set to begin its season on June 1st, and Thursday & Main will begin June 8th at Fountain Plaza. For the 2022 Main Street grants, \$300,000 in grant funds will be awarded to nine projects. Buffalo Place was notified that contractors have begun to charge for quotes, and has been advised that the grant program will cover these costs. Buffalo Place’s contract with the City of Buffalo is set to expire at the end of July 2023. In response to a question from Mr. Mehaffy, Mr. Schmand discussed the recent Common Council resolution regarding co-mingling events on Chippewa. Ms. Minkel added that a contract has been awarded to enhance curb appeal along the 400 block of Main Street. Construction is set to begin this summer.
- 6.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, on motion made by Ms. Minkel, seconded by Mr. Marton and unanimously carried (6-0-0), the April 19, 2023 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary