

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

Via Video Conference Call & Live Stream Audio

**February 17, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Trina Burruss
James W. Comerford
Michael Finn
Thomas R. Hersey, Jr.
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)

Committee Members Absent:

Darby Fishkin
Dottie Gallagher
Kimberley Minkel
Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

Peter M. Cammarata, President
Brandye Merriweather, Vice President, Downtown Development
Rebecca Gandour, Vice President, Finance & Development
Mollie Profic, Treasurer
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: Lisa Hicks, City of Buffalo-Director of Development; Seth Piccirillo, Buffalo Niagara Partnership; and Michael Schmand, Buffalo Place, Inc.

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. The Secretary called the roll and a quorum of the Committee was determined to be present.

The meeting was held via video/telephone conference in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 202.15 issued by Governor Andrew Cuomo on March 12, 2020, as amended. The meeting was also live-streamed to the general public and recorded. A transcript of the meeting will be made available at a later date.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the December 16, 2020 Meeting** – The minutes of the December 16, 2020 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Comerford made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hersey and unanimously carried (5-0-0).

- 2.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update on Buffalo’s Race for Place. Responses to the RFP for the redevelopment of the Mohawk parking ramp at 477 Washington Street are due April 30th. Ms. Merriweather reported that “The Future of Mobility: Remaking Buffalo for the 21st Century” report will be presented at the March Urbanism Next conference, which will result in national exposure for Race for Place. Planning is also underway to roll out additional Race for Place initiatives.

- 3.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – General Update** – Ms. Gandour presented an update regarding the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park project. BUDC is working with project manager Gardiner & Theobald on budgeting, value engineering and constructability issues. The project continues to evolve, and additional design modifications are anticipated. BUDC staff continues to work with the City of Buffalo to pursue additional funding for the project. Ms. Gandour also reported on a capacity grant awarded to BUDC by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and the formation of the Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy, which will manage the park following the completion of construction.
- 4.0 BBRP Loan Program – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather updated the Committee regarding the Phoenix Brewery Apartments loan. The \$750,000 balloon payment is due February 28, 2021.
- 5.0 Downtown Infrastructure – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather reported that construction of the Chippewa entertainment district infrastructure project is expected to begin this spring as soon as the weather breaks. A pre-construction meeting for the project was held last week. Construction work will be staged to minimize interference with businesses that utilize outdoor patio space. Ms. Merriweather also reported that discussions continue with respect to the expansion of the Buffalo Place business improvement district.
- 6.0 Queen City Pop Up – Small Business Recovery Efforts** – Ms. Merriweather updated the Committee regarding the Queen City Pop Up program and small business recovery efforts. There was no holiday session of Queen City Pop Up due to the pandemic. Instead, the focus was on small business recovery efforts, which included the 2020 Shop Small All Season Downtown Dollars Giveaway program and on the Buy Black Buffalo Week initiative. New concepts for Queen City Pop Up are under consideration. Lisa Hicks then presented an update regarding Stand Up Buffalo, a multi-faceted pandemic response program intended to assist small City of Buffalo businesses through a targeted microenterprise grants and assistance. Funding for the microenterprise program originated from the federal CARES Act. The program also provides assistance to residents with eviction and foreclosure prevention, fair housing, and issues relating to rental and owner housing rehabilitation.
- 7.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Schmand presented an update regarding Buffalo Place, including a one-year extension for the Main Street grant program and the ongoing dialogue regarding the expansion of the Buffalo Place business improvement district. Mr. Mehaffy then briefed the Committee on a written update that was received from the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.
- 8.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Comerford, seconded by Mr. Finn and unanimously carried, the February 17, 2021 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary