

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

City Hall – Room 209

**August 18, 2021
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Trina Burruss
Michael Finn
Darby Fishkin
Amanda Mays
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Kimberley Minkel

Committee Members Absent:

James W. Comerford
Dottie Gallagher
Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: Tuona Batchelor, Erie County Department of Environment & Planning; Debra Chernoff, Manager of Planning, Buffalo Place; Alexis Florczak, Hurwitz & Fine, P.C.; Trevor Griffis, Special Project Manager, Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency; Art Hall, BUDC Senior Project Manager; Dan Leonard, Wendel; and Antonio Parker, Project Manager, BUDC.

- 1.0 Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was present.
- 2.0 Approval of Minutes of the June 16, 2021 Meeting** – The minutes of June 16, 2021 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Minkel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Burruss and unanimously carried (6-0-0).
- 3.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – Ellicott Node Concept Plan Review** – Ms. Merriweather introduced Dan Leonard of Wendel Companies for a presentation regarding the Ellicott Node Concept Plan. Mr. Leonard provided an overview of the planning process. Wendel described the plan making process and input received from various groups. A map of the Ellicott Street corridor was presented to identify the geographic scope of the plan, which includes Ellicott Street between Goodell and Swan streets. One focus of the plan is streetscape enhancements to the intersections within the project area. These are intended to complement other development opportunities and help create a vibrant urban neighborhood. Mr. Leonard outlined proposed intersection improvements within the project area, including recommendations for changes to the five-way intersection at Broadway and Ellicott. Mr. Leonard noted that cost estimates for these improvements will be included in the final document that is expected to be released in September. A question-and-answer session followed Mr. Leonard’s presentation, with Committee members offering positive and supportive feedback on the plan.
- 4.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – SJB Contract Amendment** – Ms. Merriweather presented the August 18, 2021 memorandum to the Committee regarding a proposed amendment to

the due diligence services agreement with SJB Services, Inc. for the Centennial Park project. She noted that the amendment was discussed with the BUDC Board at the July 27, 2021 meeting, but was not voted on due to the lack of a quorum. In the interim, BUDC asked SJB Services to proceed with the work in order to avoid delaying the project. Ms. Minkel made a motion to recommend that the Board of Directors: (i) ratify the authorization to proceed with necessary and timely due diligence work; (ii) approve an amendment to the agreement with SJB Services, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$92,500 for additional due diligence services in support of the Centennial Park project; and (iii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to take such actions as are necessary to implement the authorization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Finn and unanimously carried (6-0-0).

- 5.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – Edith Wilson and Linda Bodgan Garden & Tennis Fund of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan Award** – Ms. Merriweather reviewed the August 18, 2021 memorandum to the Committee regarding a \$300,000 grant award from the Edith Wilson and Linda Bodgan Garden and Tennis Fund of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. These grant funds will be used to support capital construction of Centennial Park, including seasonal plantings, irrigation and development of the Edith Wilson and Linda Bodgan Garden. Mr. Finn made a motion to recommend that the Board of Directors: (i) accept the \$300,000 grant award from the Edith Wilson and Linda Bodgan Garden and Tennis Fund of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan; and (ii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to take such actions as are necessary to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Ms. Burruss and unanimously carried (6-0-0).
- 6.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented a general update regarding the Centennial Park project. Antonio Parker has joined the team as Project Manager for Centennial Park and is also assisting with items relating to Race for Place. Work on Centennial Park is moving forward and remains on track.
- 7.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo’s Race for Place. Several teams that submitted proposals for the Mohawk Ramp RFP have been interviewed. Ms. Merriweather commented on the overall good quality of the proposals. BUDC is also working with the City of Buffalo on two CFA requests relating to the public realm plan for the waterfront and the first phase of the Fireman’s Park project. The entertainment district construction project continues to move forward.
- 8.0 BBRP Loan Program – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather reported on potential modifications to the BBRP loan program. Discussions are ongoing with the Office of Strategic Planning regarding how to best position the program to assist transformational projects that align with Race for Place goals.
- 9.0 Partner Updates** – Ms. Chernoff reported on the Farmers’ Market and the weekly Thursday & Main concert series at Fountain Plaza. She also provided updates on the status of projects utilizing Main Street Grant program funding and the Better Buffalo Fund.
- 10.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Ms. Minkel, seconded by Ms. Fishkin and unanimously carried, the August 18, 2021 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary