

**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  
May 10, 2016  
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

James W. Comerford  
Dottie Gallagher-Cohen  
Benjamin N. Oblatz  
Steven J. Stepniak

Committee Members Absent:

Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)  
Rev. Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

Peter M. Cammarata, President  
David A. Stebbins, Executive Vice President  
Brandye Merriweather, Vice President  
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

**Guests Present:** Debra Chernoff, Buffalo Place, Inc.; Michael Finn, City of Buffalo Department of Public Works; Rebecca Gandour, Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning; and Daniel Leonard, Buffalo Niagara Partnership.

**Roll Call:** The Secretary called the roll at 12:04 p.m. and a quorum of the Committee was determined to be present. Ms. Gallagher-Cohen served as chair of the meeting in Mr. Mehaffy's absence.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the April 12, 2016 Meeting** – The minutes of the April 12, 2016 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Stepniak made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Oblatz and unanimously carried.
  
- 2.0 BBRP Loan Program – Updates** – Ms. Merriweather reviewed the current process for approving BBRP loans, which requires the BUDC Board of Directors to make two separate approvals; one approval regarding the consistency of the project with BBRP goals and a second approval of the project loan after it has been underwritten by the NYBDC. Ms. Gallagher-Cohen noted that the current process has caused confusion, as some media outlets have incorrectly characterized the Board's making of a consistency determination with a loan approval. She also commented on the need to streamline the loan approval process. The Committee discussed potential modifications to the loan approval process. It was suggested that the Board should delegate to the Downtown Committee the authority to make consistency determinations, and that staff report to the Board all consistency determinations made by the Downtown Committee. Ms. Gallagher-Cohen noted that the Board would continue to retain final authority to approve BBRP loans.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Oblatz made a motion to recommend that the Board of Directors delegate to the Downtown Committee the authority to make BBRP loan program project

alignment/consistency determinations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Comerford and unanimously carried.

- 3.0 Downtown Strategic Properties** – Ms. Merriweather circulated to the Committee the BBRP property redevelopment dashboard, which identifies thirty-two properties in the downtown area that are potential adaptive reuse opportunities. The dashboard includes information relating to the ownership, square footage, number of floors, most recent sales data and assessed value of the properties. Ms. Merriweather noted that the dashboard was developed through the joint efforts of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership, the Mayor’s Office of Strategic Planning and BUDC. She indicated that BUDC will use the dashboard to focus its BBRP loan program marketing efforts. Mr. Leonard commented that the dashboard will serve as a tracking mechanism for potential projects. A brief discussion followed regarding adaptive reuse project funding through the BBRP loan program and the Better Buffalo Fund and opportunities for inventorying vacant downtown lots. Mr. Stebbins then presented an update regarding the 110 South Park Avenue property, the owner of which is presently in Housing Court for multiple code violations pertaining to the property.
- 4.0 Downtown Infrastructure – Project Updates** – Ms. Merriweather circulated to the Committee a downtown map identifying downtown infrastructure projects and their current status. Mr. Finn then reviewed the Genesee Street Gateway, Pearl Street, Niagara Street and Seneca Street projects. It was noted that funding is in place for all of the projects identified on the map.
- 5.0 Queen City Pop Up** – Ms. Merriweather reported on May 5<sup>th</sup> kick-off event for the Queen City Pop Up program at 517 Main Street. Four retailers are participating in this session of the program, which runs until the end of July.
- 6.0 Downtown Development Guide** – Ms. Merriweather presented a brief update regarding BUDC’s continued efforts to connect with out-of-town and M/WBE developers, including a recent inquiry with a developer located in Wisconsin.
- 7.0 Buffalo Place Updates** – Ms. Chernoff presented a brief update regarding Buffalo Place matters, including the Main Street grant program and the formation of a Buffalo Place access/infrastructure committee.
- 8.0 Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Updates** – There was no update for this item.
- 9.0 Buffalo Green Code & Brownfield Opportunity Areas** – There was no update for this item.
- 10.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Comerford, seconded by Mr. Stepniak and unanimously carried, the May 10, 2016 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary