

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

901 City Hall
Buffalo, New York 14202
November 20, 2019
12:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Trina Burruss
James W. Comerford
Michael Finn
Darby Fishkin
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)

Committee Members Absent:

Dottie Gallagher
Thomas R. Hersey, Jr.
Kimberley Minkel
Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

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

Guests Present: Rebecca Gandour, Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning; Daniel Leonard, Wendel Companies; Andrew R. Rabb, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Parks and Recreation; and Michael Schmand, Buffalo Place.

Roll Call: The roll of Committee members was called at 12:05 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was not present. Item 2.0 was presented first. Ms. Burruss joined the meeting during the presentation of item 2.0, at which time a quorum of the Committee was present.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the September 18, 2019 Meeting** – The minutes of the September 18, 2019 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Fishkin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Comerford and unanimously carried.
- 2.0 BBRP Outcomes & Opportunities – Technology Hub Presentation** – Ms. Merriweather introduced Keith Belanger and Sarah Tanbakuchi of M&T Bank. Mr. Belanger and Ms. Tanbakuchi presented an update to the Committee regarding the M&T technology hub that is under construction at Seneca One Tower. The technology hub will be home to up to 1,500 M&T employees. Mr. Belanger explained M&T's site selection process, which involved a request for proposals. M&T received eleven proposals, which were reviewed by M&T utilizing ten separate evaluative criteria. Ms. Tanbakuchi presented an overview of the proposed design for the space, which is intended to create a collaborative and creative workspace that is attractive to attracting and retaining technology talent. A question and answer session followed the presentation.
- 3.0 Ellicott Node Concept Plan – Current Conditions Analysis** – Daniel Leonard of the Wendel Companies presented an update regarding the Ellicott Node Concept Plan. The principal purpose of

the node plan is to focus resources on a targeted area of downtown to create a neighborhood that is attractive to current and future residents seeking an urban live/work/play environment. Stakeholder meetings are underway and feedback is being gathered for the development of the plan. Mr. Leonard noted that there is a significant amount of parking and vacant lots between Goodell and Swan streets that could be utilized for infill development projects. He stated that the next step is to obtain feedback from the City.

- 4.0 **Ralph Wilson Centennial Park – MVVA Contract Amendment** – Mr. Stebbins circulated the October 15, 2019 letter from Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Inc. (MVVA) regarding a proposed amendment to the schematic design contract. Mr. Stebbins explained that the project design has evolved to include more complex shoreline treatments and other features that require more extensive work and investigation by MVVA and its subconsultants. The cost of this additional work is \$250,000. In addition, the proposed amendment includes \$250,000 in funding for the pedestrian bridge design work. BUDC will pay for this work with funds from the second Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation grant. Mr. Comerford made a motion to recommend that the Board of Directors approve an increase in the schematic design contract with MVVA in the amount of \$500,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fishkin and unanimously carried.

- 5.0 **Ralph Wilson Centennial Park – Project Management Contract** – Mr. Stebbins presented his November 20, 2019 memorandum to the Committee regarding the retention of a consultant to provide project management services for the design and construction phases of the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Centennial Park Project. Mr. Stebbins explained the procurement process, which included a request for proposals that was issued on August 19, 2019. Seven firms submitted proposals, and a review team comprised of representatives from BUDC, the City of Buffalo and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation evaluated the proposals and selected two firms for interviews. The consensus of the review team was to recommend awarding the work to Gardiner & Theobald Inc. (G&T). The estimated cost for the initial 25 month engagement is \$884,000 and will be paid with funding from the first grant agreement with the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation. Ms. Fishkin made a motion to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the selection of Gardiner & Theobald Inc. as project manager for the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Centennial Park Project and approve an initial design-phase contract through December 2021 for a total cost of \$884,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Burruss and unanimously carried.

- 6.0 **Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park Update** – Mr. Stebbins presented a brief update regarding the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park project. The schematic design phase of the project is expected to be complete by the end of the calendar year. The Army Corps of Engineers is rebuilding the seawall in front of the water treatment facility. Mr. Stebbins also noted that work is underway on a transportation plan for the park.

- 7.0 **Waterfront Development – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather reported on the first meeting of the waterfront development coordination committee. This committee is comprised of all of the various waterfront development stakeholders. The committee will meet quarterly, with the second meeting scheduled for January.

- 8.0 **Downtown Infrastructure Overview** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding downtown infrastructure matters. A stakeholders meeting with the Chippewa Alliance took place in late October regarding the infrastructure project for the Chippewa Street entertainment district. Discussion continue regarding the possible expansion of the Buffalo Place business improvement district to Chippewa Street.

- 9.0 **BBRP Loan Program – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather circulated and reviewed with the Committee the November 20, 2019 BBRP Loan Status Report. She also reported on a proposal for BBRP loan funding received from a Canadian food processing company. Further due diligence is needed to determine whether the project is eligible for funding.

- 10.0 Queen City Pop Up** – Ms. Merriweather reported that the holiday session of the Queen City Pop Up program kicked off on November 15th at the Market Arcade. Five retailers are participating in this session, including Bearded Buffalo, The Black Bohemian, Blessings of the Bling, Buffalo Women’s Consortium, and City of Light Publishing. The holiday session runs through December 31st.
- 11.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Schmand presented a brief report regarding Buffalo Place matters, including Main Street grant funding and an update to the Buffalo Place parking access study. He also noted that Rotary Rink will open for skating on November 29th, and that the tree-lighting ceremony will take place on December 7th.
- 12.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Comerford, seconded by Ms. Fishkin and unanimously carried, the November 20, 2019 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary