



SHAKER HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Revitalization & Development Committee Minutes
Via Zoom Due to COVID-19
Public Health Emergency
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Members Present: Tres Roeder, Chair, Council Member
Nancy R. Moore, Council Member
Rob Zimmerman, Council Member
Eric Bevilacqua, Committee Member
Donna McIntyre Whyte, Committee Member
Benjamin Woodcock, Committee Member
Kamla Lewis, Director of Neighborhood Revitalization
Laura Englehart, Director of Economic Development
Kyle Krewson, Director of Building & Housing
Colin Compton, Neighborhood & Housing Specialist

Others Present: Jeri Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer
Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning

The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Tres Roeder at 6:00 p.m.

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Approval of the April 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Council Member Ms. Nancy R. Moore and seconded by Committee Member Ms. Donna McIntyre Whyte that the minutes from April 14, 2021 be approved as recorded. The motion passed.

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3745 Lot Split & Acquisition

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the May 12th Neighborhood Revitalization and Development committee meeting. We have four items on the agenda tonight. The first is the approval of the minutes review and approval of the minutes from our last meeting, which was April 14th.

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Are there any comments on the minutes from that meeting ³ ~~move~~ approval, moved by Council Member Moore, seconded by Dr. White, all those in favor of approving the minutes say aye, those opposed, any abstentions, motion carries. The second item on the agenda is a property acquisition and it's a split between two neighbors.

Director Kamla Lewis:

We have before us an application to acquire a city owned, vacant lot, 3745 Pennington Road. As you know, most of the side lot acquisitions don't come to this committee. They only come before you if there are splits or have some other complicating factors; that's the reason this is coming to you tonight. We have two applicants who are going to split the lot if the city approves this application: Ms. Carmela Williams and Ms. Patricia Jones Blessman. Ms. Williams lives at the corner of Scottsdale and Pennington, that's why her address is on Scottsdale, and Ms. Jones Blessman lives at 3741 Pennington Road. They would split the lot, approximately two thirds to Ms. Williams and a third to Ms. Jones Blessman. It has been discussed with the planning Department to make sure that they understand how this would work, and there are no issues there.

Director Kamla Lewis:

The applicants both meet all the qualifications. They are not in foreclosure, are current in their property taxes, they have no criminal nuisance activity complaints and no outstanding housing or zoning code violations. Staff feels this would be an improvement over the city retaining this property and having the costs associated with maintaining it. The city came into ownership of this property when it was forfeited to the state in 2012. It was acquired by the city in 2015. The house that was previously on the property was demolished in 2017. We are requesting that the committee support this recommendation so that it can go on to Council for final approval.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

I wanted to ask so we can have it as a matter of record since Ms. Williams, of course, as a member of council as well. Is there anything differently that we need to do or procedurally that we would need to be aware of having a member of council applying for this application?

Director Kamla Lewis:

No, I did check with our Law Department to make sure and Ms. Williams herself spoke to the Law Department to make sure of any conflict of interest issues. Obviously when it comes to Council itself she will have to abstain, but for this committee's purposes, no.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Thank you Director Lewis, questions? If there are no questions, I'd entertain a motion.

Donna Whyte, Cmte. Member:

So moved.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Moved by Dr. Whyte. Is there a second? I heard Mr. Bevilacqua first, moved by Dr. White seconded by Mr. Bevilacqua. All those in favor of the motion, say aye. Those opposed. I know Mr. Woodcock

had his hand up as well for saying aye. Any abstentions? Very good motion carries. Thank you Director Lewis.

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VAD Owners Rep Phase 2

Tres Roeder, Chair:

The next item of business has to do with the apartments at the Farnsleigh district, the new construction that's happening there and an owner's rep. Director Englehart are you presenting this?

Director Laura Englehart:

I'm here and as is Director Kyle Krewson, Director of the Building Department and Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning, we're jointly bringing a request to you tonight, a multi-department, and you'll soon find out why in the summary. As you can see in the memo provided to you tonight, RMS Investment Corporation or RMS, is the Shaker based developer and owner of the Van Aken District. We all know how successful the phase one construction and now open has become, and they are now moving into phase two to develop a new apartment building at the corner of Van Aken and Farnsleigh Road on the city owned lot on Farnsleigh. We call it the Farnsleigh lot. The project itself has proposed to be about 229 apartments as currently designed, it's in the midst of the concept design phase, going through the planning review process right now, and due to the size and scope of what is proposed for the second phase of development, multiple departments across the city have come together and we are recommending that the city hire an owner's representative to help, on behalf of the city, manage pre-construction and construction phases of the project. The coordination and collaboration that's required among building, planning, fire, engineering, public works, the developer, it's pretty complex. Then on the development side, there's developer architect, contractor, subcontractors and the coordination among all of those parties is absolutely critical to a successful project, to avoid cost and delay, and to keep things running on schedule. For those reasons, we are seeking a recommendation from this Committee tonight to Council to enter into a contract for owner's rep services with Metro Consulting for this phase two of Van Aken Development at a total contract price, not to exceed \$82,500. This funding is available in the operating budget of the Economic Development Department for 2021.

Director Laura Englehart:

The principal of Metro Consulting is Don France, he's a Shaker resident. He also served as the owner's rep for the city for phase one. He's a registered architect and has worked for private developers for much of his career doing project management and his ability to facilitate and provide very proactive problem solving for us in phase one really helped make that a smooth process and made it a successful pre-construction and construction project which is now of course successfully completed. We initially hired Mr. France as the owner's rep through a very robust RFP process for phase one. At that time he was selected from among eight firms that submitted proposals, three of which were interviewed by multiple departments. We are not recommending a new RFP process right now because of how thorough and competitive that process was and because of the advantages of retaining the same representation in the continued process with phase two of the same large mixed use development. Services that would be included under this contract would include pre-construction, which is due diligence, plan review, permitting, reporting, and monitoring. Then the construction phase as well, documenting, approvals, maintaining the construction schedule and

managing the process, assisting in dispute resolution, you can see a full list in the memo that we provided to you tonight.

Director Laura Englehart:

I'm happy to answer any questions about the contract itself, the architect, the owner's rep that we are recommending, but the request in front of you tonight is for recommendation to Council to approve a contract with Metro Consulting, not to exceed \$82,500.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Thank you Director Englehart, Director Braverman or Krewson would you like to add anything? No, okay. And also highlighting this Director Englehart mentioned, and as is outlined in the memo here, that there was a rigorous RFP process in the first phase, this is what we do sometimes as long as there's an RFP process, then sometimes it makes sense to carry on with the same individual or firm. Questions or comments on this recommendation.

Nancy Moore, Council Member:

Thank you. It says in the memo that Mr. France will bill a city only for time worked and he will charge the same amount of hourly rate for services as he did in phase one. Did he come in under the estimated number of hours in phase one, and is there a chance that that would also be the case in this phase?

Director Laura Englehart:

Thank you for the question. Yes, he will continue under the same hourly rate as charged in phase one and not to exceed contract costs, it was structured very similarly, exactly the same in phase one. And we closed out phase one about five or \$6,000 under budget.

Rob Zimmerman, Council Member:

Director Englehart, out of curiosity is the primary role here really an augmentation of city staff? So basically acting like an in-house consultant that can coordinate between departments and then also with RMS? I'm assuming and this was just a question of process. Outside of the normal approval is the city going to be intimately involved in the actual development of the tower besides the normal approvals review process? What else will he be doing? It seems like that's my understanding, but I just wanted to confirm,

Director Joyce Braverman:

I can start on that and explain a little bit how it happened in the first phase. So we are partners on this project because the city owns the land currently. We envisioned this project with RMS. We are vested in making sure that it's successful. That owner's rep does work with different departments with coordinating. It is a very large building, one that the city does not have expertise in building or inspecting or reviewing. Don will help us with his knowledge of that type of building, a high rise. He will augment or advise the building department inspectors, which Director Krewson can talk about. And he will also work between as a liaison between RMS and their construction company and the city departments.

Director Kyle Krewson:

If I could just had further to that, I think your assessment is absolutely correct is essentially to augment our abilities and to make sure that we're not the ones that's holding the project up, he's going to keep us on task on schedule. There's no one on our staff has experience with out of the ground by Rice Construction. Some of us, myself included have worked on projects, renovations to high rise construction, brand new high rise construction on the ground is something that's unique to us. It's absolutely critical that we have another party to help, who's going to counter some of these gotchas, some of these things on these code issues with high rise construction that's very unique. Already in some preliminary discussions and conversations with him he's us pointed in the right direction. I think it's absolutely a benefit to the city and the product as a whole to ensure its success. So your assessment is correct.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Other questions? Do we have a motion?

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Council member Moore so moves. Is there a second? Mr. Bevilacqua. Moved by Council member Moore seconded by Mr. Bevilacqua. All of those in favor, say, aye, those opposed, abstentions, very good motion carries. Thank you.

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Update to NRD on Neighborhood Engagement Planning Process

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Our fourth and final order of business is an update from Mr. Compton on neighborhood engagement, on the neighborhood engagement planning process. Several of us on this committee, Dr. Whyte, who's with us tonight, were part of a recent conversation which really went very well. It was a nice leveling of any sort of power dynamics and open conversation amongst neighbors and some of the members of this committee and a few others. Mr. Compton even invited us to get comfortable in these meetings, to sit on the sofa or the floor. Share with us some more about what's happened and what the next steps might look like.

Colin Compton:

Thank you Councilman Roeder, Laura is going to share some slides. Good evening everyone. I'm going to give you a very brief update on the neighborhood engagement planning process that is underway this year. There is no action, no vote needed. I simply wanted to provide an update to the entire Committee to touch on where we are now and how I may, or probably will, invite your participation in the near future. My presentation is just four slides. As you'll remember, our scope of work for community network building with Kay Coaching this year includes both maintaining the work and maintaining the network through 2021, and also to establish a longer term plan for success and sustainability of community network building work in Shaker. In January I touched on how thus far we've been operating with this work largely year to year without a longer-term plan for where it's going and that's presented many difficulties and instabilities.

So what this process is this year is first and foremost about sustainability and success of the work in Moreland. Second, also about exploring the how's, the if's, the when's, the why's of why we might expand the work outside of Moreland. As a reminder community network building is what we're talking about tonight. That's all about connecting people to each other and to opportunities. It's doing it in a way that feels safe, fun, and productive. It starts with the residents, it doesn't start with a project or a need, and includes things like meeting and getting to know residents, building relationships with, and among them connecting residents to each other and building and tapping into leadership skills. It's all about focusing on inclusion and equity over professional expertise or social services when it comes to addressing issues or solutions. Tonight I'm going to touch on: Why are we doing this? How are we approaching it? Where we are right now? And lastly, of course, how I may or will invite you into the process.

Colin Compton:

Number one, why are we doing this? We are planning throughout this year for future success of community network building and Shaker by identifying and documenting all the ways that this work is providing value and getting support citywide, by establishing a longer-term plan for the work and using what we identify to do that in order to best ensure its sustainability in Moreland. Lastly, assessing when, how, if and why the work gets expanded beyond Moreland, and that includes what longer term support would be needed for that expansion and for that work. So how are we approaching this? We are approaching this as a phased and highly inclusive process. It began with establishing monthly leadership sessions with the Moreland residents and those have continued. We had our May session last night, at this point in the process we are now starting to bring in city staff and committee members, and eventually we'll grow to include institutional and non-profit partners throughout the city in this process.

We're intentionally only planning about six weeks in advance at any given time. This is so we can pivot based on what we're hearing, based on the opportunities that present themselves. We don't want to be hamstrung by a rigid process. Lastly, we're involving as many people as possible in this due to our beliefs that this work has broad and significant impacts on - and is impacted by - many departments and other institutions and we need to delve into those impacts, and because of our belief that more voices and ideas will improve the process, improve the relationships and of course improve the final product.

So where are we now? As I mentioned, the monthly leadership sessions have continued with the Moreland residents. We've also begun internal conversations with department directors to get them to start thinking about their involvement in this work. And we're going to be meeting, continuing to meet with them, to talk about things like how community network building has impacted their department and their work, what they might want to get out of this year long planning process and how they might want to be involved in this work in future. Lastly, and most recently, we've commenced, as Councilman Roeder alluded to, a series of conversations between NRD members and the Moreland residents. And that leads me to of course, how I may or will invite your participation. So these NRD steward conversations commenced last week, we had a conversation around the purpose of this work and these conversations are designed to level power dynamics between official city members and the Moreland network stewards, to allow candid, open

conversations about the work and to allow participation by city representatives in new and different ways.

We'll continue these throughout the year in different groupings. What I want to touch on here is in the effort to create an informal, candid conversation space, we're doing this outside of these NRD monthly meetings. As Councilman Roeder mentioned, it's in order to level the power dynamics and to create a space that best facilitates the conversation we're trying to have. We can't have everyone present at once but can continue these throughout the year. We're going to mix up the groups of committee members, council members, and Moreland network members that are present. You will probably hear from me with an invitation. Additionally, please contact me if you have interest in these, specifically we had a great conversation last week around purpose and knowing that not everyone could be there, we are considering repeating that conversation with a different group of folks. Again, let me know if you are interested. And that's where we are in the process. I'm really excited about how it's rolled out. I'm really excited how it's picked up steam. We're going to talk lots more about this throughout the year. We're going to try new things, but I wanted to provide this update to the entire Committee and I'll be coming back to do so periodically. And with that, I'm happy to field any questions based on what I talked about tonight.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Thank you, Mr. Compton for that update to Committee members. When you get that note from Mr. Compton I highly encourage you to be a part of the process. Of the folks who are with us tonight who are also part of that meeting, I see Dr. Whyte was part of that discussion. Dr. Whyte, would you like to comment about your experience with that conversation we had last week?

Donna Whyte, Committee Member:”

Yes, it was very fulfilling and it felt as though we were moving forward, it was not a “we” and “they” conversation. It was us having the same reason for being there and participating. And I'm sure that everybody who was there looks forward to other opportunities and expanded opportunities for, as we say, the city to come and communicate with Moreland. One of the things that I shared, I think before we had our meeting last Tuesday or Wednesday, because we had a smaller meeting to prepare, I said people should come to Moreland. We live in Shaker Heights but we don't necessarily know each other's communities. So some things that people may think may or may not be accurate. I think because there are more people out and about because of the weather, it's very easy to get a feel for the community during this time. I like that there is not an answer at the end. We don't know what is going to, how this is going to unfold. I think that that's one of the beauties of this process. Thank for initiating this with the community.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Directors Englehart and Lewis, you were also part of the conversation. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Director Laura Englehart:

I appreciate the opportunity to weigh in as well. I think what was very exciting for me as a city staff member, entering a new space that Colin crafted so well to make sure it was comfortable for everyone, is starting with why are we here? What is the purpose of this? Finding the common ground that everybody shared around the answer to that question and knowing your neighbors and

belonging and being stronger together, and being able to lean on one another and lean on your neighbors for support. It was a great conversation around values that we all share collectively.

Director Kamla Lewis:

The only thing I would add is this isn't a process that you can understand in theory, you can only do it by participating and I've stressed that from the outset. No matter how many times you hear Colin or anybody else talk about this, you won't get it until you actually are part of it. I do encourage you all to take advantage of any opportunities.

Donna Whyte, Cmte. Member:

I say something that's part of the Moreland neighborhood network. I'm going to take the liberty to invite everyone, to see us in action. The second Sunday of every month, I host a program that's called Witness To History, and it's all part of our networking. It emerged from our conversations with neighbors, where I have my Oprah moment and I interview one of our neighbors. It's an hour long program, Colin can share the zoom, we've done it on zoom since last summer. This Sunday at six o'clock, will be Witness To History. I'll have as my guests Larry and Brenda Ford who happened to live a couple of doors from me.

It's been a wonderful opportunity and Kamla has been including this in Moreland Rising. The recordings are also housed at Shaker library. As we think of how it is that people in the future may want to know more about the community and the people who live there, we have this opportunity at this particular point, not that we knew this would happen particularly on zoom that we are able to preserve these stories for everyone to be able to participate. You can be there live because it's Sunday at six o'clock. I thought I'd share that with you so you can see how it is that some of the things that we do in our network really come to life. Thank you.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Thank you for that invitation. I may have just cut you off Mr. Compton, are you sending the committee the link?

Colin Compton:

I'll send out the zoom link tomorrow.

Director Kamla Lewis:

Along those lines, tomorrow I will be the keynote speaker for the Michigan Historic Preservation Network's annual conference. I'll be talking about the role that oral history has played from the very beginning of the Moreland Rising project and fast forward five years Dr. Whyte is doing the Witness To History program. I did want you to let you know you're getting a shout out tomorrow.

Tres Roeder, Chair:

Thank you Director Lewis, other thoughts? Very good. That completes our agenda for the evening. Thank you everyone for your time. We'll see you at the next meeting. Goodnight everybody. Thank you.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m. The next meeting will be June 9, 2021.



Council Member Tres Roeder, Chair
Neighborhood Revitalization & Development Committee