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WEST TAMPA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

August 20, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Hillsborough Education Foundation, TECO Hall, 2306 N. Howard Avenue, Tampa, FL 33607

Meeting Called to Order by Joseph Robinson, CAC Chair at 5:33 p.m. Roll call was taken. ***There was a motion (Fenton/Maloney) to approve the agenda. The vote was passed unanimously.***

CAC Member	At-Large or Ex-Officio Seat	CAC Term	Present or Absent
Joseph Robinson, Chair	West Tampa Community Development Corp.	1/2025	P
Carlos Ramirez, Vice Chair	North Hyde Park Alliance	1/2025	P
Michael Braccia	At Large	6/2025	P
Sandra Sanchez	At Large	6/2025	P
Janice Williams	At Large	6/2025	P
Bobby Wilson	Old West Tampa Neighborhood Association and Crimewatch	1/2025	P
Jeanette LaRussa Fenton	West Tampa Chamber of Commerce	3/2026	A
Cynthia Maloney	North Hyde Park Civic Association	9/2027	P
Heem Baisden	West Tampa Alliance	1/2024	A
Delphine Jones	West Riverfront Crime Watch Group	1/2025	P
Tina Young	Project Link Inc.	1/2024	A
Vacant	Greater West Tampa Community Council		
David Iloyna	Tampa Housing Authority	7/2028	TBA

Staff present: Brenda Thrower, Nick Bennett, Cory Robinson, Chris Ullian, Tony Monk

Sign In Sheet: Steven Green, John Deluito

Public Comments: Chair Robinson asked for public comments and there were none.

Approval of July 23, 2024, CAC Meeting Minutes –Chair Robinson asked for approval of the minutes. ***There was a motion (Braccia/Ramirez) to approve the minutes. The vote was unanimously approved.***

Community Policing Updates

Tampa Police Department- Lieutenant Carlos Houston reported on crime stats and activities in the West Tampa area. Robinson asked about vacant property of Bay Brewery at 2106 Main Street requesting a wet zoning to be a package store.



Special Presentations

- a. **Rey Park Concept Design Update:** Angel Wood Mark from Phinazee Group presented the updated design plan to the CAC to include the new building in the park, basketball court, fitness center, lawn, walking trail, play equipment and lots of shade with natural canopy. Design team member Ralph Schuler described the floor plan for the new recreation building. There was lengthy discussion about the park, layout and amenities. Williams inquired about the mural on the building and Wood-Mark said that art will be captured in another location in the design. Jones asked about the building floor plan and the location of the restrooms. Also, will there be a place for kids and their computers? Fenton asked about the canopy for fitness area and courtyard and will there be a shade structure to accommodate inclement weather and leaves. Sanchez was concerned about the main entrance of the building on Howard since it's a busy road and felt that would be dangerous. The Palmetto drop off would be preferred and is it 30' from stop sign. She also asked about the water fountain outside and sunshades. The park needs to be usable with Florida being so hot. Maloney agrees with Sanchez about the drop off on Howard being not sensible. She inquired about how many square feet is the building? The consultant said the building will have 5,000 square feet of interior space. Robinson mentioned the importance of the mural and would like to see it replicated. The artist is Carl Cowden, and he is still actively painting today. Last month, the CAC learned that he was the selected artist for Rosa's Hug mural. He also agreed about moving the main entrance of the building to Palmetto cause Howard is too dangerous. He added that a decorative fence around the park along with security will be needed to deter vagrancy. In terms of the trees, he recommended new trees and removing the old ones. Ramirez inquired about community survey results and meeting with City. Monk said that the city tried to balance the community needs expressed. The building location provides eyes on the street and doesn't turn its back to Howard. There are lots of windows looking over the park which allows for better engagement and less problems. Plan for where you want to be, not from where you are. The flex space allows greater surveillance too. It's an exciting project but concerned about the budget. Fenton said it needs to have a beautiful entrance and presence on Howard. For lawn, play area for kids and it doesn't have to be 100% shaded. Jones said pickleball is not important for kids so no need to include it. Maloney likes fences and supports keeping the trees. Overall, there was consensus to move forward with the design considering the comments best they can.
- b. **Freemont Linear Park "Opening of Cross Streets" Survey Results** – Nick Bennett presented the survey results that was conducted from June 1-August 9 with over 150 received. He walked through each of the 6 questions and most of the responses were favorable towards reopening Pine, Walnut, Cherry and Palmetto streets at Freemont. ***There was a motion (Wilson//Ramirez) to support the opening of the four cross streets (Palmetto, Cherry, Walnut, and Pine) based on the survey results. The vote passed 8-1 with Maloney voting no.*** Bennett said that there is some funding earmarked for Freemont Linear Park in the budget now but will need to get a current estimate for opening the streets. There was discussion about connectivity in West Tampa and maintaining safe residential streets. Sanchez asked if there were any old plans when the streets were open. She said she was against the opening but is supporting the community survey results. ***There was a motion (Sanchez/Wilcon) to ask city staff (Mobility and/or Planning) to put in a plan to open streets. The vote was unanimously approved.***



Staff Reports

- a. **Projects Team** – There were several comments about the monthly report last month and Bennett fielded questions. Here was a summary:
 - a. Rey Park and Salcines Park – add more information on ADA improvements, breakdown of cost per park for enhanced playground equipment
 - b. Spruce Street property – There was a motion (Braccia/Ramirez) for update on this property acquired by the CRA. The vote was unanimously approved. They requested Real Estate to attend the next meeting.
 - c. Community Policing innovation – There was a motion (Fenton/Braccia) to explore a community policing innovation program. The vote was unanimously approved.
 - d. Special Project Requests – Riverwalk on list but we have not had presentation.
 - e. Planning Potential Main Street Ultimate Design Project – would like status on this.
 - f. Public Art – why is utility box public art the priority?
 - g. Alleyway study – expand the scope with Kimley Horn to include business outreach.
 - h. Alley Cleaning – provide status report at next meeting on what is completed.
 - i. Historic Preservation Cultural Assets – update on the future study
- b. **Grants Team**
 - a. The current commercial grants are listed on the tracker. If not on the list, the grant has been completed and closed out.
- c. **Housing Program**
 - a. The Housing Grants programs were opened last week at the East Tampa office and over 80 people showed up to get applications. There will be more housing open houses and two will be held in West Tampa. Robinson clarified that housing grant monies stay within each CRA so there is a separate budget for West Tampa. Need to get word out on future open houses. Braccia asked about code enforcement and requested that Code be present during housing presentations.

Unfinished Business

- a. **CAC Member Terms**- Thrower shared the status of the active CAC members and terms, along with the CAC Policy. There was a question about policy being “retroactive” and staff will inquire. Members whose terms are up will need to reapply for their seat, if eligible.

New Business

- a. **Tree replacement program**- There was a motion (Sanchez/Maloney) to explore a program to replace trees from Main Street to Columbus on Howard Ave. Vote was unanimously approved.
- b. **West Tampa Overlay District** – meeting on September 26
- c. **FRA Conference, October 23-25, 2024** – Per CAC Policy, Chair Robinson will be attending and representing CAC.

Announcements

- a. Next CRA Board Meeting: September 12, 2024, at 9 a.m., Tampa City Hall
- b. Next CAC Meeting: September 17, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., Hillsborough Education Foundation

Adjournment at 9:00 p.m.

