Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency
306 East Jackson Street 2N
Tampa, Florida 33602
(813) 274-8325
tampa.gov/CRAs

WEST TAMPA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
June 18, 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 5:31 p.m. Roll call was taken.

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

Staff present: Brenda Thrower, Melisa Martinez, Nick Bennett, Chris Ullian

Sign In Sheet: Jack Smith, Mark Anthony Little, Andrea White, Rhonda Villamia.

Public Comments: Chair Robinson opened the meeting to public comments. Three speakers: Omar Garcia, Mark Anthony Little and Michael Randolph.

Approval of May 21, 2024, CAC Meeting Minutes – Maloney said she voted no to the motion regarding CRA property acquisition and the record was changed to reflect a 9-1 vote. ***There was a motion (Maloney/Fenton) to approve the minutes with that change. The vote was unanimously approved.***

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Community Policing Updates

Tampa Police Department- Lieutenant Carlos Houston reported crime stat and addressed the concern by Mr. Omar Garcia regarding the recent shooting near his property. TPD has a suspect but could not disclose anything further since it is an active investigation. He thanked Garcia for providing video surveillance footage that is assisting the investigation. Houston presented the crime stats and reported that crime is up for auto burglaries mainly since owners are leaving doors unlocked. There is also theft occurring from construction vehicles and pawned out. Braccia asked if crime is up due to the youths being out of school and not so much but more gatherings. Young asked about an incident last night with a runaway juvenile. Robinson asked about the cameras and if working ok. He also mentioned the survey underway regarding opening of the cross streets along Fremont. Those streets have been closed since the 1980's and TPD has said opening the streets would be helpful.

Code Enforcement: The report was received. Staff will request Code staff to attend next month.

Special Presentations

a. **CRA Housing Programs:** Be Parks, Community Development Coordinator was welcomed by the CAC. She introduced herself and her new role overseeing the CRA housing programs. She presented a power point presentation for the new housing programs along with the reorganization and goals of the department. She is working closely with City Housing and Community Development and office is located at the Hanna Street City Center. The timeline for launch of the new housing programs on August 1, 2024. She will be the point person and is actively hiring additional staff to support the CRA. They will be doing community outreach for the programs. Robinson asked what's the difference between City Housing and CRA programs. She replied that the CRA is funding homeowner improvements, down payment assistance and creation of new residential units. The housing programs have been consolidated from 7 programs to 1) Housing Rehab and Renovation Program and 2) Down Payment Assistance. The communication strategy will include updating the CAC. Website, host sessions and recruit participants. The housing programs will be available to all CRAs too. Robinson asked if a house is in a commercial zoning district, can it go through the commercial grant program? There were several questions about how each program works and the eligibility. Robinson would like to see the housing program policies. It was clarified that tenants can apply with a signed owner's affidavit. AMI will be considered for the tenant, not property owner. Applications are not being accepted until August 1. The CRA Board will be providing final approval at the July 25 Board meeting. The presentation today will be available for the CAC and the public to view.

b. **Review of Jesus Nino list** – Robinson had requested that time be spent going through the list prepared by former CRA manager Jesus Nino to make sure all items were discussed and triaged. A new grant program tracking program was distributed along with the project team report and were compared to the list. The CAC went through each item to make sure that they were included on either of these lists and to update any item that was outdated or completed. The task was completed and the old list retired. Moving forward, the project team report and grant program reports will be used.

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Staff Reports

a. **Projects Team**
Nick Bennett presented the monthly projects list and provided a status of several of the pertinent projects. The Fremont Linear Park Street opening of the streets survey is active and the mailer was sent out to all West Tampa CRA property owners and tenants within the West Tampa CRA boundary. Thrower provided a copy of the mailer to each CAC member and shared that recipients could respond to the question on the mailer and drop it off to the mailbox in the lobby at the receptionist desk. She also said that the mailer is in Spanish and English as requested. There is an online version too. The survey deadline is July 31, 2024, and staff will provide a report of the findings at the August 20 meeting.

b. **Community Redevelopment Department Staffing Update –** Thrower mentioned the status of departmental vacancies. Deputy Administrator, Alis Drumgo and CRA Director, Erica Moody have both submitted their resignations and they will be leaving in July. Fenton asked for a follow up of the CAC motion made at the April 23, 2024, meeting, and inquired if it has been transmitted to the CRA Board. Thrower said she shared it with Director Moody. Fenton recommended that CAC Chair Robinson go ahead and send an email/letter to the CRA Board, Mayor, and Chief of Staff to request more staff and attach the April minutes that included the following motion:

WTCAC April 23, 2024- ***There was a motion (Fenton/Ramirez) to request City administration and the CRA Board to consider increasing the CRA staffing levels to better meet the needs of the West Tampa CRA. The vote was unanimously approved.***

New Business

a. West River Riverwalk Project: Several CAC members reported being approached about this project and recommended that one CAC member represent the WTCAC**.** ***There was a motion (Fenton/Maloney) to select Carlos Ramirez to serve as the West Tampa CAC representative for this project. Vote was unanimously approved.***

b. New Arts and Culture Coordinator, Cory Robinson, will be attending next month's meeting.

Announcements

a. The West Tampa Overlay District Community Meeting is this Thursday, June 20 at 6 pm at Julian B. Lane Park.
b. Next CRA Board Meeting: July 25, 2024, at 9 a.m., Tampa City Hall
c. Next CAC Meeting: July 23, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., Hillsborough Education Foundation

Adjournment at 8:20 p.m.