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

WEST TAMPA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary

April 23, 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 5:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

CAC Member	At-Large or Ex-Officio Seat	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	P
Delphine Jones	West Riverfront Crime Watch Group	2025	A
Tina Young	Project Link Inc.	2024	A
Vacant	Greater West Tampa Community Council		
Vacant	Tampa Housing Authority		

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

Sign In Sheet: David Hunter, Jack Smith, Edith Randolph, and Sandra Niles

Opening Comments: Chair Robinson asked if there are any changes to the agenda. ***A motion was made to approve the day's agenda (Fenton/Jones) and approved unanimously.***

Public Comments: Chair Robinson opened the meeting to public comments. David Hunter with the City's Development and Growth Management Department introduced himself to the CAC and said that he will be working on the updates to the West Tampa Overlay District. He announced that a community meeting will be held in June, and he has already begun reaching out to the neighborhood groups. He received the CAC member emails today from Ms. Thrower so he will add them to the distribution list. There were no other speakers for public comment and no virtual ones.

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Approval of March 26, 2024, CAC Meeting Minutes – ***There was a motion (Fenton/Jones) to approve the minutes with no changes. The vote was unanimously approved.***

Community Policing Updates

Tampa Police Department- None

Code Enforcement: None

Presentations

A. **Main Street Quick Build Signing and Pavement Plans**

Melisa Martinez, CRA Senior Projects Supervisor, introduced her team members, Nick Bennett, and Bryce Fehringer. Fehringer recently joined the projects team as an urban planner and will be working on the plans and studies across all CRAs. Bennett presented the Quick Build Tampa Moves project showing the plans along Main Street between Armenia and Delaware. This project is consistent with the West Tampa CRA Community Redevelopment Plan, West Tampa Strategic Action Plan, Tampa Moves Mobility Plan, Tampa Vision Zero Action Plan and Main Street Commercial District Plans. Plans were included in the packet and large versions were distributed to CAC members for discussion and feedback. The estimate to fund this portion of the project is $300K. Fenton asked why the City is not funding this project since it's a citywide initiative. Ramirez said although it is citywide, the West Tampa CRA can help fund this if they would like to see the project implemented sooner. There were questions about the proposed new on street parking spaces, particularly size and placement. The side streets are active and there may be blind spots for cars pulling out onto Main Street. Robinson complimented staff on providing large paper copies of the plans. He is concerned about solid waste service with the parking. Braccia is also concerned about commerce and service issues stating he is an advocate for businesses and wants city coordination. Ramirez reminded that committee that this project is the precursor to a bigger project down the road. Fenton was concerned about setting a precedent with the city but understands wanting to speed the project up. ***There was a motion (Ramirez/Wilson) to recommend the $300K to move forward with this project. The vote was passed unanimously.***

Staff Reports

a. Projects Team Report: Nick Bennett referenced the Capital Projects report provided in the CAC agenda packet. Bennett said both Rey Park and Salcines Park were presented last month, and the consultant is working on revisions to those plans. The reappropriation of funds for Rey Park will be moving forward to the CRA Board for approval. Bryce Fehringer provided update on 2101 W. Main Street, known as Freedom Park. A comp plan amendment is being prepared to be filed in May with the Hillsborough County City County Planning Commission to change the land use of that property from CMU35 to Recreation/Open Space so that the property can be developed for this purpose. The Planning Commission public hearing will take place on August 12, followed by a City Council hearing in September. Braccia asked if the new land use is a downgrade for the property. Robinson said that the city needs to protect the property for the long term and needs to establish property land use and zoning. The property is currently secured with a fence and environmental testing is needed. Wilson

asked when the fence can come down and can grass be installed so not dirt. Martinez said that she can include grass in the RFP. Maloney inquired about the size of the park and it's about .22 acres. Braccia would like to see parallel efforts with the land use and zoning along with design and development. Ramirez said we should keep good communications since it's a high- profile piece of property.

There was also an update on Freemont Linear Park and whether or not to open the cross streets of Walnut, Pine, Cherry and Palmetto. Staff met with City Mobility to see if they supported opening these streets and they do since it will restore the historic grid of the neighborhood. Staff will develop a community outreach plan that involves a survey of the residents and business owners in the CRA to solicit their preference. There was a discussion about also sending out a mailer with a QR code so they can link to the survey. Wilson said to make sure you include URL. Robinson asked about the Fire and Police Department and making sure 911 database is current. He provided history of the street closures saying it was a mitigation effort to curb car jackings. However, times have changed and today, a survey is needed. Fenton asked about Spanish translation and Martinez said she can assist with that. Staff will work on these details and circle back later.

b. **FY25 Preliminary Budget-** Thrower presented the budgets for West Tampa which summarized the FY24 approved budget, spending to date, and the forecast (5%) for planning FY25. She distributed larger formatted budgets to the CAC members for easier reading and note taking. Chair Robinson walked through each budget line item allowing discussion and recommendations from the CAC. The CAC recommended additional funds to the following line items for FY25: Professional Services/CRP Update ($200K); Outreach Services ($175K); Pre-Development Grants ($150K); Land Assemblage ($1 million); Main Street Revitalization ($1 million); Salcines Park ($500K); Freemont Linear Park ($300K); Public Art ($1 million); 2101 Main Street/Freedom Park ($1.4 million); Historic Preservation/Cultural Resources Inventory Update ($200K); and Tree Trimming ($50K). The CAC supported the new commercial grant program funding reappropriations from the former programs. Thrower explained that the CRA Board approved the new programs in March and will be approving the final implementation documents in June. The affordable housing programs will be presented to the CAC in the next month or so by Ms. Be Parks, who has moved over to lead that team. She has a strong background and housing and community development. ***There was a motion (Fenton/Maloney) to approve the FY25 preliminary budget subject to audit. The vote was unanimously approved.***

c. **Community Redevelopment Department Staffing Update-** Thrower updated the CAC on current staffing level for the department. Currently, we have 13 employees on board and an additional 9 positions to fill for a total of 22 employees. There are some vacancies due to retirements and turnovers, so those positions are actively advertised. The grants team has two open positions for economic development specialists; the project team has a project coordinator and arts coordinator position; the housing team has two community development positions; and the admin team has one support position. There will also be two manager positions to oversee the community outreach

team/communications contract and grants/programs/project teams. These positions will report directly to the director. Fenton expressed her concern about the number of staff given the workload for the West Tampa CRA. She would like to advocate for more staff to be hired to assist the teams. ***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.***

Unfinished Business

a. **Previous List of Projects from Jesus Nino –** provided to the CAC prior to today's meeting

New Business

a. Maloney, representing North Hyde Park, would like to see more public green space south of Interstate 275 for residents. She is concerned that property is being bought so quickly and that no space will be available for community parks and open space. ***There was a motion (Maloney/Fenton) to request staff to explore available sites for green space for a community park. The vote was unanimously approved.***

b. Fenton would like to request an update on the Rome Yard project since it's been a while.

Announcements

a. Robinson announced that the West Tampa AIA held a student design charette last week and there was a design presented for the historic Centro Espanol building. He would like to invite them to give their presentation at a future CAC meeting.
b. Robinson submitted the rezoning notices he received over the past month for the record.
c. Next CAC Meeting: May 21, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., Hillsborough Education Foundation
d. Next CRA Board Meeting: May 9, 2024, at 9 a.m., Tampa City Hall

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.