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
January 23, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.
Hillsborough Education Foundation, TECO Hall, 2306 N. Howard Avenue, Tampa, FL 33607

Minutes and Action Items

Meeting Called to Order by Joseph Robinson, CAC Chair at 5:34pm

Roll Call by Joseph Robinson, CAC Chair

First Name	Last Name	Title	Absent	Present
Joseph	Robinson	CAC Chair		X
Carlos	Ramirez	CAC Vice-Chair		X
Michael	Braccia	CAC Member		X
Sandra	Sanchez	CAC Member		X
Janice	Williams	CAC Member		X
Bobby	Wilson	CAC Member		X
Jeanette	LaRussa Fenton	CAC Member		X
Tina	Young	CAC Member		X
Heem	Baisden	CAC Member	X	
Walter	Smith	CAC Member	X	
Delphine	Jones	CAC Member		X
Cynthia	Maloney	CAC Member		X

Opening Comments: There was an announcement about Jesus Nino's departure and introduction of CRA Director Erica Moody to assist until Interim CRA Manager is assigned.

Public Comments

a. **Omar Garcia** complimented Tampa Police for the wonderful job they have done with cleaning up drug activity on Pine, near Star Grocery. He shared the desire of many in the community to open Pine and Walnut Streets. He has spoken to several neighbors who also support it.
b. **Michael Randolph**, speaking virtually, referenced a 2019 initiative, addressing technology changes coming to the job market. He discussed artificial intelligence and the role it can play in low-income areas in the realms of jobs and education.

Community Policing Updates

Tampa Police Department, Captain David Fernandez provided a community policing update and mentioned the creation of a community engagement squad, headed up by Officer Diaz. He shared crime statistics. Overall, volent crime is down by 50% city-wide, and total crime is down by 60%. Violent crimes in District 1 are down by over 21% (more than the city) and property crime is down by 12%. In West Tampa, auto burglaries are still occurring in cars that are unlocked. There were seven total incidents, with two stolen firearms; two grand theft autos, three

aggravated batteries; and one domestic dispute and arrest. With property crime, mail room package thefts have been reported at West River and the property's management has been advised to explore better ways to secure packages, like adjusting delivery times and . He also reported on an issue mentioned at last November's CAC meeting for address: 2712 W. North Bay. TPD spent approximately 30-man hours investigating this address and found no drug dealings at that house. Drug dealers were staying across the street at the Park Hotel, and they arrested a man dealing drugs in the alley behind the house. They will continue to conduct surveillance on the property but cautioned that it may take some time. Officer Diaz reported that he would continue to be seen at the meetings as they continue to build out their community engagement squad.

There were questions regarding the mailroom theft at West River. TPD did advise their management to install cellphone-activated lockers, but they said those lockers were too expensive. Also, they told them no employee wanted to take responsibility for the packages.

There was a comment about safety on the streets and a suggestion to improve the lighting to reduce vehicle break-ins. TPD said TECO is responsible for lighting and their purpose is to light the roadway, not the pedestrian areas. He mentioned that TECO offers grants for community lighting and to contact them for more information. He mentioned TECO Engineer Lee Isham as a contact.

There was discussion about the issue regarding guest parking at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) and valet parking overflowing in the adjacent residential neighborhood and narrow streets. A resident stated they requested No Parking signs from the city, but they were denied. TPD officer said he would talk to Greg Collier with City Mobility about the signs and request.

There was a question about guns being stolen from unlocked cars, and whether there are consequences for repeat offenders who leave their car unlocked and have their guns stolen. The answer was no. TPD responded to concerns about people staying in a tent on a property. There was a question about when to contact the police after hearing a possible assault and seeing drug activity. TPD said they respond as soon as the activity is reported. There was a request for TPD to monitor the stop sign at Rome and Fig, and Oregon and Fig because no one ever stops there. TPD said it's been a problem, and they are constantly trying to educate and inform people on the need to come to a complete stop at stop signs and streetlights.

Chris Freeman, Code Enforcement, was present to address any questions and fielded concerns about noise issues and who enforces complaints. It was mentioned when someone calls TPD to report a noise problem, they point finger to Code Enforcement and vice versa. Freeman confirmed that is true to a degree. TPD does measure noise levels and will respond to complaints, especially after hours, in evenings and on weekends. Code Enforcement follows up on documented violations by TPD. For daytime complaints, it was advised to call TPD non-emergency number. He also mentioned the situations with Air BnB's and that all rentals are a minimum of 7 days. He referenced Chapter 27-156. There was a question about trashcans. Freeman said trashcans should be hidden, and not left at the curb on non-collection days or placed in front of the garage. There was a question about who had towing rights for vehicles. If parked illegally, contact TPD. If a car is inoperable, owner has 3 days to move it. He mentioned the citation process and provided his contact information. Mr. Freeman can be reached at Chris.Freeman@tampa.gov and 813-347-7823.

TAMPACRA

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

Presentations – None. In February, there will be a presentation by the CRA Grants Team on the CRA Commercial Grant Portfolio Audit and Recommendations.

Action Items : Approval of November 28, 2023, CAC Meeting Minutes - The minutes were approved with the following corrections: 1) Tina Young needs to be added as a CAC Member and marked present 2) Bobby Wilson was listed twice and is not a staff member. It was suggested that absent people should be listed as absent for that meeting.

Old Business - None

Reports

CRA Director's Report- Director Erica Moody: Director Moody shared her background, the restructuring of the CRA to make it more effective, the old CRA structure versus the new divisions that were created, including a grants team, housing team, projects team, administrative team, filling out these divisions is bringing much needed stability to the CRA. She mentioned unifying the location of the CRA districts by moving everyone under one roof. We will be moving everyone to downtown Tampa for now, while continuing to look for a permanent location in East or West Tampa. After some questions and answers and commentary from Chair Joe Robinson, there was discussion about a projects list issued by Jesus Nino in December and the CAC requests that Director Moody get them the list again so they can track progress in their community. Someone mentioned the issues with grants being on hold, difficult to access, and the requirements being too difficult. Director Moody responded that the grant audit exposed that the community is not utilizing the grants and that the Grants Team will address much of that when they present to the CAC in February. There was a discussion about the efforts many have invested in the district, and not seeing their efforts come to fruition. Many expressed frustrations at decisions being made without the input of the CAC. Director Moody expressed that the CRA managers are the liaisons for the CAC to the City/CRA. She presented a Strategic Update timeline for everyone to review, and reiterated the CRA's restructure goals, her determination to hold people accountable, and commitment to support the five focus areas of affordable housing, economic development, connectivity and infrastructure, quality of life and community engagement. Finally, she mentioned some updates to the CAC policy and distributed handouts for the committee to review. She emphasized the importance of metrics and measurables and establishing goals, that would be defined by the CAC and that their help would be required.

CRA Projects Team Report- Senior Project Manager Melisa Marinez: Ms. Martinez gave her brief introduction and background and came with Jesus Nino's projects report in hand. She requested that items 3 (Fremont Linear Park) and 6 (Tampa Moves Quick Build Programs) be heard at the next CAC meeting, to allow her to get updates from the consultants. CAC members were concerned that the list provided was shorter than the previous month. Ms. Martinez explained that the original list had a combination of projects, grants, and programs. Due to the department re-structure, the previous list will be divided into the three groups previously mentioned. Each group will come before the CAC and provide updates. Ms. Martinez went ahead and provided a projects update. CAC Vice-Chair Ramirez requested an update on the list of recommendations that came from the Parking Study completed on November 2023 and wanted to know when the recommendations can be implemented. Ms. Martinez will provide an update at the next meeting. There was concern from CAC member Jeanette LaRussa Fenton about the CRA having enough staff to manage projects in all Districts. Chair Robinson stated that the CRA

has a plan, and to give them time to implement the change. CAC would like to have a CRA Urban Planner to assist with the district's studies. Ms. Martinez mentioned that they were currently interviewing for that position.

Sandra Sanchez made commentary regarding her frustrations at the lack of response from Robin Nigh regarding the Arts and Culture agenda for West Tampa. She mentioned a presentation she created, and her frustration that other CRA's are moving forward, and they are still waiting. Chair Robinson addressed the issue too and mentioned the Soul Walk.

CRA Communications Team Report – Be Parks: Ms. Parks presented an update on communication team efforts, stating that she met with each CAC to determine what they wanted to see on social media, publications, virtual, face to face, community outreach, etc. She mentioned the work she has done and continues to do on social media and the website because it is a constant update. She shared the details of what she does and her background in housing as well as her FRA Certification. She shared the communications contact information and encouraged everyone to reach out and stay updated via the website and the quarterly newsletter. It was suggested that she may want to reach out to the Mayor's Youth program for help distributing signs and other collateral materials in the community. She addressed questions about reaching out to those who are not property owners, and getting the community more involved.

General CAC Discussion (CRA and CAC Business Focused, examples of topics listed below)

a. General discussions. When is someone from Tampa Housing Authority going to begin attending meetings? Director Moody addressed, saying that THA needs to be reached out and request someone to begin attending.
b. Next meeting is in February.
c. Walter Smith announced a Fish, Grits, and Black History Fundraiser event for the library located at 905 N. Albany on Saturday, February 24 from 9 a.m. -3 p.m. The fundraiser is to support renovations and to open up new programming. There will be an African Drummer's opening call to gather; three different panel discussions; a feature by Historian Fred Hearns on the disappearance of black communities and their history; a discussion on environmental justice in black communities; and the history of environmental justice in the Tampa Bay area. Admission is $25 advance and $35 day of event. Visit www.wlsmithlibrary.org for tickets and more information.

Announcements

a. Next CAC Meeting: February 27, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., Hillsborough Education Foundation
b. Next CRA Board Meeting: February 8, 2024, at 9 a.m., Tampa City Hall
c. Chair Robinson announced the current requests and applications for rezones, special uses, etc.

Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.