

Baltimore Casino Local Development Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2014, 10:00AM – 12:30PM
Montgomery Park Auditorium, 1800 Washington Boulevard

Attendance:

LDC Members: Keisha Allen, James Alston, Del. Luke Clippinger, Rev. Alvin Gwynn (Vice-Chair), Sam Himmelrich, Andrew Gervase, Garrett Schiche, Richard Parker, Councilman Edward Reisinger, Bill Reuter, Wayne Vance, Beth Whitmer

Quorum Present: Yes

City/Agency Representatives: Ethan Cohen (Project Coordinator); Brent Flickinger and Theo Ngongang—Department of Planning; Councilman Eric Costello

Public: Kia Calloway, Jameson Chalmers, Ben Hyman, Lyneisha Jackson, Bill Marker, Michael Middleton, Bria Russ, Taylor Russ, Mark Reutter (Press), Douglas Wise

Proceedings:

- 1) Vice-Chair, Pastor Alvin Gwynn called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m., noting that Senator Bill Ferguson, LDC Chair, is home sick with the flu and sends his regrets for missing the meeting.
- 2) Minutes from the meeting on December 17, 2014, were approved. Motioned by Bill Reuter, seconded by Richard Parker, all in favor.
- 3) Membership and Meetings:
 - a) Pastor Gwynn announced the new LDC membership for 2015. It was noted that all prior and new members are serving for one year terms renewable in January. A hand-out was provided with the names and affiliations of members, also listing sub-committee assignments and sub-committee chairs. Individuals who are new to the LDC are Len Bush, Garrett Schiche, Beth Whitmer, and Andy Gervase. A correction was noted that Corwin Jones, who was listed under Public Safety and Services, is replaced by Andrew Gervase as the new representative of the Sharp-Leadenhall Improvement Association.
 - b) Pastor Gwynn noted that sub-committee meetings are open to the public, as are LDC meetings. As noted at the December meeting, Sub-Committees are expected to meet regularly to review information or issues related to their topic areas and bring recommendations to the full LDC.
 - c) Upcoming meetings are February 11 for the Transportation, Sanitation and Infrastructure Sub-Committee, with others to be scheduled in February and March. The next full LDC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 23.
 - d) Election of Vice-Chair: Ethan Cohen noted that, as this is the first meeting of the 2015 membership, the LDC needs to elect the Vice-Chair. Ed Reisinger moved to nominate Pastor Gwynn as Vice-Chair; seconded by James Alston. Pastor Gwynn accepted the nomination. Approved by acclamation.
 - e) Richard Parker asked if there may be changes to sub-committee assignments. Pastor Gwynn replied that if LDC members wish to discuss their sub-committee assignments they should raise the issue with the Chair (Sen. Ferguson), who will make a determination.
 - f) Report by Public Safety and Services Sub-Committee Chair Keisha Allen: Representatives of the sub-committee and LDC met with Baltimore Police Department (BPD) representatives on January 19 to review policing issues raised at the end of 2014. Among the topics discussed were:

(Continued)

- i) Expansion of the Casino Mini District outer patrol area (“Zone 3”), with a map provided indicating the new expanded boundaries that include portions of Westport (east of MD-295), Pigtown and Ridgely’s Delight (east of Washington Boulevard), and all of Sharp-Leadenhall.
 - ii) A report on crime statistics throughout 14 City-defined neighborhoods of the Casino Impact Area, comparing 2013-2014 crime incidents for September through December. Copies of these reports were provided. They indicate a decrease in Part 1 crime in all areas except Lakeland (2% increase), Saint Paul (167% increase based on a rise from 3 incidents in 2013 and 8 in 2014), Westport (0% change), and Carroll-Camden Industrial Area (15% change).
 - iii) It was noted that statistics for Carroll-Camden should be viewed in the context that they compare periods from before the casino’s existence to once it was open, receiving thousands of visitors per day. Ethan stated that in future reporting he would ask BPD if they could segregate out the area of the casino from the larger statistical for Carroll-Camden.
 - iv) It was clarified that the deployment of uniformed officers within Horseshoe Casino is not covered by Local Impact Grant funds, nor are officers deployed there by the Casino Mini District commander. Officers deployed within the casino (specifically at the entrances) are deployed as part of Secondary Overtime services for which the casino made arrangements with BPD and paid directly. [Note: Horseshoe’s use of BPD Secondary Overtime services ceased in December 2014]
- 4) Old Business: FY’16 Spending Plan
- a) Pastor Gwynn presented the Advice Letter from the LDC to the Mayor, issued in December 2014, which conveyed the LDC’s response to the Draft Spending Plan. He stated his that view the letter accurately represents the message and substance of the LDC’s discussion in the December meeting, including areas where members seek more information.
 - b) Gwynn further noted that, whereas the letter states that Local Impact Grant funds are intended to “mitigate negative impacts,” the statute states that LIG funds “shall be used for improvements in the communities...” He advised that, in any future references, the specific language of the statute should be used.
- 5) Reporting on Current Year (FY’15) Spending and Initiatives:
- a) Ethan Cohen presented the updated “dashboard” and progress report on FY’15 Spending, which was distributed as a hand-out and included in a PowerPoint. The current budget shows a revised Tier 1 allocation of \$6.9 million. Spending for the first two quarters of FY’15 totals approximately \$2.255 million reported through December 2014. Some specific changes include:
 - i) Funds allocated to the Temporary Public Safety Substation, set-up and rental for seven months: \$15,000
 - ii) Medic Services – budget savings of \$15,000 were shifted to cover the cost of the substation.
 - iii) A Feasibility Study for the Community Benefits District is budgeted at \$50,000.
 - iv) Community Enhancement Projects (seven at \$50,000) are budgeted at \$350,000, shifted as of October 2014 from funding allocated for the Community Benefits District operations.
 - v) The Warner Street Urban Design Study may be able to proceed with funding from other sources if Tier 2 funds are not available.

- vi) Fiber Study of the Casino Impact Area – a draft report is due in February or March.
 - vii) Plans are ongoing for the Employment Connection Center, with staff recruitment and a search for office space underway
 - viii) The Complete Streets Study is underway, with community meetings in progress and background and neighborhood chapters being drafted.
 - ix) The report on the Workforce Needs Assessment is expected in February 2015.
 - x) Plans are underway for the training program in construction careers; the RFP was issued and contractor selected [Job Opportunities Task Force, Project JumpStart], with the program scheduled to run April-Nov. 2015
- b) Discussion:
- i) Pastor Gwynn stated that the LDC and City need to quickly resolve the issue of the steam line and infrastructure reimbursement payments, urging that the vetting of these payment requests not be allowed to remain outstanding for long.
 - ii) Ethan stated that he would seek an update on the Fiber Study from the City's IT department to be shared with the Sanitation, Transportation and Infrastructure Sub-Committee.
- 6) Ethan gave an update on the status of Community Enhancement Projects. He has met or corresponded with several community associations on the project ideas, but some groups have not proposed specific activities. Each group should form a sub-committee to develop a list of potential improvements that can be achieved with an allocation of City maintenance or capital operations by DOT, Parks, BOPA, etc. (\$50,000 per neighborhood) and contact Ethan to review these proposals.
- 7) Ethan presented a memo regarding the formation of a Community Benefits District previously distributed to LDC members.
- a) The memo references the intent of forming a district as outlined in the FY'15 Spending Plan, including that: "Many of the priorities for sanitation, workforce development, and other services would be managed by this entity once it's up and running."
 - b) It also clarifies that no new State enabling legislation is required for the creation of a district serving the Casino Impact Area. Rather, the City Charter, Article II, Section 63 authorizes the Mayor and City Council to establish three "Community Benefits District Authorities" (CBDA's) in addition to the three that already exist: Charles Village, Midtown and Waterfront Partnership. (Downtown Partnership is a "downtown commercial district management authority" authorized under Article 61).
 - c) New CBDA's are created by an "establishing ordinance," which spells out the purpose, boundaries, main functions and governance representation for the new district. The CBDA appears to be the best fit for the purposes and functions envisioned for this entity by the LDC. A planned feasibility study will help explore these issues and provide the framework for the establishing ordinance and the basic operations of the CBDA.
- 8) Public Comment
- a) Michael Middleton of Cherry Hill Development Corporation commented on the fact that Community Enhancement Project funding is allocated for some neighborhoods within the Casino Impact Area but not all. He asked whether future allocations would be available for Cherry Hill and other communities not included in the first round.

- b) Bill Marker of Barre Circle began his comments by welcoming the new members of the LDC. He stated his belief that the much of the spending of LIG funds is illegal and the bulk of the appropriations are for purposes not envisioned by the statute. He further stated his views that any reductions or cuts necessitated by lower than projected Impact Grant funds should be applied proportionately to City operations and repayments to the casino, not just to services and initiatives benefitting the community. He added his view that, as the LDC is required to include two delegates, one should be from the 40th District.

9) A 10 minute break was given

10) Work Session on Master Plan:

- a) Theo Ngongang, Assistant Director with the Baltimore City Department of Planning (DOP) introduced himself and Brent Flickinger, District Planner and Project Manager, and presented an overview of the process of developing the South Baltimore Gateway Master Plan.
- b) Brent Flickinger presented three-ring binders with the draft Goals, Strategies and Recommendations (GSR) chapter of the Master Plan, framing this document as the guide for future spending of LIG funds and for development of a multi-year spending plan. He then walked members quickly through the document, explaining how the nine goals are organized and the strategies and recommendations flow from these overarching themes. He noted that items highlighted in draft document are tasks that may be overseen by the Community Benefits District in the future. "Geographic Considerations" is the sub-section that divides the Casino Impact Area into "sectors" (east, west and south) and refers to specific, place-based improvements.
- c) Discussion:
 - i) Councilman Reisinger made a distinction between the Master Plan area and the original spending plan zones that contained inner and outer circles of impact from the casino where funding would be prioritized in the near term versus the longer term.
 - ii) Pastor Gwynn praised DOP's efforts, hailing the vision in the Master Plan as "Harbor South," alongside the Inner Harbor and Harbor East. Building on Councilman Reisinger's point, he stated the value of the plan is in allowing the allocation of resources to begin with areas closest to the casino and then move concentrically outward to address the entire area.
 - iii) Brent and Ethan described the next steps to be distributing the chapter electronically to LDC members for review and feedback and scheduling work sessions with each of the sub-committees to review their relevant chapters.

Adjourn 12:45 PM

Prepared by: Ethan Cohen, Office of the Mayor, (410) 545-3107, Ethan.Cohen@baltimorecity.gov