

Baltimore Local Development Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 26, 2017, 6:30-8:00PM
Baltimore City Department of Planning
417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

Attendance -- LDC Members:

Keisha Allen, Sen. Bill Ferguson (Chair), Jill Johnson, Alvin Lee, Garrett Schiche, Bill Reuter

Quorum Present: No

Baltimore City Agency Representatives: Ethan Cohen (Mayor's Office, Liaison to LDC)

Proceedings:

- 1) As there was no quorum, Senator Ferguson called the meeting as an informal discussion, starting at 6:45PM.
- 2) Ethan presented the revised FY'17-FY'18 budget, showing cuts due reduced revenue as compared to projections after the MGM Grand Casino opened, and a draft budget for FY'19
- 3) Ethan referenced the Administration's plan to launch an anti-homelessness strategy with a pilot in South Baltimore, which has a unique history of homelessness. He has asked the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services to make a presentation to the LDC.
 - a) Sen. Ferguson asked if the City has mapped the homeless encampments.
 - b) Jill Johnson cited the growing issue around MedStar Harbor Hospital, including an encampment of sorts (vehicles that never leave) in the parking lots the hospital leases from the City. Jill has met with the Maryland Secretary of Health and is on an advisory committee related to the issue. She would like to collaborate with the MOHS on the initiative. Ethan mentioned that Pastor Gwynn had expressed interest in engaging faith-based institutions to address homelessness as well.
- 4) Bill Reuter asked about the budget line item for Redevelopment Studies. Ethan reported the intention to use that funding for Westport, building upon the strategic planning effort of the "CDC" and providing a baseline analysis that can inform the development of a community land trust (which will acquire, hold and develop vacant land and buildings). Keisha Allen stated that there is a need for planning in Westport, in order to understand the current conditions and the market opportunities or challenges in the face of change coming from Sagamore's developments, and speculators acquiring properties.
- 5) Sen. Ferguson inquired about the Employment Connection Center and its outcomes. Ethan reported on the October 12 meeting of the Community and Economic Development Committee with MOED/ECC staff. A persistent challenge cited was "employability" or soft skills when it comes to getting unemployed residents into jobs.
- 6) Sen. Ferguson commented on the reserve for infrastructure and facilities budgeted at \$2.5 million. He stated that the City Health Department has recommended to him this be used to help build a new and relocated facility for "BARCs," the City's animal shelter. Discussion ensued on the merits of the project as a use of LIG funds. Sen. Ferguson stated that, as an action item, BARC's and Health need to meet with and present the project to the LDC.
- 7) Ethan noted that a new "South Sector" representative is needed for the SBGP Board.
- 8) The meeting ended at 7:50 PM

Next meeting: Scheduled for Thursday, November 30, 2017