

**Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
Minutes
June 6, 2022
6:00 p.m.**

The Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force held a meeting on Monday, June 6, 2022. The meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m. and adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Voting Members Present:

Byron Price – Chair
Christopher Flood
Susan Murray
Ariel Gardner
Craig Hughes
Christina Dancy
Patricia McQueen
Mayela Zambrano
Linda Peoples-Jones

Voting Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Brooke A. Smith, Deputy City Manager/Dir. of Economic Development
LaRette Reese, City Clerk

Others attending:

None

Swearing In

City Clerk LaRette Reese administered oaths of office to all members of the task force.

Introductions

Chair Byron Price introduced himself and stated that he was appointed by Mayor Terry Crow to chair the task force. Chair Byron Price then called the roll. A quorum was present to conduct business. Each member of the task force introduced themselves and provided general information on their backgrounds.

General Discussion of Process and Schedule Regular Meetings

Chair Price turned discussion of this agenda item over to Deputy City Manager Brooke Smith. Smith noted that she would take up both discussing the process and scheduling the regular meetings together. She noted that this was the introductory meeting and that they would discuss scheduling a regular meeting. Smith said the available days of the facility were the 2nd Tuesday of the month, the 1st Monday of the month, or the 3rd Monday of the month.

Smith stated that this task force is being pulled together to create housing program and reinvesting in the third ward. She stated that there would be a lot of public outreach, but that the first couple of meetings would be just the task force members getting to know each other and general discussions followed by a lot of public outreach that would be held at

various locations throughout the city to make sure the task force is accessing as many residents as possible, especially when talking about the housing program.

Smith informed the task force that the City Manager's vision for this process is two-fold, starting with the housing program and walking through that process then going to the reinvestment in the third ward, which will be more than just housing. For the housing program, Smith noted that they would discuss what that looks like for University City, exploring housing programs in other cities throughout the country and getting public input to come up with a recommendation to be submitted for approval. The next step will be the reinvestment strategy for the 3rd Ward which will include public outreach as well, looking at neighborhood plans from other cities and come up with recommendations to be submitted for approval. Smith noted this would be a pretty long process. Smith informed the members that she is the Deputy City Manager and staff liaison and will be the one to prepare and send out the packets, prepare the minutes, and post the audio from the meetings. Smith said the chair will facilitate the meetings and she would be in touch with him the most and then with the group as information needs to be disseminated. At the request of Linda Peoples-Jones, Smith formally introduced herself to the task force. Smith then moved on to the presentation.

Review of Presentation from Council Retreat

Deputy City Manager Smith began to review the presentation that was submitted to the City Council at the Council Retreat in September of 2021, noting that the City Manager thought it would be a good idea to go over the presentation with the task force to get the juices flowing and get ideas about what this process will look like and to discuss examples of housing programs Smith has administered in the past. Smith informed the task force that nothing was set in stone for the task force, and the presentation is simply meant to generate ideas and should not be interpreted as this is what the task force is doing, except for the planning process of assessment, planning, and implementation which is standard any time you are doing a planning process. Deputy City Manager walked through the presentation and noted that everything is as it was presented to the City Council in September of 2021.

Smith noted that now that the task force has been appointed, the next step will be assessment which will be identifying the needs, Regarding the Housing Program, Smith stated that the goal is to create a Housing Program that can be implemented city-wide but noted that the other wards would have to have a different funding source, noting that the funds from the Costco development are restricted to use in the third ward only. Chair Price asked about the funding source and how those monies come to the city. Smith replied that \$3 million was received up front and the remainder of the funds will trickle in over a specific timeframe and that it could fluctuate. She said the revenue will be projected in the annual budget each year. She said we may not know for sure what the revenue will look like until the Costco development is up and running. Smith explained the budgeting process, noting that she makes the recommendation to the City Manager and the City Manager will adjust accordingly and ultimately the City Manager makes a recommendation to the City Council.

Christopher Flood asked what the task force's role is in relation to the spending of the TIF money is. Smith responded that the task force will set the principles and programs, but they will not determine how the monies are spent, noting that the City Manager would recommend how the funds are allocated as he does with any program the city implements. Smith stated that she is certain the City Manager would take into consideration the public

input received as he is making his recommendation. Flood asked if the task force recommends anything directly to Council. Smith responded that the task force would put together a recommendation and they may address it to the City Council, but the recommendation would go first to the City Manager and then he will submit the recommendation to the City Council along with his recommendation.

Smith resumed her presentation and emphasized that for the housing program the task force will be recommending a program that can be administered city-wide but noted that staff will have to find funding sources for Wards 1 and 2. The 3rd ward currently has a funding source and Smith noted that staff would also continue to look for additional funding sources for the 3rd Ward. Chair Price asked for clarification on the city-wide housing program, noting there are areas considered low-moderate income and areas considered wealthy, so he is trying to figure out how the programs would apply. Smith answered that you would create a variety of programs and provided an example of programs she'd administered previously. She explained how these programs could vary with income requirements, matching requirements, etc. She said a low-moderate income program may require the applicant to have a certain income and a certain number of members in the household while a second program for Ward 1 may not have an income requirement and would require the applicant to match the funds given. Smith said these are items the task force will explore and come up with recommendations for what the programs will look like. Smith emphasized that the idea is to have several programs that can be applied across the board.

Susan Murray asked about the funding, stating that her understanding is that the money from the Costco development would go to the third ward to help offset some of the long-term inequitable disinvestment of past, and so she would hope that while this is all spent on the 3rd Ward, when additional funds become available, they are divided between all three wards because the funds from the Costco development are "catch-up" funds and going forward, the 3rd Ward should be able to go forward along with the 1st and 2nd Wards. Smith said this may be something the City Manager could speak more on, stating that she was not sure of the plan moving forward. Smith said she knows for certain that the funds from the Costco development was for the 3rd Ward. She also said she has already begun looking at other grant programs, stating that staff would not go after grant funds for just the 3rd Ward, but would look for funding for all the wards. Murray said what she's thinking is that the additional grants/funds would be distributed city-wide and not just limited to the 1st and 2nd Wards because in the past it has been limited to the 1st and 2nd Wards and this is catch up. Smith said it would depend on the types of grants staff would go after. The grant requirement may be that it must benefit a certain area and those funds may go just to the 3rd Ward, but staff would be looking for funding sources for the city as a whole. Smith said that as staff is looking at additional funding sources, she can't say for sure now how the funds would be allocated, but she could say staff will be looking at funding sources for all of the wards. Chair Price stated if the \$10 million from the Costco development is fixed for the 3rd Ward, the discussion of other funds and how they are allocated is not for this body and that people would need to take that up with their Council people.

Christopher Flood said this is a broader mandate than he thought the task force would have and he thought it was the third ward housing and the funds to be used there. He said if they are tasked with making recommendation about city-wide housing programs and policies and that's just one component of it, it's bigger than he was expecting. Smith clarified that this is true for the city-wide housing program but that the second part of the task force's work will

focus solely on the 3rd Ward, which will include talking about housing again along with any other needs in the 3rd Ward. She said the City Manager's vision for that is Housing, Infrastructure, and Public Safety as the main three components we will look at specifically for the 3rd Ward and a broader approach for the city-wide housing programs. She said the task force will also look specifically at housing for the 3rd Ward as well.

Smith returned to the presentation and discussed public outreach, taking tours, etc. to determine what the needs are in the 3rd Ward specifically. She said for the housing programs the public outreach will include citizens from all three wards to determine their vision for a housing program administered by the city. Smith said the task force would review housing programs from other cities to see how they are administered and then conduct public outreach to get ideas and feedback from the citizens, and from this a recommendation will be submitted.

Smith discussed the planning stage and what that will entail, including setting the goals and objectives and discussing the programs the task force wants to recommend, looking at funding sources, even for the 3rd Ward with Smith noting that \$10 million is not a lot of money when you talk about creating home repair programs. Smith said the task force will be identifying community stakeholders and community partners, noting that when the task force begins to discuss leverage funds, it will be important to engage community partners like our financial institutions and nonprofits because this is not something that can be done by just the city.

Smith discussed the final step of the process, implementation, which would be submitted the recommendations to the City Manager and then to the City Council and once approved, staff will begin implementation.

Chair Price stated that money has been earmarked for a specific demographic but that this task force has been charged with planning beyond just that demographic to create a housing program for the whole city, which he found confusing, and asked the task force members if anyone else was confused and if they needed to send it back to ask for clarification. Linda Peoples-Jones said she thought it important to allow Smith to get through her slides to see if the information is provided and then follow up with questions.

Smith resumed her presentation, reflecting on how the task force was appointed and the vision for the task force is to set the guiding principles, identify the goals and priorities, and setting the performance measures. An example given for performance measure was requiring that 30 grants be administered for home repair in the 3rd Ward. Smith said these are some of the items that will be looked at. Smith then began to discuss the needs as it relates to housing and provided examples. She emphasized that this is where public outreach will be important as they will tell the task force what the needs are. Smith said that while a lot of time is spent talking about housing, reinvestment in the 3rd Ward will need to go beyond just housing because when you move somewhere and stay somewhere, you aren't just looking at housing, but also at infrastructure, public safety, school districts, etc., so when talking about reinvestment in the 3rd Ward, it is important to take a comprehensive approach. Smith provided examples of Housing Repair Programs that she's administered in the past and examples of types of repairs to focus on.

Smith discussed looking at homeownership programs and how to increase homeownership, specifically in the 3rd Ward and the city has a whole, noting that studies show homeowners

tend to take better care of their properties than renters. She provided examples of programs dedicated to homeownership. She also discussed engaging community partners with existing programs and determining how to get them more involved in University City. She discussed creating and distributing resource guides because sometimes people just don't know where to go. She said this would be more on the staff level, noting that the task force can discuss what that should include. Smith also discussed the responsible landlord program, acknowledging that the city had programs on the books, but enforcement has been an issue due to staffing requirements. She stated that two new Code Enforcement officers were hired last year, and staff has been doing a better job of enforcing the ordinances already on the books. Smith discussed the City of Florissant's landlord licensing program and stated that the task force would explore that program and if it fits in University City.

Smith went on to discuss infrastructure with focus on the streets, trees, and lighting. She explained the importance of engaging stakeholders like Ameren and having them replace lights that are out, erecting poles where needed, which is something that can be done while the task force continues to work. Smith noted that when she reviewed materials from the TIF process, she noticed that adequate lighting came up frequently, and the task force will be exploring this as it moves through the process.

Smith discussed Public Safety and noted that it is becoming an issue everywhere at this point. She stated that she reads the conversations from NextDoor including in the City Manager's Report, saying she reads the comments and sees a lot of concerns about public safety in the area. She said the task force will explore this for the 3rd Ward to see what can be done to improve public safety, what kind of programs can be implemented to improve public safety, and discussing issues with the Chief of Police.

Smith discussed the step she added in called "Doing While Planning" that she would like to explore with the task force. She explained her experience with "Doing While Planning" at her previous city with the HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant that allows for the identification of items that can be done immediately, reiterating that it will be about 1-2 years before the task force has recommendations to submit to Council. She acknowledged that for a lot of people this can be too long because they want to see something being done immediately. She said when she first joined the city, there were a lot of people looking for things to be done because they knew they city had received the \$3 million. She said the task force would discuss what that looks like for the city. She gave examples of street repairs and tree pruning in the 3rd Ward. Using streets as an example, she discussed how street repairs in the 3rd Ward are planned out for 5 years and that it becomes a matter of funding. If the task force decided to recommend that funds be allocated to those street repairs now, it would be more streets are being repairs in FY23 than initially planned. She noted that it was not a mandatory part of the process, but that her experience was that it gave people hope when you are talking about a 2-3 year planning process but people want to see something immediately. Smith also said this doesn't have to be just a city initiative and discussed neighborhood cleanups in the 3rd Ward. She said this would allow people to see something getting done immediately or in 6 months versus 2-3 years.

Smith went on to discuss leveraging funds, noting that the amount of money being discussed can go very fast, depending on the type of programs being run. She discussed looking at a revolving loan fund which would require people to repair funds, which means you are replenishing the money instead of it just going away. She discussed bank

investments and gave an example of an initiative at her previous city where the bank agreed to match the city's funds to create a home repair program for citizens in the city that the bank would administer. Smith noted that a number of banks have community development requirements that they have to meet, and they will partner with us to fulfill obligations that they have, and this is why it is important to engage our stakeholders. Smith also briefly discussed grants and how funds can be leveraged by providing matching funds for entities like SHED that is doing work in the 3rd Ward. Smith went through some of the potential stakeholders the task force should consider engaging during the process and discussed how important it will be to partner with these organizations.

Smith said the process will be fluid as public outreach is conducted, the task force will tailor the process to what they are hearing from the public. She discussed the importance of having an open mind and no preconceived notions and really listening to members of the public in order to come back to the table to tailor the approach based on what is learned. Smith concluded the presentation.

Deputy City Manager Smith asked for a vote on setting a regular meeting date. Discussion was had on the feasibility of various days, and Smith noted the requirement to have a quorum at each meeting.

Chair Price asked by a show of hands who would be in favor of the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Heman Park Community Center.

Linda Peoples-Jones asked if the meetings would be an hour or an hour and a half. Smith said she would budget anywhere from 1 to 2 hours. Peoples-Jones said she believed that an hour and a half would suffice.

Linda Peoples-Jones asked if guests or the public will be allowed to come in and ask questions. Smith answered yes that every meeting is opened to the public, that every meeting after this one will have a Public Comment section. She explained this one did not have a Public Comment section because it was the introductory meeting and for the sake of time, she wanted to make sure the task force as able to go over the housekeeping items. Smith said the Public Comment section will mirror that of the City Council with a time limit on how long a person or persons can speak. She emphasized the extensive public outreach that is anticipated to engage the public. She said ideally the public outreach meetings will be the time for the public to speak, but each meeting will also have a public comment section.

Linda People Jones asked if she heard Smith say this task force may be together for two years. Smith answered yes and a noted that it could be shorter, or it could be longer. Smith explained that it must be a thorough process and the task force should strive to reach as many people as it can and hear from people not typically heard from. She also explained that the assessment and planning stages will be the longest and that they are budgeting a lot of time for public outreach. She said they will look to partner with the churches and hold public outreach sessions at various locations throughout the city, that they will need to consider some virtual sessions depending on what happens with COVID, and that the task force is flexible and thorough to make sure they hear from the people before making decisions.

Linda Peoples-Jones asked if staff would send out postcards to get responses back. Smith answered yes, she said she would hope to do surveys to get information back from citizens. She said the task force would take multiple approaches to get information back from the citizens including the meetings and surveys. Peoples-Jones asked if the task force members need information like how many vacant homes are in the city would staff provide that information. Smith answered yes and said that info will be compiled and updated and discussed during the task force's regular meetings.

Patricia McQueen said she wanted to be candid about her concerns as she has been waiting a long time for this task force to get up and running. She said one thing that got her involved as an active citizen was noticing the number of vacant and abandoned properties in the 3rd Ward. She said she used to ask the city for a list and she used to get it. She said she knows it will be harder now as a person in the public asking for that information. She said she believes housing has to be corrected in the 3rd Ward or it's going to affect the 1st and 2nd Wards. She said she hopes the task force is not being so broad that they will not be able to do the housing part. She said she is concerned this vision does not focus on housing. She said she hopes the task force does not spread itself so thin that it does not get to focus on the housing which she views as most important. Chair Price added that on the housing side, it is a big lift in the 3rd Ward by itself. He said his concern is that the task force would be spreading itself too thin and it wouldn't really do what is intended. He said he doesn't know how feasible it is to do a city-wide housing program. He said this would be more meetings, more public input, confusion because you're talking about different people across different incomes looking for different things that may not even fit with what the 3rd Ward demographic is about. He is concerned it will get diluted and the purpose is not done. Smith acknowledged the concerns and informed the Chair that it will be his duty to set the agenda, so the task force doesn't lose focus. She explained that the task force as a body can determine how to set the agenda with the Chair and the Chair will relay that information back to Smith. She said the task force will be in control of how the meetings will go, that she will make suggestions and recommendations, but ultimately this is not her will.

Christopher Flood said he recognizes some of the issues that were raised may be significant concerns and if that's what the public wants the TIF money spent on, then he would defer to that. He said he would hate to see this once in a generation type of money be used just to right the underinvestment in the 3rd Ward and asked shouldn't the rest of the city contribute to that out of its normal process and budget and the TIF proceeds be used instead for something extra, over and above what should be done every year. He said he is confused about the work product the task force is supposed to come up with. He said it sounds like it's two plans, 1 being the city-wide housing program and 2 being the 3rd Revitalization. He asked how much control the task force has over those plans, what they look like, how much will they cost, how will they be produced. Smith responded that as the cost is concerned, as the task force goes through the process, they can get estimates on some of their recommendations and she noted the task force will have the option to request a consultant if it desires, noting that the City Manager and/or the City Council will have to approve that. Smith said her understanding is the final product will be a recommendation for the housing programs and what they look like. She said as far as the revitalization strategy, she intended to provide the task force with examples of neighborhood plans and that she is certain something similar is the expected final product. She said the task force would walk away with the housing programs completed, maybe down to what the application looks like, to submit a final recommendation. She said as it relates to the cost, they can make recommendations with the understanding that the City Manager is the one

who will ultimately recommend to the Council what the budget item should be. He may agree with the recommendation, or he may adjust it, and the Council would ultimately decide. Smith said she didn't think it would be too farfetched to include recommendations on the amounts, but that this task force will not ultimately decide how the money is spent.

The question was asked how the Doing While Planning would work. Smith explained that once the task force is up and running and they determine there are some items that cannot wait, the task force can, by a majority vote, make the recommendation to complete the task, and that will be submitted to the City Manager who would then direct Smith if and when to prepare an agenda item for Council with his recommendation on how Council should act. She explained that the process will require the items go to City Manager first and he review and consider competing priorities before ultimately deciding how to proceed.

Susan Murray said she thinks the task force needs some data and not just public outreach, noting that there is no updated information on website, nothing there is no updated Comprehensive Plan on the website. Smith stated that that will be underway soon. Murray asked for a timeframe and Smith said she would not be comfortable putting a timeframe on it, but she will follow-up on that. Murray said she believes the task force should be working in conjunction with the plan and Smith replied that any strategy that would come from this task force would be incorporated into the comprehensive planning process. Murray asked if they could get a map from the police department for annual crimes, she said she would like to see a flood map and the areas that are flooding that are not in flood zones. She said she would like to know the status of MSD's plans for detention tanks and other plans and data that will help the task force decide how to make decisions. Smith said she would make a note and also encouraged the task force members items they would like to see and/or review. Smith told the task force members they can email her at any time on items they would like to see and/or have on the next agenda. Smith also informed the members that being on the task force does mean their information is public and if a sunshine request is received, the information will have to be release.

Smith noted that the task force will not hop right into the public outreach, but she believes that it will be very important moving forward in the process. She said there will be a few meetings as a group to iron out the process before scheduling public outreach meetings.

Christina Dancy said it's still not clear to her what the ask is. She said we talked about a city-wide housing program, but the data will mostly be out of the 3rd Ward. She asked how the task force will get data from those outside of the 3rd Ward for the city-wide housing program. Smith said the idea was that if focused on city-wide housing programs, then the outreach will be city-wide for the first phase. She noted the 2nd phase would then focus solely on the 3rd Ward which will also include housing specific to the 3rd Ward. Dancy said she thinks this needs to be discussed more because this is not a city-wide committee, it is 3rd Ward and that members of the public may be concerned that they are making decisions for the entire city. She said she wasn't aware that the task force would be considering the city as a whole, she thought it was all 3rd Ward. Smith said she would take the information back to the City Manager for discussion.

Chair Price asked if there were any follow up questions, concerns, comments about segmenting this from city-wide to specifically for the 3rd Ward. Linda Peoples-Jones said she believes the mission just needs to be clear on what the task force is charged with.

Patricia McQueen said the Federal Reserve Bank should be one of our partners. She also said she still has information she has gathered over the years and that she is willing to share it. Smith told everyone they find information they would like to share, to share it with her and the Chair, but asked them not to share emails in group form so as not to get into Sunshine issues. She also recommended the task force members review the Missouri Sunshine Law.

Chair Price closed by clarifying that the City Manager can give recommendations to the Council, and they will either accept them or reject them, but the Council makes the final decision.

Adjourn

Linda Peoples-Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Susan Murray seconded.

Motioned passed by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.