

CHARLES STREET AREA COUNCIL / CORPORATION
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
September 12, 2023 @ 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM (via Zoom)



Called to order 6:37 PM

In Attendance Angela Williams, Ericka Wingfield, La Rita Alton, Rebecca McDonough, Quincy Swatson

Guests Dave Hagar and Rebecca Mizikar (PVE), Ryan Kieta (Real Design), Ashante Jones (AJoseyArt)

Excused /Absent Archish Maharaja, Amy Cotten

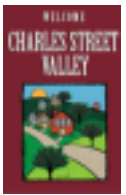
I. Introductions / Check-in (6:30 PM)

II. Invited Guest Presentations: 6:40 PM - 7:10 PM

a. Predevelopment: PVE (**vote**)

- ☐ Will be providing Civil Engineering services for 2400 North Charles Street infill housing project
- ☐ They also have experience with surveying, site planning, and other areas they could advise on
- ☐ Previously worked on the EECO Center in Larimer, the Riverfront Landing in the Strip District, 39th and Butler Streets in Lawrenceville, and Mellon Street in East Liberty (with Modular)
- ☐ Have worked with the URA in the past, and have completed projects ranging widely in size / scope
- ☐ Our project should begin in the next few weeks with the Due Diligence phase for the first 7 houses!
- ☐ Phase 1: Due Diligence
 - i. Site survey
 - ii. Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment
 - iii. Geotechnical Engineering Services
 - iv. Wetland Investigation and Report
 - v. Traffic Engineering Services
 - vi. Preliminary Utility Coordination
- ☐ Phase 2: Schematic Design - Master Plan
 - i. Base Map
 - ii. Review Due Diligence
 - iii. Kickoff Meeting with CSAC & Architectural Team
 - iv. Master Plan
 - v. Meet with CSAC and Architect
- ☐ Phase 3: Design Development - Phase 1
 - i. City of Pgh Pre-App Meeting
 - ii. Civil Engineering Design Documents
 - iii. Utility Coordination & PWSA Tap-In Permitting
 - iv. Coordination with DOP/DPW
 - v. PA DEP Sanitary Sewer Planning Module
 - vi. Lot consolidation / subdivision / addressing
 - vii. Coordinating with construction manager and contractor, updating cost estimate
 - viii. Project meetings with the CSAC team (pop-up events, tabling)
- ☐ Phase 4: Construction Documents - Phase 1
 - i. Civil engineering construction documents
 - ii. Contractor bidding and coordination
 - iii. Civil engineering and construction administration
- ☐ Questions:
 - i. Which project most closely replicates what we plan to do in Charles Street?
 1. Any of the projects conducted with Modular (ex. Mellon Street)

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- ii. Are we still planning for single family detached homes with driveways or garages?
 - 1. Yes, but only if we're able to place an alley in the lot – it would present a safety concern to have the driveways exiting onto the main road (Charles Street).
- iii. Are there any items that need to be completed before we begin Due Diligence in Phase 1?
 - 1. The 4 URA lots have been cleared – any other tasks like this to prep the lot?
 - a. Grass less than knee high shouldn't be an issue.
 - 2. CSAC will review and sign the PVE proposal and the URA site access agreement.
- iv. What should we tell our neighbors to expect?
 - 1. There will be machines drilling, but they shouldn't be too loud during investigation.
 - 2. Construction will happen during City of Pittsburgh's set hours of operations (will confirm what these are later on so that we can notify the community).
- v. Has there been much community engagement around the project so far?
 - 1. Yes, CSAC conducted a comprehensive process with the Forbes Funds a while back. Now that funding is secured and we're ramping up again, we'll share information with the community with printed materials and face-to-face discussions.
 - 2. When the Master Plan and houses are designed (around Phase 3) and we have some conceptual plans, we will want to engage community members for feedback.
- vi. Will this scope of work take us to construction?
 - 1. It does if we have a building architect on board with the project. We do not at this time, we will need this person to actually produce the building design plans – could go in-house through PVE, work with Modular, or use another modular contractor.
 - 2. What would it cost to go through PVE for the building architect?
 - 3. We have also spoken with a company out of Homestead.
- vii. Can we build in such a way that if we ONLY build the 7 houses, they are not partially developed? (Example: Josh Gibson area sites.)
 - 1. The homes in this plan should be continuous. The phasing was also demonstrated in the design done by Module. All of the 1st and 2nd phase lots are publicly owned and pre-secured, but 3rd phase sites would need to be privately acquired.
 - 2. **Action Item:** Angela will share the previous design document from Modular.
- viii. **Vote:** Rebecca motioned to accept the proposal from PVE, Ericka seconded provided that we ensure they do not access the site without the rider in place. The vote passed unanimously with one abstention (Quincy was exiting the call).

b. Greenway

▣ Real Design

- i. Presented the conceptual design package prepared in August 2023.
- ii. The greenway is across from the Cross-Strauss Playground and borders Harlan Avenue.
- iii. Real Design was consulted last year alongside E Holdings and participated in the playground design process, and has an understanding of the overall development plans for the area.
- iv. The goal of the design is to increase the connection between the playground and the greenway so that the entire area is usable.
- v. We want a focal point when approaching from Cross Street, as well as a formal, welcoming entrance from along Strauss Street.
- vi. Feedback from the City Engage website indicated that residents were interested in a variety

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of native plants, a functional walkway, lighting, and seating.

- vii. Our site falls within the larger Perry South greenway. It can function as a catalyst for other projects in the space, which is helpful from the City's perspective.
- viii. There are two conceptual designs:
 - 1. Organic Forms emphasizes rounded shapes and soft angles. It features a paved plaza or garden space with a seat wall as a focal point, as well as fitness trails along Harlan Avenue. Native plants and gardens are present throughout.
 - 2. Fractals is a more angular design. It features a plaza with decorative paving as a focal point. Rather than curves, there would be more sharp angles connecting features.
- ix. In both designs, signs will be added that celebrate the history, heritage, and culture of the community. The planting palette has been reviewed by the City and other partners.
 - 1. Grounded will no longer be providing a review of the planting.
- x. Ryan and Angela are meeting on site tomorrow with Bob Mistick and a City planner.
 - 1. **Action Item:** CSAC and Real Design will engage the community for feedback before landing on a final design. We will also begin recruiting for the stewardship program.

🔗 AJoseyArt

- i. Planning to have the draft by September 22nd.
- ii. The sign will take 6 weeks for AlphaGraphics to produce, and Bob Mistick will put it in the ground for us with concrete posts.
- iii. The sign will highlight Dorothy Mae Richardson, Josh Gibson, and Connie Hawkins as well as some more recent community members.
- iv. After the first draft is shared, the CSAC board and community members should share feedback, and Ashante will incorporate changes and liaise with AlphaGraphics.
- v. Ashante will also reach out to Rebecca M. prior to September 22nd to check in.
- vi. **Action Item:** Board members should review the images shared by Angela (email)
 - 1. Are there any that we love and absolutely want to see in the design? Any that we believe should be omitted (provide reason)?
- vii. **Action Item:** Anglea will confirm photo permissions.
- viii. Questions:
 - 1. Will the size of the text be small? Will that depend on the amount of text?
 - a. It will depend on the amount of text, but the goal will be to ensure that it remains legible.

III. BOD Meeting Minutes Approval (vote) (Secretary Rebecca) 7:10 PM

- a. June & July Meeting Minutes
- b. [August Meeting Minutes](#): names & amounts to be redacted
 - i. **Vote:** Quincy motioned to approve the meeting minutes, La Rita seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.
- c. October Meeting = Community Meeting: October 17th, virtual, from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
 - i. Housing Development: Flocker Street Collaborative could present at this time
 - ii. Greenway Development: Real Design and AJoseyArt

IV. Financial Report (attached) (vote) (Treasurer Dr Arch) 7:15 PM

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- a. Statement of Activity & Financial Position
 - i. Additional money was deposited yesterday= restricted funds for Greenway. Angela will be picking up a check on Tuesday from Wes Banco – they are making a donation to the Cross-Strauss playground.
 - ii. **Vote:** Rebecca motioned to accept the statements of activity and financial position as presented, La Rita seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.
 - b. Grants: GEDTF funds
 - i. Application for affordable home development is due this September, which may also include lighting. Angela has spoken to representatives in Harrisburg who are supportive.
 - ii. **Vote:** Ericka motioned to approve the submission of the application, Rebecca seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.
 - c. Loans: NSLC / URA
 - i. NSLC: Angela is asking for NSLC to be able to apply for what is remaining from the Casino’s donated funds to be allocated to the affordable housing project.
 - ii. URA: CSAC would have needed to share information for the loan by September 24th to pass it along to the Housing Opportunity Fund this month, but won’t be able to. Our goal would be to submit in October.
- V. Safety Report (Amy Cotten) 7:20 PM – absent, no formal report**
- a. 311 Issues, NSPSC Meeting Report
 - i. Abandoned car in a turnaround at Josh Gibson – please boost this request
 - 1. Save the confirmed request and email to the group
 - b. Vacant lot maintenance
 - i. Angela will speak to Rebekkah Ranallo in the Mayor’s Office and also send out a 311 request for maintenance to occur at the predevelopment site (will also discuss other items).
 - ii. La Rita put in a 311 request for the lot, but ended up having to resubmit. She was also able to get PWSA to check the fire hydrants a couple of weeks ago.
 - 1. They are supposed to check these every 3 years, but are behind in the Charles Street Valley. A recent check on Strauss St realized or caused a water main break in two places. PWSA dug up, replaced old pipes but only in part, per PWSA forman. PWSA patch repaired the street with asphalt.
- VI. Executive Director’s Report (7:30 PM) (vote)**
- a. Predevelopment Agreements:
 - i. 4 Parcel Site Access License Agreement (URA): CSAC needs to review, approve, and pay \$1. This will enable our predevelopment contractors to access the site and begin work.
 - 1. **Vote:** Ericka motioned to execute the site access agreement, Rebecca seconded. The vote passed unanimously with no abstentions
 - 2. Discussion:
 - a. Will CSAC be held liable for activities on the site during our access term? If so, we will likely need a general liability rider added to our insurance policy.
 - b. **Action Item:** Anglea will request the general liability site access rider from the insurance company and instruct all contractors to NOT access the site until we

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have the insurance update in place.

- b. Letter of Support process: Flocker St Collaborative
 - i. Sean has requested a letter of support from the Charles Street Area Corporation. They have purchased an additional building at the corner of Flocker and Brighton Rd. Angela stated that the board would need an update and requested that they present to the board.
 - ii. **Action Item:** The Governance Committee should convene to develop a process for requesting letters of support, stipulating that they should be submitted in writing and would require a presentation to the board in order to initiate a vote for a letter of support.
- c. Pitt SOSW Community Organization Student Project
- d. Cross-Strauss Update
 - i. The pavilion and grill will now not be added this year due to a budget issue with DPW (bids over budget). As it stands, we will not have lighting or electricity during this phase of development.
 - ii. We can submit a right to know request to the URA to clarify how the budget has been spent and follow up with a request for a meeting with Sheila to advocate for the necessary improvements – perhaps inviting representatives to a board meeting.
 - iii. **Action Item:** Angela will submit a [right to know request](#) regarding the URA Avenues of Hope funding for Perry South. Angela will also email Andrea regarding the playground budget.

VII. Governance & Strategic Planning (vote) (Vice President Ericka) 7:40 PM

- a. Forms, Committees, Volunteerism, Advocacy
 - i. Committee should meet quarterly. **Action Item:** Ericka will schedule the next meeting.
- b. Strategic Planning
 - i. A strategic priority for the organization should be to secure a space that we can use to work and convene with community members and other stakeholders.
- c. CSAC taxes, DBA, SAM
 - i. SAM registration has been renewed

VIII. Marketing & Media & Communications (Secretary Rebecca) 7:50 PM

- a. Website Pages Update
 - i. Housing Updates page feedback from board members:
 - 1. Want to highlight affordable housing in particular, maybe in 3 sections: Renters, Potential Homeowners, and Existing Homeowners.
 - 2. Feature organizations with high level descriptions and bullet pointed programs rather than listing individual programs.
- b. Newsletter
- c. Announcements

IX. Adjournment: Rebecca motioned to adjourn at 9:03 PM, La Rita seconded.