

LIBERTY SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT

Community Engagement Session 04: Economic Development + Section 3 Hiring

Liberty Square Community Center

October 27, 2016 | 6:00 – 8:00pm

SUMMARY

The meeting focused on the economic development. Its goal was to provide the community with updates on the expanded training and economic opportunities that will be available to the community in conjunction with the redevelopment. Several visual presentations of the proposed retail shops, services, business center, and programs followed. Presenters responded to questions and comments from the community [See Meeting 4 Agenda]. Attendees were informed that a summary of the proceedings, accompanied by the full visual presentation, would be posted after the meeting at: www.newlibertysquare.com.

PROJECT UPDATE

Jorge Cibran, Development Division Director, *MDC PHCD*

The Liberty Square project has reached its first small milestone: In preparation for demolition and reconstruction, the first group of 5 units has been rehabilitated. Residents will be transferred to the newly rehabilitated units beginning next week.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION

Ivo Fernandez, Jr. *Modis Architects* [See: Modis Architects PDF]

The presentation focused on the spaces for economic development that will form part of the new Liberty Square. Mr. Fernandez highlighted the areas designated as retail, and their locations in the community. The retail spaces are designed to serve community members as well as the larger neighborhood. Parking will be available behind the stores. A colonnade will provide shade to encourage pedestrian traffic. The stores will define the entrance of Liberty Square. The Liberty Square plan includes three types of retail spaces:

- Small [Mom and Pop shops]
- Grocery store scaled to fit the Liberty Square context.
- Mid-size retail on the ground level of the mid-rise buildings.

INTERNSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Traci Pollack, *Miami Dade Economic Advisory Trust* [See: MDEAT PDF]

Presented a concept proposal for internships and gave a work overview of the Miami-Dade Economic Advisory Trust. Emphasized its focus on the creation of economic parity in their target communities.

She described the following programs:

- Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP)
- Economic Development Initiatives: Studies in their target areas to help small businesses.
- Youth Department Action Committees: Launching series of different services for Black mental health.
- Youth Intern Partnership Initiatives
 - o Miami-Dade County Teen Court, which has a successful track record of youth development
 - o Liberty City Internship and Training
 - o Small Business Creation
 - o Concept Proposal: Internships offered through collaboration with developers, targeted to college and high school students in the fields of architecture, engineering, building trades, public administration, and related fields
 - o Provides early and realistic exposure to potential careers
 - o 6-8 students chosen through an application/screening/selection process - TBD

MIAMI-DADE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Eric Knowles, *Miami Dade County Chamber of Commerce* [See: MDCCC PDF]

- Establishing a space in Liberty Square, brings the Chamber back to its original home
- Incubator and Business Center

- Creates opportunities for Black-owned businesses, and aspires to effect economic and social transformation in the community
- Space will be provided for the Chamber in the center of Liberty City
 - o Incubator/shared workspaces
 - o Access to professional expertise: Accountants, graphic designers, attorneys available to those who need help growing their businesses.
 - o Meeting space with computers, digital communication equipment for visiting companies
 - o Conference/ workshop space/board room/business center/ shared kitchen
 - o Printing and courier services as needed

URBAN CONSTRUCTION CRAFT ACADEMY

Bill Dozier, *Urban Construction Craft Academy* [See: UCCA PDF]

Now in its sixth year, Urban Construction Craft Academy grooms and trains Black men for a successful future. Its goal is to create the next generation of builders by providing them with hands-on training to compliment what they will learn in the classroom. The program also encourages entrepreneurship: it identifies people with passion for the building industry, and provides them with the skills they need to help them create their own business. The Related Group is currently assisting the program.

RESIDENT PROGRAM

Leeroy Jones, *Employ Miami-Dade*

Created two years ago, *Employ Miami-Dade* takes youth who live in the 18 poorest county zip codes and provides them training and skills in the areas of hospitality, construction, culinary arts, security and IT. Participants receive \$500 upon acceptance. They must enroll and attend all classes in a 30-day program of work-readiness training. After completing their training and mandatory drug testing, graduates receive a \$700 - \$1000 stipend, as well as a certificate. The amount of the stipend depends of the student's skill level.

- Those who study construction receive a toolkit for their work.
- Students receive a bus/ Metrorail pass weekly. They are encouraged to travel and become familiar with the larger metro area.
- Classes are held near Liberty Square.
- The program helps people find jobs.

Rick Beasley, *CareerSource South Florida*

The goal of *CareerSource South Florida* is to ensure that every citizen in the Miami-Dade County has an opportunity for employment. The targets are the communities with the highest crime rates and unemployment, as well as the 18 poorest zip codes in the County. Women comprise a majority of participants. Additional male participants are welcomed. All who complete training at *Employ Miami-Dade*, are eligible for job placement through *CareerSource*. Applicants undergo drug testing, and a background check. In addition, the program works with the Office of the State Attorney.

SECTION 3 HIRING

Kareem Brantley, *Related Urban* [See: Section 3 PDF]

Section 3 is a Federal [HUD] program that fosters economic development by permitting preference in hiring. First preference is given to individuals who live in public housing and who have low to very-low incomes. Handouts on the program, including the forms that need to be completed, are available at the front of the room. After the meeting, MDC PHCD staff will be available for consultation and for assistance with filling out forms. Everyone, even Liberty Square public housing residents, needs to complete an application.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS | COMMENTS | RESPONSES:

Q. Thank you to Mrs. Wilson for bringing the application that I requested. Who is going to be eligible for the *Employ Miami-Dade* program? Will people with disabilities qualify for funding? Does the program pay for child care services as well?

Q. I babysit for my grandson all day. Is there an option for me? I'd like to go to the program but my daughter works, and I take care of my grandson.

R: Students registered in the program can leave their children at NANA. Childcare is available at \$9/month for the entire duration of the program.

R. Mr. Jones notes that he is available to questions and offers his telephone number. A resident stands up and says that men in the community must become more involved.

Q. My son is 20 years old, an adult, and is currently in High School. I want to know if he qualifies for the program? I am worried that doors will not open for him.

A. Yes, he qualifies.

Q. When is the beginning of redevelopment (construction)?

R. Not sure of exact date for the demolition and reconstruction process, but as soon as possible. A HUD review is currently in process.

Q. Are people going to start moving next week?

R. Yes, we will rehabilitate units and move families in phases. Those who live in the first area to be demolished will be moved first. Construction related to rehabilitation of existing units has already begun. The first group of units will be available as soon as next week.

The redevelopment has been in process for a while. The drawings we have shared at these meetings are part of the redevelopment process. The meetings themselves are also part of the process. After the meetings conclude, detailed construction drawings will be completed and sent for approvals.

Q. I want to know whether there will be special outreach efforts to ensure that the new proposed retail spaces will be filled with Black businesses?

R. Yes, there will be outreach sessions. The Miami-Dade Chamber hosted one last week.

Q: Will there be buildings or areas that we could name after important people in our community? For example, could a building be named after the man who owned the first dry-cleaning business here and employed many people from the community?

A: There will be further conversation on that subject. We want the community to give input.

NOTE:

This document, drafted by FIU and finalized in consultation with Miami Dade County PHCD and Related Urban [RUDG], was prepared as a brief summary of the topics discussed on 10.27.2016. It does not constitute full minutes of the meeting.