

Urban Government Center TIF Public Hearing – April 18, 2024
Meeting Summary

Meeting started at 5:30pm.

Jeff O'Brien, Executive Director of Economic Development, presented an overview of the project and the TIF request. He indicated the Metro Council's Labor, Economics and Appropriations Committee will discuss the project again at their May 7, 2024 meeting.

Speakers:

1. Thomas Woodcock, 1375 S Brook St, stated he is opposed to the TIF as it's a bad deal for the city. He stated concerns about delays and secretive meetings over the past 2 years, that there were no binding elements in the TIF itself, no track record for the developer and that other city subsidies would be sought as part of this project. He indicated there were alternative plans that could be implemented on this site.

Mr. O'Brien clarified the "secretive" meetings over the past two years were the public meetings required for the rezoning process and the neighborhood advisory group. No other Metro subsidies, other than TIF and the property transfer, were being requested.

2. Steve Wiser, 2812 Reidling Ave, stated he was opposed to the TIF. He was concerned the TIF set a bad precedent as other housing, office, parking garages and hotels were being built without tax incentives. He stated the project was incompatible with the surrounding land uses. The buildings didn't need to be demolished and the redevelopment of the site could be more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. He was also concerned the developer did not have a track record.
3. Al Cornish, 10241 Dorsey Point, stated he supports the project and the TIF. He noted TIFs were good tools for cities to use to encourage redevelopment. He was presenting on behalf of the Bates CDC as its Vice President. He noted that Bates CDC would be benefitting from the project as it would provide job opportunities. He stated the properties are currently a blight on the community.
4. Brian Forrest, 1041 Fulham Ct, stated he was representing the developer and noted the same group that developed the northern areas of Paristown Pointe, that includes the Paristown Hall. He stated the previous Saturday there were 4,000 people in Paristown Pointe – so the developer does have track record in the neighborhood. The Urban Government Center site is catalytic for the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent neighborhoods. He also noted the developer already owns 814 Vine St.
5. John Gonder, 1000 Swan St, stated the project and process lacks vision and it should be an asset for the entire community versus for private development. He noted the administration's policy for the site is the same as the previous administration's. He stated the public land should be kept public.

6. Steve Magre, German Paristown Neighborhood Administration (**Please Note:** The below comments were taken from a written document he provided and the emphasis was added by Mr. Magre).

I want next to speak to each of you as one who understands your role and pressures, as I spent 24 years of my life as a City Legislator. You all together are 1 of the 2 remaining branches of City Government that by your charge should never accept as OK what can only be defined as the lead branch via out Mayor is being obvious in its move to say it wants you give the OK to single out 1 specific CBC member, dump the other 4 members as having a vote; and we all know the one that is wanted! If this does end up being the actual play out then all of you are tied to a strategy that was implemented to purposely mute 4 neighborhoods out of the blue, and silence four neighborhood areas that care greatly and it will have been done in a way that frankly equates breach! I'm not here to mince words!

What I have seen playing out over many months now is an intentional action by the Mayor to fully negate what needs to be the rightful influence coming from all but his NOT choosing to support this approach but to rather accent input as needing to come from one neighborhood only. What must be recommended next by the City to gain a CBA must come via the full community benefits committee that has been in place for years. Its having ability as a representative committee to influence should be on the basis of a public blessing by the Mayor and if not the Mayor then it certainly must come via the Council! What we need you all to help assure is the Mayor and his administration in bringing forth a final form of an agreement to you has an agreement in hand that has all 5 of the representatives of the CBC fully involved and not one of them are made to be muted.

So WHO IS LEFT TO CHECK ALL AND STEP UP TO ASSURE ALL PROCEEDS in THE RIGHT way. Well, IT IS CLEARLY NOW UP TO the second branch of City Government and you all as a body DO have that power and YES- YOU HAVE THE duty.

IN CLOSING, I WILL SHARE that from my Civic Courses taken as a student eons ago at Bellarmine; and from my 23 years as a city legislator WHAT HIGH QUALITY LEGISLATORS ARE CALLED ON TO DO MOST OFTEN IS THEIR administering checks and balances by IT IS THIS branch of City Government CAN ASSURE good government HAPPENS WHEN IT LOOK LIKE IT CAN NOT. As Council members each of you have the power MAKE THE DIFFERENCE HERE, and I pray you do. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

7. Deanne O'Daniel, 2211 Dearing Ct, stated she is concerned with demolition of the buildings and noted the buildings can be cleaned up and re-used. She noted that tourism is a major component of Louisville's economy and historic buildings are major attractions. She also noted her concern with the loss of green space. She noted if the developer is seeking a TIF, they should be required to include a library.
8. Cindy Pablo, 1039 Lampton, stated she lives in Paristown Pointe. She noted that the neighborhood worked in 1997-1998 with Alderman Steve Magre to become an official neighborhood association. She indicated the current developer was chosen because of the failure of previous groups. She noted the neighborhood advisory groups have been working for 2 years and had only been negotiating for their own special interests. She stated the

neighborhood didn't need a park as there were only 20 kids. She stated the community wants its garden improved. She stated she supported the project.

9. Derek Pedolzky, Limerick Neighborhood Association, stated he was opposed to the TIF as the city has many other needs including housing, funding for the Office of Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods. City tax dollars should not go to one developer. He indicated concern with the developer's track record and noted there were alternatives plans for the site.
10. Valerie Magnus, Soil and Water Conservation District, 2015 W Main St, stated she was opposed to the TIF. She indicated the plan needed more green space and affordable housing. She also indicated the paw paw trees on site should be preserved. She stated the project is designed for a world that no longer exists and is not helping the city prepare for the climate emergency.
11. Amy Luckett, Original Highlands Advisory Group Member, 1427 Christie, stated the public property is priceless. The project needs to have sustainable landscaping and more affordable housing. She state the developer has not been willing to negotiate on these issues and the land will be sold after the TIF is approved. She stated the city could do better.
12. Gail Howard, 807 Guillion Court, President of Paristown Pointe Neighborhood Association, stated that she agrees with Cindy Pablo's comments. She stated the Paristown Pointe Neighborhood Association would sign the community benefits agreement. She also stated she was concerned with the condition of the buildings and supports the project.
13. Frank Ford, 1038 Lampton, stated that he was opposed to the project. He stated the community should only grant TIFs if the community gets something it wants.
14. Glen Dentinger, 1939 Payne Street, stated the public land should be designed to benefit the public. He stated he is opposed to the TIF. He stated he is concerned with the growing urban heat island and thought the property should be developed more responsibly.
15. Rebecca Minnick, German-Paristown Advisory Group Member, 1038 Breckinridge St, indicated the project will impact neighborhoods surrounding the site – not just Paristown Pointe. She agreed with many of the previous speakers and noted the property is the same size as Tyler Park. She stated she had been following the process since 2017. She said the primary issues for the Neighborhood Advisory Group were – providing more green space with a playground and affordable housing. She stated the project should adhere to LEED standards and the rent thresholds should be lower than 80% AMI. She stated the land is an opportunity for the community. She stated her concern about the developer's capacity and is opposed to the TIF.
16. Joanne Robinson, 854 Vine St, stated she loves the lower Paristown development. She stated the immediate neighbors wanted the development. She stated the neighborhood needs balance between affordable housing and market rate housing. She noted the developer has a track record in the neighborhood and supports the TIF.
17. James Heck, 1134 Breckinridge St, could stand to benefit from the project because he owns Seidenfaden's. He stated the neighborhood does not seem to want the project and the city should take that into account.

18. Chris Wells, Vice Present, German Paristown Neighborhood Association, stated that the neighborhood doesn't want the project. He stated the project does not address climate change and the city is not really getting any benefit from the project. He said the city is cutting a deal with one neighborhood association.
19. Ameerah Granger, Chickasaw Neighborhood, stated her neighborhood was in the West End Opportunity Partnership TIF. She stated it seems that TIFs are going longer and that she does not recall TIFs running for 20 years. She stated the process should be restarted and that she is opposed to the TIF.
20. Michael Zuckerman, Greystone, Northbrook, IL, stated he walked the property and is an advocate for affordable housing and historic preservation. He stated that development is hard to finance. He stated that the buildings should be preserved and would be an opportunity for affordable senior housing.
21. Selena Filichia (via WebEx), 1926 Swan St, stated that she works in an office building that is 40% occupied and is concerned that the office use is not viable. She stated she lives three blocks away from the site. She said she has concerns about the developer and does want to see the opportunity to create more green space be wasted. She noted the building should be preserved.
22. Shannon Musselman (via WebEx), Lampton St, stated she has concerns about the community benefits agreement. She stated the agreement should be signed by all neighborhood associations. She said the building can be saved and is opposed to the proposed hotel location.

Meeting concluded at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff O'Brien
Executive Director
Economic Development