

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tulsa Development Authority Board of Commissioners Special Meeting

Rudisill Regional Library
1520 N. Hartford
Tulsa, OK 74106
Room – Ancestry Hall

Thursday – November 18, 2019
5:30 p.m.

Present:

Nancy Lynn Roberts, Chairwoman
Carl Bracy, Commissioner

Absent:

Steve Mitchell, Vice Chairman
Thomas Boxley, Commissioner

O.C. Walker II, Executive Director
Jot Hartley, General Counsel

Also, Present:

Brenda Alford
Darrick Bramlett
Joyce Brown
Travis Cephus
Arthur Candler
Rev. Andrea Chambers
Tracie Chandler
Debra Dickens
Nick Doctor
Lamar Guillory
Vanessa Hall-Harper
Rose Hardwick

Also, Present:

Kian Kamas
Terry McGee
Julie Miner
Ashley Philippsen
Nathan Pickard
Burlinda Radney
Mike Reed
Etta Taylor
Anthony Vice
Kandi White
Jerod Widemon
Jane Ziegler

Also, Present:

Jane Malone
Demauri Myers
Nicole Travis
Carol Young

The Special Meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m. by Chairwoman Roberts

1. **Roll Call:** Chairwoman Roberts called roll: Commissioner Bracy was present. Vice Chairman Mitchell and Commissioner Boxley were absent. Since votes would not be taken, a quorum was not needed.
2. **Welcome, Review Agenda and Establish Roles**

- a. **Nancy Lynn Roberts, TDA Chairwoman**

Chairwoman Roberts opened the meeting by thanking the Unity-Heritage Citizens Advisory Team (UHCAT) for being in attendance. Mrs. Roberts acknowledged their reasons for being a part of this group because of the love they have for their community, their desire to be the voice of change and the determination to not give up. Roberts stated those three things are mission critical to what the group is about to embark on coming together, looking forward and see what we can do to make a difference.

Roberts noted there is a great deal of activity in Tulsa focused on looking back at what has taken place in the past in Tulsa for this community. She stated that looking back can be uncomfortable, eye opening, and even painful, but ultimately it is designed to break down walls that have been built up over the years. Roberts emphasized that UHCAT, together with TDA and the City, will be focused less on looking back and more on looking forward to a brighter future.

Roberts explained that TDA initially formed the Unity-Heritage Citizen Advisory Team as a part of the Sector planning process. The Sector Plan is designed to lay out the vision for this section of North Tulsa, and it should reveal how the community imagined what North Tulsa could look like in the future. Roberts reminded the group there was a proposed amendment to the Sector Plan that was designed to do certain legal things that it created confusion, questions and concerns. Roberts expressed appreciation to the City and City Councilor Vanessa Hall-Harper for deciding to press pause and take the time for the citizens in North Tulsa to understand the purpose of the amendment and its full impact.

Roberts stated the focus for this group now is to determine how we can all come together to move forward into a new future where we put an end to segregation, discrimination and hatred from the past to build a rich, diverse, highly integrated, loving and respectful community of the future.

Roberts forecasted that tonight's meeting was about three things: (1) the purpose, (2) the outcomes that are needed from the UHCAT, and (3) the process the UHCAT will follow going forward.

- b. **Ashley Philippsen, Deputy Chief, Community Development and Policy**

Ashley Philippsen, Deputy Chief of Community Development and Policy, introduced herself and thanked everyone in attendance, as well as their dedication of time to the group. Mrs. Philippsen established the roles within the UHCAT to keep the group on track, asking for volunteers. Volunteers were: Lamar Guillory – Note-taker, Etta Taylor – Timekeeper and Travis Cephus – Focus-minder.

3. Understanding and Clarifying the Purpose

a. What is the purpose of the Unity Heritage Citizens Advisory Team (UHCAT)?

i. O.C. Walker, TDA Executive Director

TDA Executive Director spoke about the purpose of the Unity Heritage Community Advisory Team (UHCAT) which is to provide input and suggestions surrounding the proposed amendment to the Unity-Heritage Sector Plan that was approved in 2016. The purpose of the Sector Plan is to add additional language to make it an Urban Renewal Plan, therefore by constituting the eminent domain and condemnation.

Walker stated the underlying intent of the UHCAT meetings are to ensure there is a clear development plan for the neighborhood that aligns resources from TDA, the City, and community leaders that has a clear guidance and buy-in from the community it seeks to serve.

Walker further stated that TDA and the City hope to integrate UHCAT discussions into current planning efforts that impact the Unity Heritage community, particularly the housing study and Kirkpatrick Heights-Greenwood Area Master Plan, as well as establish a process that provides information on community development tools and pros and cons of their application within this neighborhood, and ultimately provide community input to TDA and the City on where Eminent Domain can be an effective tool in the implementation of the Unity Heritage Sector Plan. The charge of the UHCAT is to look at the amendment and see how we can establish a goal to make the quality of development in North Tulsa better.

Tracie Chandler asked if the City was concerned with the definition of Blight and the scope of the Blight study?

Walker responded and stated we are all concerned and moving forward, hopefully TDA and the City can lean on the UHCAT to receive their input and guidance on how to best move forward in this process.

Etta Taylor also raised a concern regarding political voting power being taken away if the community was integrated. What are we doing to ensure we keep our political power for African Americans?

Roberts responded and stated Taylor's concerns were heard and appreciated. Roberts reminded the goal of the meeting is to focus on the purpose of the UHCAT, the outcomes to be achieved as a group and the process to be followed. Roberts noted the group tonight would be developing a list of topics to be discussed in separate workshops over the course of the meetings in the upcoming year. She noted Taylor's concerns might be appropriate for one of those workshops.

4. Understanding and Clarifying Outcomes

a. What are our intended outcomes?

Nick Doctor, Chief of Community Development and Policy, spoke about eminent domain and for it to be considered, what tools and resources are already there and if they are going to be used, where should it be used specifically and in what context. Part of the process that needs to be discussed to ensure it aligns with the group is, how do we create a process to get the information and for the community to be aware of all the tools. Having those final conversations on where we would get this broader range of development tools we have, as we further understand eminent domain.

The proposed outcomes for the UHCAT are as follows:

To include members of UHCAT as participants in the Housing Study and Kirkpatrick Heights-Greenwood Master Planning efforts that focuses specifically on what is the current demand for housing, what is the supply for housing, where the gaps would be in demand and supply and how are we ensuring as development incurs, that residents are not wrongly displaced, and that the neighborhoods are benefitting from the development. Doctor also stated before development takes place the City wanted to ensure there was:

1. Put a community-led Master Plan in process to reveal what the development should look like and desires for UHCAT to be included in the process.
2. Identify the top areas of concern for the UHCAT as it relates to Unity Heritage neighborhood redevelopment efforts including things like gentrification and the possible impact on political representation and what that looks like.
3. Evaluate the definition of blight, how blight impacts the community and what criteria should be the focus when determining what to do about blighted areas.
4. Build knowledge and skills to address community concerns.

Lamar Guillory asked if ways can be explored to ensure African American Developers/Contractors participate in development and provide a way for a percentage of residents to participate in ownership of multi-housing developments.

Doctor responded and stated that land ownership and development are key pieces for both the housing study and housing strategy to consider.

b. What does success look like at the end of the UHCAT process?

i. Nick Doctor, Chief of Community Development and Policy

Doctor spoke on what success can look like towards the end of the process which includes: developing a communication strategy to ensure our work and progress is shared within the networks and communities, as well as develop a recommendation for the City of Tulsa and TDA on how to proceed with the proposed amendment to the Unity-Heritage Sector Plan. Doctor also spoke about the timelines for the Housing Study that will be complete in January of 2020. The Master Plan process to select a Consultant will be no later than December 2019 and the selection of the Consultant by January or February of 2020. Within 6-9 months, the City hopes to have the Master Plan complete and adopted by the fourth quarter of 2020, as well as work toward having the key studies complete before UHCAT makes their recommendations.

5. Understanding and Clarifying the Process

a. What approaches will we need to use to achieve success?

i. Ashley Philippsen, Deputy Chief, Community Development and Policy

Philippsen suggested everyone provide as much insight to the process as they can in the meeting so that at the next meeting even more progress can be made. Tracie Chandler added there should be 5-6 more meetings with the UHCAT to ensure that nothing is missed and there is enough time in the process for everything to be communicated and understood regarding eminent domain.

Taylor questioned where the money comes from for redevelopment in Urban Renewal Plans and if it all came from the citizens tax dollars. TDA Executive Director, O.C. Walker, provided in his answer the money that provides opportunities for redevelopment can come from a variety of resources – federal, state, city, public, and private. Arthur Candler reiterated the need for transparency from City officials to preserve the trust and inclusion of the citizens.

6. Identifying Challenges and Prioritizing Workshop Areas

a. How will these concerns guide our focus and process?

i. Ashley Philippsen, Deputy Chief, Community Development and Policy

Roberts stated that Ashley Philippsen will be a new Commissioner for TDA. She knows that she has been recommended, but not sure that Ashley has accepted the recommendation.

Roberts also mentioned to her knowledge not one TDA Commissioner has actively been involved in exercising the power of eminent domain occur since they have been a Commissioner of TDA. Roberts noted that the workshop topics will help everyone get up to speed and educated on how eminent domain works in Oklahoma and what the City of Tulsa and TDA's current policies are around exercising it.

Travis Cephus suggested that as many people come to the planned trainings as often as possible.

Etta Taylor asked if the UHCAT and Sector Plan falls through, what will happen?

Roberts reiterated that the UHCAT and TDA and the City will all be coming together throughout this process of learning, will collaborate as the UHCAT come up with their recommendations so ideally nothing will fall through with the process. Taylor explained her experience with education in Tulsa, when recommendations have been made to a board, the board comes up short on what was suggested and leaves them feeling ignored.

Doctor recognized that the Tulsa City Council made clear that the plans would not move forward until there was adequate input from the citizens of the community. It will be a lengthy process, but

as long as there is adequate information coming from the group, then things should move forward in the long run.

A question was asked about who chose the individuals that were sitting in the room to serve on the UHCAT. Vanessa Hall-Harper mentioned that each City Councilor is responsible for choosing who should participate in a citizen advisory team for their district. She had named the individuals. Doctor explained that the original UHCAT was formed many years ago when the Sector Plan was being developed, but that this new UHCAT was formed with the understanding that the citizens who were actively involved today in the community would need to be the ones giving input into the process.

Philippsen reminded the UHCAT there will be workshops implemented for the UHCAT based on what information the UHCAT members may need and encouraged them to identify priorities to add to the priorities and parking lot topics that Kian Kamas has already started writing down on the easel pads on the wall.

Future Workshop Topic Ideas:

1. Planning for educational infrastructure
2. Defining & determining/mapping blight
3. Property Valuation & Eminent Domain process
4. How do we fund development? And what are the tools
5. Housing Study Presentation & Overview
6. Building capacity to increase numbers of, and among African American developers
7. Tools to promote and ensure African American ownership in property and businesses
8. TDA and COT processes/policies for property acquisition & use of Eminent Domain
9. Rates of INCOG/TDA/COT
10. Urban renewal overview (Examples of plans that don't use Eminent Domain)
11. Public Health/safety & role in the use of Eminent Domain
12. Design/Engineering decisions
13. COT programs for demolition & acquisition beyond Eminent Domain
14. Tools for housing rehabilitation & reinvestment
15. THD & health risks and housing
16. Tools to help residents invest & stay in homes
17. CDBG funding award process
18. Banking & Historical Legacy of Red lining, ongoing barriers
19. Overview to of Sector Plan & language in plan
20. Strategies to prevent/minimize gentrification
21. Overview of employment focused & economic mobility initiatives – city & state
22. Historical designations

7. Remaining Questions, Comments or Concerns

- i. **Ashley Philippsen, Deputy Chief, Community Development and Policy**

Philippsen and Doctor handed out surveys for everyone in attendance to complete about their view of the material that was covered in the UHCAT meeting. UHCAT members expressed their concerns on the need for transparency and their wishes that their opinions be heard.

8. Closing, Next Steps and Adjournment

i. Nancy Roberts, TDA Chairwoman

Roberts and Philippsen advised as to the next steps of the process. They informed the UHCAT that the information gathered in the meeting will be distributed to those that were unable to attend the meeting and the next meeting date will be set for them to meet in 6 weeks.

Roberts expressed that many times when redevelopment and revitalization occurs, gentrification is an unintended consequence. The meetings with the UHCAT are intended to identify the issues the community could possibly face because of gentrification and to help identify preventive measures that can be put in place to help minimize the otherwise adverse impacts that redevelopment and revitalization has on the community.

General Counsel Hartley encouraged everyone to revisit the goals of the Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan that was approved by the Tulsa City Council in 2016. It will provide a better understanding, regarding the nature of the process.

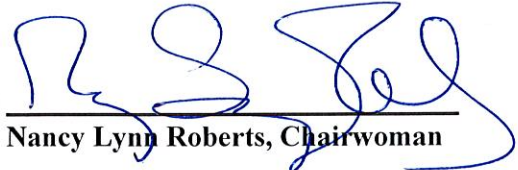
The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Approved as to legal form and adequacy:



Jot Hartley, Esq., General Counsel

Tulsa Development Authority:

By: 

Nancy Lynn Roberts, Chairwoman

[11-21-19 – Special Meeting Minutes – dm/nt/jm/nr]