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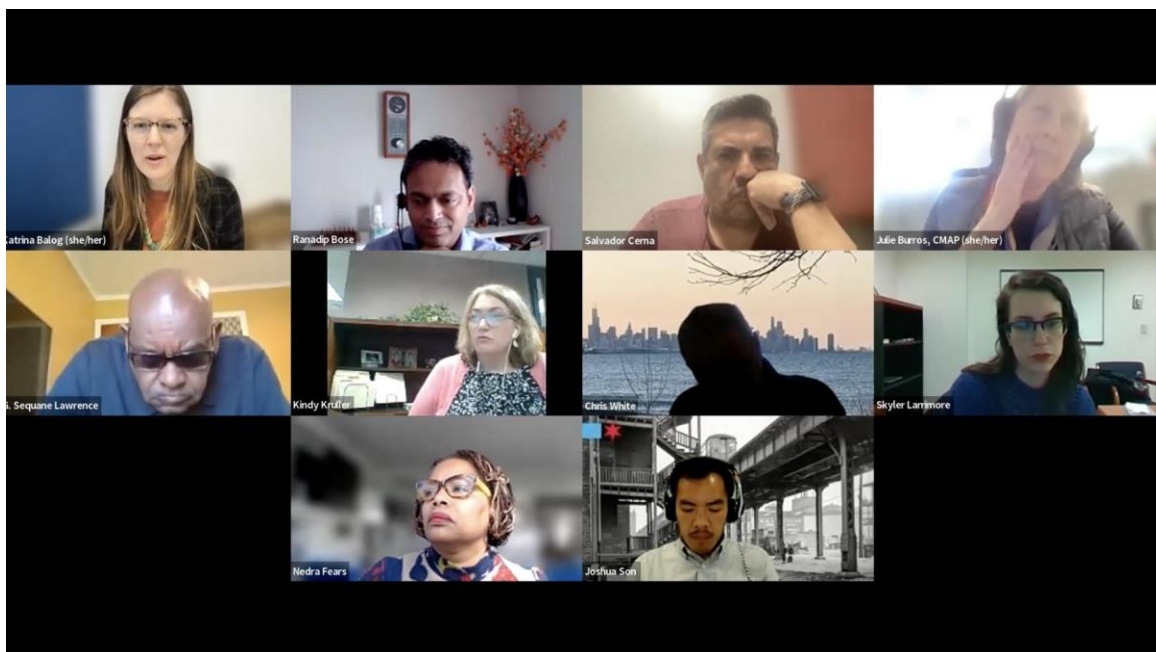
Economic Development Meeting #12

April 26, 2022, 02:00PM | 2 hours

Documented by: Archit Baskaran

ATTENDEES

- Katrina Balog
- Lynnette McRae
- Skyler Larrimore
- Nneka Onwuzurike
- Salvador Cerna
- Tina Augustus
- Alec Singer
- Cindy Plante
- Julie Burros
- Ranadip Bose
- Kindy Kruller
- G. Sequane Lawrence
- Chris White
- Nedra Fears
- Joshua Son
- Vamsidhar Kurakula



MEETING GOAL

Discuss and refine policies within the final pillar document to be presented to the city.

WHERE WE ARE

Step 1

We Are*Setting the Stage*

Step 2

We Have and Need*Develop A Policy Toolkit*

Step 3

We Will*Set Policy Framework***KEY TAKEAWAYS****1**

The Advisory Committee provided two main updates: the first update was regarding questions around economic development priorities: where development happens (neighborhood/community versus downtown), the role of transit, and opportunities for BIPOC-run businesses. The second main update was to highlight the importance of strengthening communication across pillars.

2

The pillar team discussed feedback from the Artist Engagement Report and the Community Partner Engagement Report, followed by the We Will Chicago (WWC) framework plan outline. A draft of the Framework Plan will be made available at the next (and final) meeting. Next, community feedback will be incorporated and the plan will be sent to the Chicago Plan Commission for adoption.

3

A majority of the pillar team's meeting was spent discussing the pillar's goals and objectives. Participants focused on goals 3-5, discussing critiques or modifications along the way.

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

“I think that this question of community ownership—in terms of their labor and work—is important, particularly if we talk about neighborhood-centered investment, like in the West and South. What do folks in those communities think about how they should deploy labor?”

G. Sequane Lawrence | President/CEO, Revolution Institute

“There are a lot of industries where they exclude people with [criminal] records for no good reason—especially where their offense is not related to their ability to do that job. I’ve been seeing a lot about temp agencies. I have been to so many factories and warehouses, especially on the West Side, where someone with a record was working next to someone without a record. They’re doing the exact same job, but the person with a record is making half as much and they’re working through a temp agency.”

Chris White | Citywide Equitable Development Organizer, Alliance of the Southeast (ASE)

“There is a very limited flow of private and capital funding. But actually public, mission-driven, philanthropic, and faith-based organizations have a lot more funding. The problem is that it’s just not enough. The scale of private funding is way higher. But we need to put in more public funding to leverage some of those private sources.”

Ranadip Bose | Senior Vice President, SB Friedman Development Advisors

“I think that we need to be able to promote specific neighborhoods, so it goes beyond episodic media stories, but really looking at what the assets there are in the community and promoting those specific communities. We have really good traction in Chatham. It’s one of the few communities where our population actually increased by 2% over the past decade and our homeownership rate went up. That was through a concerted marketing effort by our community.”

Nedra Fears | Executive Director, The Greater Chatham Initiative

“One of the things we don’t do enough is lift the culture, conditions, and history of people in these neighborhoods that are unique and exceptional ... We have to understand those traditions and the cultural uniqueness in the history of these people, and the mixture of these neighborhoods that make them magical.”

Salvador Cerna | Community Outreach Director, Economic Strategies Development Corporation

NOTES

1. Lynnette McRae provided updates from the WWC Advisory Committee and fielded Q&A.

- a. McRae's first update was regarding the main questions the Advisory Committee received, including: a) How they were valuing community and neighborhood economic development versus downtown-area development; b) How they were thinking about transit and mobility as part of economic development; c) How they were thinking about small business run by BIPOC communities as it relates to economic development.
- b. Her second update was that many of the core topics the Advisory Committee discussed had significant overlap with the work from other We Will Chicago teams. She noted a need to improve cross-communication between the different pillar teams to better collaborate on shared priorities.

2. Katrina Balog shared feedback themes from the Artist Engagement Report and the Community Partner Engagement Report gathered from Meeting #7:

- a. Themes from the artist engagement report included financial literacy, beautification, business co-ops, environmental standards, placemaking and place keeping. Themes from the community partner report included access to capital, planning and zoning, mentorship, fines for polluting and frustration with city processes.

3. Ranadip Bose discussed updates from the WWC framework plan outline.

- a. He noted that the process is in its final stages. The framework plan will serve as a guiding document for future implementation of policies. The foundation of the plan relies on converting questions from pillar teams into concrete goals and objectives. A first draft will be made available at the next (and final) meeting. Throughout the summer, the teams will gather and incorporate feedback from Chicago community members. The framework plan will then be sent to the Chicago Plan Commission for adoption.

4. The pillar team next discussed the individual goals and objectives in the pillar document.

- a. Balog first noted two changes that the committee made already:
 - i. Objective 1.1 was changed from "partnering with banks" to "increase access to responsible capital, financial, and banking services in Black and Latino communities."
 - ii. Goal 2 was changed from "small business growth." to "support business growth throughout Chicago, especially businesses owned by Black and Latino people."
- b. The rest of the conversation centered on goals 3-5.

- i. Objective 3.1 (Promote career pathways to high-quality, living-wage jobs in growing and sustainable industries):
 - 1. Nedra Fears requested clarification on what “sustainable” means. Ranadip Bose defined it as environmental and economic sustainability—that is, enabling resilience and growth in the future. Skyler Larrimore pointed out that none of the policies at present speak about environmental sustainability, such as green jobs.
 - 2. Alec Singer asked whether the team was reopening the conversation around what the sectors are (which he noted were already decided upon) versus carving out environmentally sustainable opportunities within the already-decided sectors. Lynette McRae echoed these sentiments and wanted to know what was different in what the pillar team was doing.
 - 3. G. Sequane Lawrence noted that there should be an emphasis on sectors focused on reckoning racial disparities, such as sectors that tackle disproportionate incarceration of Black communities.
- ii. Objective 3.2 (enhance employer leadership in hiring, retaining, and promoting diverse workforces).
 - 1. Kindy Kruller noted that the team needs to take a long-term view of policies without referencing specific organizations or initiatives. Moreover, she noted that the team ought to figure out what new jobs will look like, centering employees as the Great Resignation is still occurring. Finally, she noted that the team needs to promote access to strong workers’ rights and protections by engaging workers in the process.
 - 2. There were many thoughts on “scaling” existing efforts around what working groups are doing already. There was additional conversation around the focus being two-fold: first on the employee, then on the industry. Team members noted the importance of focusing on middle management.
 - 3. G. Sequane Lawrence suggested that teams design an initiative in which workforce investment is pegged to various indices. Moreover, he brought up the importance of considering community ownership of labor and work in terms of neighborhood-centered investment on the South and West sides, where there is more entrepreneurial and gig-work related activity.
- iii. Objective 3.3 (identify and remove barriers to job participation)

1. G. Sequane Lawrence and Chris White noted that these do not presently address the dire need for sectors (especially health and finance) to become more welcoming to people with criminal records.
 2. Julie Burros pushed the team to think about how they may be able to flip the focus toward employees; for example, “help people with disabilities find work in which their disability is an asset” or urge older people to consider fields they may not have considered prior.
 3. Nedra Fears brought up the importance of thinking about city resources that could help support employees, such as providing housing to housing insecure people.
- iv. Objective 4.1 (create vibrant and stable neighborhoods that remain affordable for existing residents and businesses)
1. Committee members discussed the need to map out a process for how the neighborhood plans will be considered, adopted and operationalized by the City. They discussed how many factors in the process overlap and how plans need to remain flexible in case of unpredictable factors like COVID-19.
- v. Objective 4.2 (empower local residents and businesses to shape investment in their neighborhoods)
1. This is being shifted to the new civic and community engagement pillar.
- vi. Objective 4.3 (facilitate the creation of thriving commercial corridors in Black and Latino community areas)
1. Joshua Son noted that the team ought to raise awareness about existing initiatives, such as the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF)
- vii. Objective 4.4 (enhance the public sector’s toolkit of financial incentives for neighborhood economic development)
1. Ranadip Bose noted that private funding is far more scalable but limited when compared to public funding and philanthropic/faith-based sources of funding on the South and West sides of Chicago. He noted that further public investments are needed on both sides of the city in order to then generate greater private investment. He also noted that they may need to create a new funding source. Some other cities have a separate funding source specifically for housing development.

- viii. Objective 5.1 (change the narrative about Chicago’s South and West side neighborhoods)
 - 1. Kindy Kruller noted the importance of defining “media,” as well as who the audience would be. She then suggested wording changes and proposed including something along the lines of “create positive stories through media and art.”
 - 2. Nedra Fears noted the importance of having marketing campaigns from the neighborhood level. She cited the example of Chatham, where homeownership (and residents themselves) increased over the past decade. She stressed the distinction between events to build traction and a broader approach to these marketing campaigns.
- ix. Objective 5.2 (promote South and West side neighborhood destinations to tourists and residents alike)
 - 1. Salvador Cerna commented, “One of the things we don’t do enough is lift the culture, conditions, and history of people in these neighborhoods that are unique and exceptional... We have to understand those traditions and the cultural uniqueness in the history of these people, and the mixture of these neighborhoods that make them magical.”

5. The pillar team concluded the meeting with a very brief Q&A and closeout.

RESOURCES

INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE

[More details about city efforts to revitalize industrial corridors](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILLAR ARTIST AND ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK REPORT

[Summary of findings from community outreach events led by Enneressa Davis and Vanessa Stokes](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILLAR COMMUNITY PARTNER FEEDBACK REPORT

[Summary of findings from conversations with local organizations and businesses](#)

THE 4 A.M. ARMY

[A TIME Magazine article on temp agencies referenced during the meeting](#)

NEXT STEPS

- The research team will review all the notes from the team meeting in addition to the comments written in the margins. They will draft their report afterward.
- The pillar team will have its final meeting on Tuesday, June 7, at 2 p.m. They will review the work done thus far and the work from other pillar teams.
- There will be an all-pillar meeting at the end of June, similar to the first kickoff meeting last summer, to celebrate their work over the past year.