

MINUTES OF GPA GENERAL MEETING OF SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2021

Call to Order/Attendance – taken from Zoom meeting roster by Bob Keck.

Guest Speakers: Kevin Fitzpatrick, Chief Operating Office of the Greater Rochester YMCA and the Carlson Metrocenter, and Bret Garwood, CEO of Home Leasing.

Main Agenda:

Megan introduced Kevin Fitzpatrick, Chief Operating Officer of the YMCA of Greater Rochester and Carlson Metrocenter YMCA. Kevin grew up in Rochester and returned in 2006. He is a 37 year veteran of various YMCA branches in the national YMCA network.

Background of Y's decision to terminate its fitness membership

Effective April 1, 2021, the Board of Directors of the Metrocenter decided to terminate permanently its operation of the Y's membership fitness program. The Board's rationale was that it could no longer dedicate financial resources to sustain a building with about 70,000 square feet allocated to fitness activities, when so few people were using it on a daily basis. However, the Metrocenter will continue to offer child care services and other programs for children and teens at the site.

Kevin presented an update on the changes in programming at the MetroCenter YMCA branch. His screen presentation is available at <http://www.groveplace.org/meeting-minutes.html>. Two screenshots are attached to these minutes.

Below is a summary of the salient points:

All 17 YMCA branches here are operating at a deficit which has precluded the Y's ability to support City Mission Delivery with surpluses for the foreseeable future. Annual revenue is greater than 50% less than prior revenue. The Y lost more than 60% of its membership and program revenue.

The Metrocenter wasn't eligible for COVID PPE loans on the first two rounds due to its large network. There has been some relief with the third round of PPE funds. The Y was back to 50% of its pre-COVID membership and they had hoped to increase usage to 85%. But there were only @100 visits per day when COVID first rules eased up. Not counting COVID months, the Y's membership and financial capacity consistently has been low for several years. There was no source of subsidies to get the Carlson Center through the next few years. They talked with UR and other entities to see if there could be collaboration, but to no effect.

Kevin showed a screen shot of the Y's situation in membership decline at Carlson, citing a 10 year decline in financial results and trends. Subsidies needed to continue membership is \$750,000 to \$1 million per year.

Kevin said that the Y was informed by the City that the 13 school programs cannot return to the Y in the fall due to COVID so that revenue will also be lost.

Q&A with Kevin:

Q: What does the future hold?

A. Kevin couldn't say. However, they will not sell the building. The Metrocenter's best niche is child care and youth development, wellness programs, food equity, community services, and programs to make meaningful impact on racial and educational inequities. He cited the success of the Lewis Center. The Board has created a 6-month task force in place to put together a strategic plan for how the Y can better serve the city. Jeanne Strazzabosco is on the task force as a Community Advocate.

Q: how does terminating the membership program recoup the \$700,000K deficit Kevin cited?

A: The Metrocenter building has 70K square feet. The membership program required a large cost for space, staff and deferred maintenance. The membership program drained funds from its mission of child care and children's programs. The Pittsford Y raised \$20M and borrowed \$20M. The YMCA loses money at every branch. Combined losses for all 17 branches are @\$400,000 a month now.

Q: Is there any option to offer reduced fitness programs such as Pilates, Yoga - something for neighborhood residents who have used the facility for years? The task force can consider this.

Q. GPA was very disappointed that there was no outreach to us or to donors before the Y Board decided to terminate the membership program --especially because GPA and its members have long supported the Y.

A: Kevin replied – that was a missed opportunity but they did engage community members from many entities across the community.

Q: What can GPA provide to be helpful. He said contact Jeanne Strazzabosco for input.

Kim introduced Bret Garwood.

Bret Garwood joined Home Leasing in 2017. He serves as Chief Executive Officer for Home Leasing and Home Leasing Construction. Bret provides executive leadership and oversees the day-to-day operations of the company. Home Leasing (HL) has built all the properties on Charlotte St. and is completing Union Square on Union St. at East Ave.

Before returning to Home Leasing, Bret served as Senior Vice President for Multifamily Programs for New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). Bret also served as Director of Business and Housing Development for the City of Rochester from 2007-2013.

Bret presented an update on downtown development. His presentation is mostly about the Inner Loop. HL's specialty is affordable housing, but they do build some market rate properties. In addition to development, they have a construction arm. HL is a Certified B Corporation.

The Inner Loop East (ILE) has 7 parcels (but Bret added Charlotte St. properties in his map because it was a part of ILE project).

Union Square has 21 units for LGBTQ residents that are subsidized apartments in partnership with Trillium, which will occupy a portion of the first floor near East Ave. There will be some other commercial space at the other end.

All of HL's rental facilities have exercise rooms, public art, and some open space. Union Square has a concrete covered patio between the two main buildings.

HL uses green building features, including solar energy.

There are several other developers building on Union St. (including the new VIDA apartments and the Konar construction at The Strong campus). Bret showed statistics to prove that a portion of these units are for lower income residents. Rents will range from \$400 up to \$3,000 per month.

Q&A with Bret

Q: Someone opined that the Union St. development gentrification.

A. Bret replied: the developments on Union Street are not gentrification. Units are designed for low-income and working poor, and some are for people with other special needs.

Q. Are the subsidized apartments different from the market rate units?

A. HL apartments all have the same design. Contrast with Charlotte Square, which is market rate, so it has different apartment designs. HL rental units all have exercise rooms.

Q: GPA wants to encourage single family for sale housing downtown. Why is it so difficult? What are the obstacles?

A. Bret replied: HL did the Charlotte townhomes. But single home development is very different downtown – these projects are only feasible at a very high cost range \$400,000 to \$500,000. So it's risky and less profitable for developers to finance. For example, without the tax abatement, the Charlotte St. Townhomes wouldn't have been built.

Q. When ILE was designed, how did developers acquire the parcels on Union St.?

A. The City did an RFP for each parcel and sold all the parcels at appraised value. Everyone was required to pay the appraised value.

Q. What are some details about the Christa development on Union between Charlotte St. and East Ave.?

A. All are affordable mixed income (similar to HL Union Square). One quarter to one-thirds of the Christa units are designated as affordable and will be supervised with Veterans and Christian Life. Howard Konar's development next to The Strong will be mostly market rate, with some units for moderate income levels.

Discussion ensued regarding the lessons learned with ILE:

Q. GPA members have design and open space concerns. The ILE is very densely developed. The City assumed that if they asked for green space in their RFPs that would have been included, but the City did not require green space, so there is none. If we want to make sure that the proposed Inner Loop North (ILN) development doesn't ignore green spaces, what should GPA do?

A. Bret replied: the plan for Inner Loop East never was intended to develop green space. What was built reflects the original plan. Paying for green space is an added expensive cost to a developer.

Q. For ILN, green space must be set in the design.

A. ILN is a very different project from ILE and it should be more amenable to including green space.

Q. The ILE buildings stretch the entire length of Union Street from Charlotte St. to The Strong property (where a new hotel is being built). Would it have been feasible to break up the parcels into smaller areas with breaks in-between?

A. That would be more costly to the developer.

Q. Can the City develop smaller areas for smaller developers?

Q. Where could we send to Bret our ideas? His email: bretga@homeleasing.net

End of guest presentations. The general meeting continued:

Treasurer's Report – Rick McGrath reported that the GPA account balance is \$5,746.16

Committee Reports

Beautification – Pam DiPaola reported that an email went out to GPA members from Bob re: planting the planters for the spring. Reply to Pam. She has taken photos of Lot F to send to the City- there's been no maintenance there and it's falling apart.

The City is supporting many clean sweeps. Beautification and Membership committees are joining in this. There will be a GPA MiniCleanSweep on May 15, rain date the 22nd. Orange Glory will open for us at 9am. Pam will obtain supplies from the City. Area of clean – Grove Place, Charlotte St. and Pitkin. Megan will create a flyer for the project. Hours are from 9am-11:30am. A zoom poll was taken of members– 63% of members on zoom said they'll participate. 11% not sure, 26% probably will not.

Public Safety – Pam DiPaola reported that Center City PCI meeting is next week and Pam will go.

Membership – Megan reported that the new committee has met – Kim, Megan, Jill, Josh. New membership outreach, some social activities, consistent and improved communications, keeping the web site current, Facebook too. The membership roster is up to date. May 15th is the first event. Other proposals: House tour? Cemetery tour? Email to meet at local restaurants such as Orange Glory, PeppaPot? Support local restaurants with takeout dinners held at the Charlotte Square community room. 15 max. can meet there.

Membership renewals start May 1st. Possibly online payment option.

Art Committee- Roz Goldman - no report.

Development Committee – Richard Rosen reported that he completed a draft of points in reaction to first CPC ZAP hearing. Only one issue raised – of-street parking. Members of Development Committee should reply to Richard by the end of April. Then a formal summary will go to the general membership and then the City. Richard is pleased with most of the report, it covers most of our concerns. The City has requested comments, but a formal meeting where citizens can speak will be in June.

Open Forum:

East End Tavern: Kim reported: EET was fined \$2500 for COVID violations. Prior to receiving the fine, Jeff agreed to shut down for a few weeks, due to Charlotte Square complaints about crowds and disruptions that required police attention. Jeff was apologetic and is trying to stay in business. He wants to do a reboot back to his opening in 2016. He has a go fund me site to raise funds. He asked for a second chance.

This is the last general meeting of our fiscal year. Bob thanked everyone who has participated in our meetings on zoom.

Reminder – there's a Democratic primary election on June 22 for Mayor, City Council, the school board and city judges. This is an important election for the Zoning Alliance Project (ZAP) and ILN. Evan Dawson of WXXI's Connections will have interviews with the candidates. See WXXI.org/News.

Richard opined – think of Union St. as part of entire downtown, not on its own. The new street that Howard Konar is building will connect all of the new buildings to Manhattan Square Park. There will be @ 1500 new residents populating this area.

Ed Saphar said that the ILE was developed by neighborhood proposals, then developers came along to build according to that plan. For the ILN – what do people want in their homes and surrounding areas? Bob Keck attended a meeting with the Lewis YMCA. They want a good neighborhood. They don't want housing projects, rather, they want affordable houses that they can maintain. Beth El Church members were veering toward preferring multi-residential housing.

Kim - Marketview Heights area – a large portion is populated by long-term renters. Habitat is involved in the City.

Richard said pay attention to Pathstone (<https://pathstone.org/housing-services>). They are very successful and could be part of the ILN solution.

Bob DiPaola – The City has announced that Parcel 5 will be grassed in and used as a public gathering venue (temporary but with no time limits for now).

Bob DiPaola moved to adjourned the meeting at 5:41 pm. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Loeb, Secretary

Attached: Screenshots from Kevin Fitzpatrick's YMCA presentation.

YMCA OF GREATER ROCHESTER - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (32-bit)

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YMCA AT A GLANCE: WHERE WE ARE TODAY

YMCA of Greater Rochester: TODAY

- Severe financial stress to survive this pandemic. Painful cuts necessary, including branch closures, service delivery cuts and a review of all Association owned assets (buildings and land). Staffing now under 1,000.
- All branches operating at a deficit which destroys our ability to support City Mission Delivery with surpluses for the foreseeable future
- Complete loss of access to serve students in RCSD and loss of corresponding funding from Greater Rochester Health Foundation
- Annual revenue more than 50% less than last year
- Lost more than 60% of membership and program revenue
- Branch visitations remain a fraction of this time last year (capacity restrictions, masks, fear) despite an extraordinary low infection rate
- Serving in NEW, EXPANDED and INNOVATIVE ways, with fewer resources
- SURVIVING to serve today and working tirelessly to preserve our future by evaluating all our operations.

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TRANSFORMATIONAL INITIATIVES

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES CAN LEAD OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

- Increase neighborhood access to health and wellness services that address health disparities.
- Have meaningful impact on racial and educational inequities.
- Provide and grow services to meet essential family needs, including childcare, food equity and opportunities for youth development.

HOW

- By bringing together community leaders, organizations and residents like never before – sharing ideas and finding collective solutions to address the inequities in our City.
- By ensuring the sustainable funding of these initiatives by garnering significant philanthropic support, allocating greater human need resources, and targeted use of our endowment.