

EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, August 15, 2019
6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Room 4802

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order/Declaration of a Quorum**
2. **Approval of meeting minutes of July 18, 2019**
3. **Public comment**
4. **For Consideration**
 - a. "Solutions Only Sub-Committee" Report, Commission recommendation
5. **For Discussion**
 - a. Truth & Reconciliation Initiative
 - b. Commission work plan for upcoming months
6. **Reports**
 - a. Staff
 - b. Commissioners
7. **Adjournment**

Next meeting:
Thursday, September 19, 2019
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston
Room 2402

The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible. Any citizen needing mobility, communications access assistance, or interpretation services should contact Dr. Patricia A. Efiom (847-448-8067) or Facilities Management (847-448-8052 for TDD). La Ciudad de Evanston se compromete a que todas las reuniones públicas sean accesibles. Cualquier persona que necesite asistencia para desplazarse, comunicarse o servicios de interpretación debe comunicarse con la Dra. Patricia A. Efiom (847-448-8067) o la Oficina de Administración de Instalaciones (847-448-8052 para TDD)



City of
Evanston™
EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 18, 2019

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Lorraine Morton Civic Center

2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Parasol Room

Present: D. Holmes, M. Wynne, A. Ibañez, J. Grover, K. Lyons, J. Corbier de Lara, M. Dillard

Present: T. Eberhart, M. Weinberg

Staff Present: P. Efiom

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jane Grover at 6:39 pm and a quorum was declared. Chair Grover called meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. Comm. Grover briefly introduced Comm. Maxx Weinberg who will be joining us officially at the August 15 meeting.

Four persons signed up for public comment. Ms. Tina Payton wants to ensure that the work of the “Solutions Only” subcommittee does not get stuck in City Council. Mr. Corliss Sutton hopes that the reparation work brought forth through the subcommittee will be actualized. He is particularly interested in reparations that address the issue of housing. Ms. Roberta Henson notes that “The City of Evanston has neglected Black homeowners devastated by the impact of redlining. She stated that “older” Evanstonians continue to struggle to keep their homes.

Mr. Kumar Jensen, Chief Sustainability and Resiliency Officer, returned to the Commission as a follow up to his CARP Policy Engagement presentation last month. The policy package was designed by staff, modeled as an omnibus. The plan will follow a two-year process. The first year will be a pilot process, broken down in three (3) phases: to educate and solicit input, reflect back, and then do policy development.

CARP: Public Policy Engagement feedback

- Proposed timeline should be longer.
- Comm. Holmes said that the enforcement of the resolutions and ordinances should be considered. She also stated that there is a need to fully understand the impact of the cost of green on individuals
- Comm. Dillard that he is concerned about the information inequities both in distribution and reading level. He also suggested the use of pictures when advertising the very technical language of CARP.
- Comm. Lyons recommends a grade level no higher than 10th grade but 6th grade would be better. The reading level does not assume a lack of intelligence. She further stated that the CARP team should go into the community to engage residents where they are.

- Comm. Ibañez stated that she and Comm. Holmes had worked very hard on a Community Engagement Policy and would like that work to be reflected in the CARP Engagement Policy
- Need to develop a list of other stakeholders

“Solutions Only” Subcommittee report

Comm. Holmes chair of the subcommittee reported that the subcommittee held public meetings on the evening of Thursday, July 11 at the Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center the other on Saturday, July 18, 2019. There were more than 50 in attendance at each meeting Comm. Holmes reported that the meetings had generated a broad list of outstanding recommendations. However, she reminded the Commission that Ald. Rue Simmons made a very specific referral to the Commission and that was to focus on housing and economic development.

Ald. Rue Simmons thanked the group for the very hard work with a very aggressive timeline and looks forward to the report going to City Council.

Next steps: Subcommittee will meet on Monday, July 22 at 6:00 p.m. to review all of the information received and determine a set of recommendations to come back to the August 15 meeting of the full Commission. Assuming that the full Commission is in favor of the recommendations, those recommendations will be presented at the September 9, 2019 City Council meeting.

Vice-Chair Election

It was moved by Comm. Holmes and properly seconded that Comm. Dillard be nominated as Vice-Chair for the Equity & Empowerment Commission. Comm. Dillard very graciously accepted the nomination. It was moved by Comm. Lyons and seconded by Comm. Dillard that Chair Grover be re-affirmed as Chair. **Both motions carried 7-0.**

Commission Work for the Upcoming Months

Truth and Reconciliation Initiative

Given that the “Solutions Only” subcommittee heard repeatedly that the story of the community must be told, Comm. Holmes proposed that the Commission formally move to launch a Truth and Reconciliation Initiative which the Commission has discussed several times. Comm. Holmes stated that it is important that the City lead this effort but with full inclusion of the community. The Commission would be the vehicle that drives the initiative Comm. Dillard stated that this initiative is essential to our really engaging our community and if done right would be very powerful. Ald. Wynne believes that the Equity & Empowerment Commission is “the right entity” to lead this work. Comm. Lyons says this initiative is how the Commission can help empower people through hearing their stories.

The subcommittee for the Truth and Reconciliation is Comm. Holmes, Dillard, Ibanez, Weinberg (appointed in his absence) and Lyons.

Equity Framework

Dr. Efiom will update the Commission at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**Next meeting:
Thursday, September 19, 2019**

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston
Room 2402

DRAFT

From: Ike Dickson

Date: July 15, 2019

To: : Alderman Robin Rue Simmons

Subject: **Reparations Ideas**

Hello,

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend to the reparations meetings.
Below are a few ideas how possible Fifth Ward reparation funds could be used.

Ideas:

Homeowners fund for updating and beautifying residential property. Homeowners could submit their project to the fund for landscaping, painting exteriors, repair of porches, fencing. If chain link fences were banned on residential front properties it would change the look of the 5th Ward for the better. Funds could be used to have homeowners replace chain link fencing with beautiful landscape plantings, new grass/sod or if they insist a wrought iron fence.

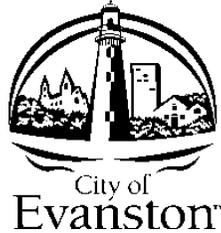
The criteria for approval could include submission of project and projects must be completed within 6 months or funds returned. Also, assistance can be allocated according to income level/household size, so properties in most need could receive it.

Second idea would be a new business fund to start new businesses in Fifth Ward or by Fifth Ward residents doing business within Evanston. Many people have great business ideas , but lack the planning skills to get a loan and/or implement the plan. The fund would provide business planning for residents with great business ideas.

Thank you for your time and considering these ideas.

Best Regards,

Ike' Dickson



EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION
Solutions Only subcommittee

Addressing suggested actions/concerns from Thursday, July 11th
Community Meeting on Local Reparations
(Listed actions taken from meeting minutes)

- Affordable Housing
 - “In 2018, City Council established expanding affordable housing options in Evanston as one of its goals. Council has since moved several activities forward to further this goal. These activities include: establishing an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO) Subcommittee to revise the City’s IHO in order to incentivize more on-site affordable units and assess new funding streams for the Affordable Housing Fund; passing an amended version of the IHO ; allowing the rental of coach houses to non-family members; creating a Landlord Rehabilitation Assistance Program to assist landlords with repairs, establishing an intergovernmental agreement with Evanston Township High School for the Geometry in Construction program, and reviewing City code to allow for the creation of new accessory dwelling units and small lot housing.” (Taken from the City of Evanston Housing & Grants Division website).
- Focus on skilled trades for Black residents
 - The City of Evanston Minority/Women/Evanston-Based Enterprise program (**MWEBE**)
- Facade improvement for commercial buildings
 - Recent investment at Church/Dodge and Simpson
 - City of Evanston **Facade Improvement Grant** for commercial structures. Must obtain Design and Project Review approval. Economic Development office at Civic Center (2100 Ridge Ave).
- Improvements to Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center
 - Share recent commitment
- Lakefront access → free beach tokens
 - **City of Evanston Recreation Division at the Civic Center** provides free beach tokens based on income level. Proof of income required.
 - **Evanston Public Library**, Main Library (1703 Orrington Ave) provides free 10-punch beach pass to teens ages 13-18 yrs. Proof of Evanston residency is required.
- Evanston Public Access television
 - **Evanston Access TV** is a publicly funded cable channel to empower individuals and groups in the community to produce programs by, for, and about the

community of Evanston. Provides equipment, airtime on Comcast Channel 6 (AT&T Channel 99), access to TV studio for producing. More information about registering on City of Evanston website

- Preservation of Foster School
 - **“Evanston Preservation Commission votes to make former Foster School building historic landmark.”** (July 16,2018). Wilson Chapman, The Daily Northwestern.
- Acquire the Foster School building
 - **“Group Makes Offer to Buy Foster School Building From Family Focus.”** (March 1, 2019). Jonah Meadow, Patch.
 - Article Excerpt: “EVANSTON, IL — The Family Focus board is considering an offer to purchase the former Foster School building, a local landmark with a significant role in the history of Evanston's black community. A group of roughly 30 Evanstonians has made a \$700,000 offer to buy the building, Pioneer Press reported. The structure was listed for sale last June for \$2.4 million and granted landmark status in October, over objections from the social services nonprofit Family Focus.”
- Voter Registration
 - **NAACP** can register and provide information. To register must provide two pieces of identification, one with current address. A photo ID is not required.
 - 2010 Dewey Suite 302A Evanston, IL 60201. Phone: (847) 864-0038
- Financial Literacy
 - **YWCA** Evanston/North Shore provides workshops through Women's Economic Empowerment Programs. For more information call 847-864-8445 or email Fabiola Alfonso: falfonso@ywca-ens.org.
- **LIFT- Chicago**
 - “LIFT coaches help parents set objectives like securing a safe home, living wages and a better education. And then connect them to the financial resources and networks they need to make those dreams a reality.” (Taken from LIFT website)
 - 2325 South Michigan Ave. Chicago, IL 60616. Phone:(312) 316-1866



City of
Evanston™

EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION
Solutions Only subcommittee

Saturday, July 13, 2019, 9:00am to 12:00pm

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
2100 Ridge Ave, Evanston, IL 60201

Members Present: D. Holmes, J. Grover

Staff Present: P. Efiom

1. Welcome

2. Community Discussion

The discussion was a continuation from Thursday's meeting, focused on actions and revenue sources. The comments from community members who sent in written recommendations are included here.

A. Actions

- Involve the Jewish community
- Have more media at meetings
- Conservation district 1996 marking our district; consult with Dino Robinson from Shorefront Legacy Center
- Home ownership/affordable housing
- "Evanston Trust" for Black people to keep their homes
- Oakton School – keep the school in Evanston so Black kids can have a better education
- Banking institutions in neighborhoods
- Northwestern University tuition-free
- Black media outlet
- Reach out to Northwestern University students
- Study groups about budgets and revenue streets, transferring funds to reparations
- Evaluate City budget
- Civic education
- The City sells Shorefront Legacy Center a building for \$1
- Banks match savings accounts for Black people affected by redlining
- Name streets in north Evanston after families who were displaced
- Black people who lost wealth
- African American teachers/teaching Black history in Districts 65 and 202
- Multicultural Black people educational meeting/history
- Create something to monitor banking activity for elders and multicultural communities

- Include more Black people on City boards
- Invest heavily in childcare and early childhood education programs.
- Continue investment while tracking progress as students matriculate through middle & high school
- Provide parenting programs at accessible centers, or funding for families in existing programs.
- Provide free transportation to students walking several blocks to school.
- Stop forced bussing
- Provide free access to substantive programs/activities such as camps, after school/holiday break programs, free access to programs such as swimming lessons at Y'S
- Empower people living in poverty by involving them in the development and implementation of plans and programs to reduce and eradicate poverty. Their involvement ensures that programs reflect those things that are important to them.
- Remove barriers to equal access to resources and services.
- Provide free quality mental health care in collaboration with local institutions/ non profit organizations
- Provide housing vouchers in scattered neighborhood-provides family with access to resources and schools and social capital
- Free community college
- Insist that Pay Day Loans business such as on Dodge Avenue invest in the community or start a campaign to boycott. (must provide alternatives for people)
- Investment in infrastructure-Resurface businesses on Simpson-Make a decision about the store on Simpson/Darrow.
- Only negotiate with the next developers for a building that includes a specified number of moderately priced units (must determine-moderately priced)
- Homeowner's fund for updating and beautifying residences.
- Fund for homeowners to replace chain link fencing with plants/grass/other fencing
- Monetary assistance and business planning for new businesses

B. Revenue Sources

- Sort out grant money from loans
- Good Neighbor funds to go to "Solutions Only"
- Look to candidate Pete Buttegieg's Douglass Plan in lieu of money
- Free Northwestern University tuition
- Black banks

3. Small group discussions

Prioritized actions were divided into five categories: history/culture, finance, education, institutions/systems and power structure. Each group of community members created specific ideas and shared with the large group. The notes are organized by section below.

A. History/culture

- Preserve Black neighborhoods and icons
- Do away with restrictive covenants/zoning
- Shorefront Legacy Center

B. Finance

- Banking
 - Grants for
 - Housing
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Repair for redlining
 - Rehabbing and purchase
 - Does redlining still exist? If yes, how to fix?
 - Tax forgiveness for African Americans regarding their homes
 - Credit union education to African Americans
 - Which banks participated in redlining?
 - Are properties being assessed unfairly? If yes, how can we fix?
 - Local banks provide rate information on existing loans/interest by ward?
 - System to prevent access
 - Entrepreneurship funding, education, training
 - Develop budget for development education
 - Business school for entrepreneurs, nominal fee or free for African Americans
- Businesses
 - Unions, trades members
 - Funding for development of African American businesses
 - Free financial education
 - Assistance in ownership of land being transferred to African American past residents affected
 - What current advantage given; if none, need some
- Housing
 - Repair for housing that were moved from north Evanston
 - All police/firefighters should live in Evanston?
 - City workers – 80% live in Evanston?
 - Rent control for landlords concerning African Americans
 - Families who lost homes due to redlining should restore check
 - Trace titles, funded by real estate, insurance agencies, and the City
 - City system on who receives repair, flexibility on how funds are utilized
- Real estate
 - Purchase of Family Focus building
 - System to prevent access to home-buying opportunities
 - Lost of African American residents
 - Real estate agencies' repayment

C. Education

- Encompassing treatment in past, present, and future
 - Use media coverage in RoundTable
 - Mandated African American history courses in D65 and D202
 - Create Black media
 - “Community Table” Meet & Greet at community centers and homes
- Focus on current, every day, systemic racism
- Churches/synagogues, temples, education

- Support STEM school in the 5th Ward

D. Institutions/systems

- Accountability by institutions receiving public funds
- Stem school in 5th Ward (D65)
- Banks – history of exclusion, plan for inclusion
 - Locating one in the 5th/2nd wards
 - Provide community gathering space
- Re-districting in Evanston (maybe two at-large representatives on Council)
- Institutions funding and/or providing banquet/meeting spaces
- Northwestern University
 - List of historic inequities
 - Community engagement office (and others) as authentic partner in reparation dialogue and funding
 - Matching funds for _____
- Faith-based groups across ALL denominations face their own histories; develop common steps to:
 - Be part of Truth and Racial Healing process
 - Exert pressure on local institutions to participate fully in reparations efforts
- Realtors address issues of “steering” and develop current ways to support development and support of accessible/affordable home-buying
- Criminal justice system
 - Support for job-training for previously incarcerated
 - Programs to support Evanston Police Department and Evanston Fire Department members living in Evanston
- Insurance companies
- City of Evanston to operationalize equity
- Unions-trades discrimination

E. Power Structure

- Civic Leadership class
 - “Leadership 101”
 - Education and awareness of how to engage in civic processes, events, activities, etc.
- Diversity and inclusion on all committees, boards, and subcommittees
- MWEBE ordinance with goals
- Regulate diversity!

4. Community Reconciliation - things to consider

- Need to understand our history and keep the story out in the public
 - Black families
 - 5th Ward
 - Evanston’s
 - Residents from the islands, different Black cultures
- Cultural appropriation
- Discrimination, bias
- Black history in local curriculum
- Educational opportunities
- Encroachment/gentrification
- Organic gentrification
- Historical oppression

- Multi-generational stress
- Health outcome disparities
- Access to capital, institutional banking
- Wealth transfer
- Slavery
- Property devaluation
- Northwestern University's role and history
- Structural, institutional reform
- Reparations is part of repair
- Banking system

5. Adjournment

From: Ike Dickson

Date: July 15, 2019

To : Alderman Robin Rue Simmons

Subject: Reparations Ideas

Hello,

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend to the reparations meetings.

Below are a few ideas how possible Fifth Ward reparation funds could be used.

Ideas:

Homeowners fund for updating and beautifying residential property. Homeowners could submit their project to the fund for landscaping, painting exteriors, repair of porches, fencing. If chain link fences were banned on residential front properties it would change the look of the 5th Ward for the better. Funds could be used to have homeowners replace chain link fencing with beautiful landscape plantings, new grass/sod or if they insist a wrought iron fence.

The criteria for approval could include submission of project and projects must be completed within 6 months or funds returned. Also, assistance can be allocated according to income level/household size, so properties in most need could receive it.

Second idea would be a new business fund to start new businesses in Fifth Ward or by Fifth Ward residents doing business within Evanston. Many people have great business ideas, but lack the planning skills to get a loan and/or implement the plan. The fund would provide business planning for residents with great business ideas.

Thank you for your time and considering these ideas.

Best Regards,

Ike' Dickson

Hello Mrs. Simmon, Holmes, Efiom

Thank you for your efforts in the direction of local reparation in the community. As you are aware, but stated for the record we must be careful not to allow our government to assume for one moment that a submission on behalf of the community, and acceptance by local bodies means that its debt is payed and forgiven. We often hear from citizens and all levels of government the following statement. The current citizenry had nothing to do with what happened to your ancestors. However we must never forget that the current citizenry has/is the beneficiary. In this life time we as a race will never have a fraction of what they have amassed on the backs of our ancestors.

Being the most successful nation in the world says that we know how to promote success. It has been documented for years that we can incubate, develop and produce generational success through vigilant adherence through 2 major areas. Those areas are education, greater human capital. (education, skills, training, etc.) tend to be more competitive in the labor market, and as a result, will run a lower risk of experiencing poverty. In turn when economic shock occurs we are financially prepared.

A few Other Suggestion based on Major Areas of Concentration

1. Invest heavily in childcare and early childhood education programs.
2. Continue investment while tracking progress as students matriculate through middle & high school
3. Provide parenting programs at accessible centers, or funding for families in existing programs.
4. Provide free transportation to students walking several blocks to school.
5. Stop forced bussing
6. Provide free access to substantive programs/activities such as camps, after school/holiday break programs, free access to programs such as swimming lessons at Y'S,
7. Empower people living in poverty by involving them in the development and implementation of plans and programs to reduce and eradicate poverty. Their involvement ensures that programs reflect those things that are important to them.
8. Remove barriers to equal access to resources and services.
9. Provide free quality mental health Care in collaboration with local institutions/

- non profit organizations 10. Provide housing vouchers in scattered neighborhood-provides family with access to resources and schools and social capital
11. Free community college 12. Insist that Pay Day Loans business such as on Dodge Avenue invest in the community or start a campaign to boycott. (must provide alternatives for people)
13. Investment in infrastructure-Resurface businesses on Simpson-Make a decision about the store on Simpson/Darrow.
14. Only negotiate with the next developers for a building that includes a specified number of moderately priced units (must determine-moderately priced)

Just a few thoughts that crossed my mind today/can't get there the evening

Thanks again It was a productive meeting

**Willie Shaw Political
Action Chair NAACP**



Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Equity & Empowerment Commission

Subject: Status Report - Wealth and Opportunity Gaps

Date: July 31, 2019

Recommended Action:

The Equity and Empowerment Commission recommends the City Council receive this update report based on public comment and priorities identified at its subcommittee meetings and July 18, 2019 Commission meeting regarding policies and actions to begin to remedy the City's role in historical and institutional racism and discrimination.

Livability Benefits:

Equity & Empowerment: Provide for meaningful community engagement; Ensure equitable access to community assets.

Summary:

At its June 2019 meeting, Ald. Rue Simmons requested that the Equity & Empowerment Commission assist with addressing the historical wealth and opportunity gaps that African American residents of Evanston experience. Ald. Rue Simmons sought a "Solutions Only" process to identify actions that the City of Evanston could take to implement a meaningful repair and reparations policy.

The Commission created an *ad hoc* subcommittee and convened community meetings on July 11 and July 13 to include residents and gather public input on why Evanston should address repair and reparation, who should be involved, what actions could be taken, and what revenue sources should be considered. Both meetings were well-attended.

Attendees identified five **priority categories for action** (History/Culture, Finance, Education, Institutions/Systems, and Power Structure) and then broke into smaller groups to **prioritize actions** within each category. Public input requested a related, but separate, community reconciliation initiative. City staff also provided attendees with a partial list of existing City programs and ordinances that already address specific priorities.

Housing:

- Provide property tax relief to African-American, long-time owners of residential property in Evanston.
- Provide housing repair and rehabilitation assistance to African-American property owners in Evanston.
- Provide down payment assistance to income-qualified, African-American home purchasers in Evanston.
- Provide housing rental assistance to income-qualified, African-American residents in Evanston.

Economic Development:

- Re-purpose the Gibbs-Morrison Center to provide co-working or work cooperative space for African-American entrepreneurs.
- Invest in workforce training for African-American Evanston residents.
- Provide low-interest loans for African-American Evanston entrepreneurs.

The Commission requests the City Council provide any input appropriate this evening. The Commission plans to complete its work in August and make recommendation to the City Council on next steps.