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City Council

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

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Summary

- Residents discussed in depth the need for more funding for community development in Cleveland.
- Residents expressed concerns over Cudell Park's future.
- A community member shared concerns about the lack of access for residents to easily acquire vacant land in their neighborhoods.

Follow-Up Questions

- How is the Safety Committee headed by Council Member Michael D. Polensek addressing the issues presented today by community members?
- How will residents be made aware of new improvements approved by the Safety Committee?

Notes

The meeting was opened on time with a majority of members present. Roll call was followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comments

Rev. Pamela M. Pinkney

Discussed community development and education. Pinkney said funds are lacking for Black and brown communities but readily available for sports and entertainment. Pinkney spoke about lack of funding for necessary services such as a grocery store in East Cleveland but said high-end real estate is increasing elsewhere.

Faouzi Baddour

The Ward 11 resident discussed the importance of [Cudell Park](#) and how important the area is to the community. He stated his displeasure with the land swap the city approved in 2021. He is requesting the city “take back” that [legislation](#) to ensure the park is utilized for its intended purpose.

Kareem Henton

Council President Blaine Griffin introduced Henton, a Ward 14 resident as a citizen discussing the Browns stadium. Once at the microphone, Henton said City Council’s major land concern is Browns Stadium. He utilized this to segue to his major land concern, which is the vacant lots in his ward. He stated the importance of beautification in his neighborhood and his desire to purchase vacant lots easily. He stated his disdain for the process of leasing and buying lots.

Selena Vicario

The Ward 15 resident discussed the importance of healthy public green spaces. She said parks help residents combat loneliness and anxiety and improve cardiovascular health, all without adverse side effects. She said Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) accepted an “unethical” land swap deal for the [Watterson-Lake property](#).

Antoine Tolbert, who also goes by Chairman Fahiem, spoke on behalf of New Era Cleveland

He pointed out the absence of Council Member Deborah Gray. He said there has been an uptick in violence in the last 30 days for the City of Cleveland. He invited members of the council and Mayor Justin Bibb to speak with youth at the juvenile detention center. He informed the council that he had brought several children from his organization to speak on the importance of being innovative with addressing crime issues.

The following youth members of New Era Cleveland approached the mic.

Rameer Askew, New Era Cleveland

Discussed the negativity in music, film and social media. Askew praised Fahiem. He also touched on an issue that arose on April 26 in a meeting with Council Member Gray present. He spoke about the hostility that he and the organization felt from Gray.

Dewayne Wayne (uncertain spelling), New Era Cleveland

Discussed the correlation of youth and gun violence. He stressed the importance of

investing in the New Era Cleveland program and the many benefits of the program.

Kaia (uncertain spelling), New Era Cleveland

Discussed the importance of programs aimed at helping children stay engaged in positive programs to help curb their desire to engage in gangs. She praised the New Era Cleveland program and the need for funding to continue the program.

Marlee McMichael (uncertain spelling), New Era Cleveland

She originally was overwhelmed with the process of speaking before the council but returned at the end of public comment to speak. She talked about youth violence and the importance of safety in the community.

Communications

The clerk read into the record information about the following:

- Oaths of office
- New license applications and transfers of license/ownership applications
- Condolence and congratulation resolutions

Legislation to be passed

There were three ordinances read for the first time and passed, including: [554-2024](#) and [555-2024](#).

555-2024 An emergency ordinance authorizing the Director of the Department of Aging to utilize money from casino revenue funds for a senior grass cutting program.

Council also passed several ordinances on second reading, including:

[339-3024](#) An emergency ordinance authorizing the Director of Economic Development to enter into an agreement with LMM (Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry) pertaining to the usage of 3D printing technology to assist with the development of low-income housing.

Find the full [agenda](#) here.

Miscellaneous

John Hay Lady Hornets basketball team honored for winning city championship.

Council also recognized Brittney Smith, founder of the [P.E.A.R.L.S. program](#), which has the goal of restoring confidence in inner-city girls.

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