

***Expanding Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion within CCRA
/Increasing Equity in Greater Philadelphia***

JEDI COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Maggie Mund, Chair

Jared Gluskin, Barbara Halpern, Board Members

Travis Oliver, Managing Director

To date, the JEDI committee has identified 4 areas of work. They are:

Promotional: Sharing events promoted by social justice organizations via our social media, CCQ and CCRA This Week increases their visibility and reach. These promotional posts began in the Fall and now are featured under their own banner in CCRA This Week.



Educational: CCRA partnered with Hugh Taft- Morales of the Philadelphia Ethical Society on *Sense in the City*, a series of ZOOM discussions focused on different aspects of community, difference and justice that we all encounter in our everyday lives in Center City. Topics included

- January 19- Public Spaces and Thoroughfares
- February 9 - Equity, Public Schools and Democracy
- February 23 - Homelessness and Humanity
- March 9 – Fear and Street Crime



Between 20 and 40 people registered for the discussions. Hugh did a fabulous job laying out the issues of the various topics in about a 20-minute presentation. Small group discussions were led by CCRA board members (thank you!). The discussion ended with a large group discussion summarizing the small group discussions. WE tried to focus on the social justice aspects of the topics, and not problem solving. This proved difficult for most as CCRA members tend to be action oriented.

Next Steps—VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Email all who signed up to thank them for their participation. Invite them (and all CCRA members) to an event on October 2 or 3 which would feature organizations that are actually working to address the issues discussed so facilitate their volunteering with groups of interest. These could include (list not complete!)

Bethesda Project or Project Home—homelessness

Bicycle Coalition and Philly Walks—street behavior issues

Philadelphia Police Department—crime

Freire Charter School, other school advocacy organizations—schools

Advocacy—

Freire Charter School Support Partnership. Freire Charter High School, located at 2027 Chestnut Street, has been a part of the CCRA community since 2006. This school, which has almost 100% black and brown students, draws from southwest, north and west Philadelphia. Most students are from single parent households with limited income. Despite these obstacles, 83% of Freire students go onto college.

We have met a couple of times to discuss ways to make the neighborhood more welcoming to the students, focusing on ways to provide opportunities for internships, training, and mentoring from CCRA members.

Several ideas have been discussed. To date, we have accomplished two

- Meg Berlin conducted a voter registration drive on March 25
- American Government professor Gordon :Henderson provided supplementary Civic instruction in mid May.

Other ideas included

- Featuring contributions from Freire School writers in CCRA This Week or the CCQ and /or having writers from the neighborhood lead writing workshops with the students
- Interview skills training
- Supplying chess tutors to the Chess club—have since learned the chess club is now a board game club with very few chess players
- Providing guest speakers to talk about business or career opportunities; could be combined with an office or site visit or even internships
- Taking students to plays, museums and other outings

One or two volunteers are needed to develop a relationship with the school. School employees are very busy doing their real work, it is hard to get them to focus on our desires to help. I have heard there is a board of directors—we need to look into whether joining the board is a better vehicle for our involvement. Then once better direction is established, additional volunteers are needed to increase our presence at Freire

Participatory Private Equity Social Capital Fund (working title)

An initial meeting was held to define goals and a preliminary operating structure for a small business investment fund in the neighborhood. Thoughts included:

Our Goal;

1. Raise capital to fund investments in new/[existing] businesses by disadvantaged minority individuals or groups based in Center City.
2. Enhance the diversity and vibrancy of the neighborhood and fill high vacancies [27%?].
3. Provide an opportunity for the established business community and residents to donate their funds as well as their skills by directly participating in the investment underwriting process and pre/post investment mentoring including as committee/board members.

Our Initial Thoughts;

1. Structure and launch a private investment fund underwritten by local businesses, real estate owners/developers and residents. The fund would offer to make preferential equity [and/or subordinated/senior debt investments] to local minority disadvantaged owners facing difficulties accessing capital from normal market sources to startup, expand or remain in business. Prioritize startups that could occupy Center City retail locations and with oversight and as an affiliate/subsidiary of CCRA.
2. Investments could be layered with other sources of capital such as senior secured/unsecured bank loans, seed equity, subsidized rent as well as parri instruments. Where possible, the Fund's investment would be meant to facilitate the availability of other sources towards a full capitalization of the business.
3. Investees would be expected to repay their investment with a return over a predetermined period of time with regular reporting requirements to the fund and an overall disciplined approach to the utilization and return of their investment. Fund, however, would typically not be expected to pursue market type level of enforcement upon default (other than possibly in the case of fraud or gross negligence etc.). This would need to be clearly disclosed, although, subordinated nature of investments would not position fund for recoveries anyway.
4. Real investment with a reasonable prospect of a real (but below market) return. However, a must to avoid overly cumbersome regulatory, tax and reporting requirements but with an emphasis to find qualified investors primarily attracted to the community building aim of the fund offset by below market expectations on the fund's return.
5. Fund investments would be recycled regularly but [scheduled optional] redemption periods would also be offered from time to time at the recommendation of the board/investment committee based on liquidity, fund performance and pipeline of potential reinvestment opportunities. [Investments could be transferrable such as for people leaving the area, sickness etc..]?
6. The fund would be run with a strong partnership with CCRA. Fund could also partner with local bank(s) that could provide capital on commercial terms and investment oversight in conjunction with fund investments, real estate owners/developers and mentoring sources such as SCORE, Wharton etc....
7. Fund should be administered/reported by 3rd party operation (Enterprise?)

8. [As manager, CCRA could benefit from equity kicker for highly successful investment outcomes. Structure TBD.]
9. Emphasis on robust disclosures and insurance to minimize any risks to CCRA, board, investors committee participants etc.

Immediate Next steps;

1. High level legal/regulatory structure discussion with legal SME. Maggie has a good contact (and hopefully free!) **TROUTMAN PEPPER-- Judy Corelli--referred from Della Reese ((The Enterprise Center)**

1. Further diligence existing similar funds in the area or beyond (don't reinvent wheel)--
The Enterprise Center, Urban Affairs Coalition, 30 day fund, Merchants' Fund, Plain Sight Capital, Impact PHL, Entrepreneur Works, The Philadelphia Foundation and Philadelphia Commerce Dept.

2. Reach out to [Enterprise] regarding their administration terms/costs