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BEARDEN PLACE: A Housing Competition in the “Artists’ Core”

Minneapolis, MN





The Block, 1971 © Romare Bearden Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

about Romare Howard Bearden
1911-1988

“His life and art are marked by exceptional talent, encompassing a broad range of intellectual and scholarly interests, including music, performing arts, history, literature and world art. Bearden was also a celebrated humanist, as demonstrated by his lifelong support of young, emerging artists....From the mid-1930s through 1960s, Bearden was a social worker with the New York City Department of Social Services, working on his art at night and on weekends....Bearden was also a respected writer and an eloquent spokesman on artistic and social issues of the day. Active in many arts organizations, in 1964 Bearden was appointed the first art director of the newly established Harlem Cultural Council, a prominent African-American advocacy group....Recognized as one of the most creative and original visual artists of the twentieth century, Romare Bearden had a prolific and distinguished career. He experimented with many different mediums and artistic styles, but is best known for his richly textured collages....”

– *from the Romare Bearden Foundation website*

www.beardenfoundation.org/artlife/biography/biography.shtml

“...the impulse of Bearden’s work – creating collages from the disparate elements of the African-American community – speaks directly to what we are trying to do in North Minneapolis. This community, as far back at the 1880s, welcomed newcomers from anywhere, any culture, into the broad and accepting panoply that was, and still is, our most salient and salutary characteristic. For those members of our current community whose efforts are directed, right now, toward creating a sense of African-American legacy, the choice of Romare Bearden could not be more appropriate.

Bearden Place would be around for a long time as something important people could point to and say “That’s when the change began in our community.”

– *Comments from Members of the Community*

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Background

The city of Minneapolis currently owns over 350 vacant residential properties including hundreds legally designated condemned and boarded and slated to be torn down. Because of the conditions brought on by the foreclosure crisis and its economic effects on local communities, and despite the best ongoing efforts of affordable housing non profits and the private marketplace, these properties have little likelihood of being redeveloped into sustainable long term assets in the near future. They sit vacant and unattended and the surrounding community continues to suffer. In many instances where lots have been developed in recent years, the quality of construction and design elements have been very poor and resulted in some homes being torn down after a mere 5 years.

The typical development process for smaller scale medium density residential projects has failed in recent times in part because of the reluctance of lenders to make financing available for these needed projects. Local neighborhoods are frustrated at continuous “community participation” processes that bring excitement and anticipation but in the end yield no new projects on these vacant properties because of this lack of development funding. It is time to see if something different can be developed, something that begins in a spirit of collaboration, shared risk and reward, and the inclusion of new partners including the development/ financing component and market research as part of the planning effort, all unified in the “commitment to rebuild communities”.

Sponsor's Goals:

CPED

- In the wake of the foreclosure crisis demonstrate best practices for Urban Infill residential construction and design on vacant city parcels in highly foreclosure impacted areas of the city.
- Establish and encourage new partnerships to induce construction of a variety of affordable and market rate housing types to our neighborhoods.
- Encourage the development of energy efficient, sustainable, green housing products in the City.
- Bring to the market new ideas for universally designed housing to accommodate seniors, live/work units, and artist housing.

BATC

- Combine our efforts (BATC and the City) to insure the best plan for redevelopment and revitalization for the people who live and work in the city.
- To leverage the expertise, experience and authority of the team to be a role model for the country on how housing can be the way to economic recovery.
- To communicate that Minneapolis can provide a perfect place to live and raise a family - i.e. we want people to move back to the city and to be proud to do so.



Summary and Objectives/Mission and Values

This Competition is an initiative of the City of Minneapolis' Department of Community Planning and Development (CPED), the Builder's Association of the Twin Cities (BATC) and its Builder's Outreach Foundation (BOF) to develop and conduct an architectural design competition based on a model of collaboration and partnership. This juried Competition will serve as a catalyst in the rebuilding of vacant urban properties that would otherwise remain underutilized or distressed for years. It is an opportunity to demonstrate a successful process of alliance building and cross organizational collaboration focused on neighborhood reinvestment that includes integrating finance and market research partners.

The Builder's Outreach Foundation (BOF) will serve as the developer and finance the construction of the project and members of the Builders Association of the Twin Cities (BATC) will work closely with the selected design team to negotiate a contract for professional services and provide construction and cost management of the winning scheme. This will result in a built housing project that demonstrates a successful method of collaboration among public-private-non profit and community based partners which can then be modeled for other development opportunities on city owned properties of various scales.

The Competition also responds directly to several of the "themes" identified in the Family Housing Fund's Rethinking Housing Symposium of 2009 which included:

- Think and act very differently about the kind of housing we provide in the future to fit new economic and demographic realities
- Improve the ways we can make existing and new housing more green and sustainable.
- Improve the housing regulation and development process to be clearer and more efficient.
- Form stronger alliances and build new alliances.
- Educate the public and decision makers.
- Research, gather and share good information.

The Competition is intended to provide a density of ideas addressing the future of affordable and sustainable urban infill housing. Significant participation by the design community will stimulate great public interest and serve as a reminder of what can happen when good intentions meet personal and public resolve. A public exhibition and presentation is planned for the community to view the submissions and engage in a dialogue with the designers and sponsors.

Entrants are encouraged to take a multidisciplinary approach in forming their teams. Landscape architects, artists, scientists, writers and other creative professions have much to offer as teams address the social, political and cultural elements that inform their design decisions. Independent market research can augment information provided in the Competition Program.

The project's construction will include local enterprise opportunities with elements of job training, minority and youth participation as well as partnerships with local educational and training institutions.

The Site, Program and Development Standards

about the “Artists’ Core”

The “Artists’ Core”, a community response to the recent housing/foreclosure crisis, grew out of the Willard Homewood Residents Economic Development Committee meetings which have been going on since the middle 1990’s. In April 2008 there were sixty-five foreclosed homes in the sixteen square block area now designated at Artists’ Core.

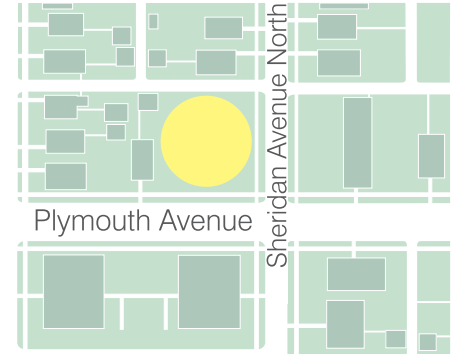
Local residents/committee members cobbled together support programs from several housing agencies and City of Minneapolis departments and began targeting young families, especially artists and their families, as potential buyers for these homes. Some were rehabbed and then offered for sale, others were offered as is with rehab assistance following the purchase.

All of the homes in the Artists’ Core were photographed, their status investigated (foreclosed, vacant, occupied) and maps of each block were prepared so any interested buyer could immediately see what homes were like around the one they were interested in. The model of identifying a specific target group, (in this case artists), and developing incentives designed specifically to attract and to meet this groups’ needs is applicable in a more general basis.

At this time, there are fewer than five of the original sixty-five homes still on the market. Not all the homes sales were the result of the Artists’ Core project, but many were. The community continues to work to insure new families are invited to purchase homes and to send strong roots down into the soil that has nurtured so many of us and our families.

- synopsis of this neighborhood community’s efforts

The site for the Competition is located at the northwest corner of Plymouth Avenue North and Sheridan Avenue North in Minneapolis and is owned by the City of Minneapolis CPED. It currently consists of three contiguous individual parcels (2500, 2506 and 2510 Plymouth Avenue North) zoned R-4 and will be re-platted as a single R-4 site prior to construction. However, for purposes of this Competition consider the site a single new parcel and prepare your submittal as such.



Surveyed dimensions off Plymouth Avenue No. can be found on the existing surveys for 2506 and 2510 Plymouth Avenue No. but dimensions along Sheridan Avenue No. are not shown on the existing survey of 2500 Plymouth Ave No. Therefore, for purposes of the Competition assume the following site dimensions off Sheridan Avenue No.:

- East property line to sidewalk = 3’-0”
- Sidewalk dimension = 5’-0”
- Sidewalk to curb edge = 5’-0”

The site is part of Willard Homewood, an historic Minneapolis neighborhood with a rich architectural tradition but severely impacted by the foreclosure crisis. In the last two years significant resident commitment has focused their efforts on revitalizing their neighborhood with a marketing and information campaign targeted toward bringing “artists” into these homes. This housing competition reinforces these efforts.

The Competition is a call for innovative and creative ideas that address issues and challenges of:

- design excellence applied to affordable entry level home ownership
- spatial flexibility and adaptability including design of “live/work” space
- sustainable building practices and materials using economical building technologies
- urban infill sustainable site design and place making opportunities
- design for a range of lifestyle choices and family configurations including “universal” design
- high quality neighborhood livability

Entries will be judged for their responses in meeting the above criteria and the sponsor’s goals outlined in this Program which was developed with the input from CPED, marketing studies, and community input and calls for a medium density housing project; preferably six (#6) “live/work” units for the site.

If the entrant believes that less than 6 units is optimal in satisfying the goals and values expressed herein, than that applicant may propose a scheme less than 6 units along with a narrative explaining that decision. While the stated goal of the development is 6 units, the jury will fully consider schemes less than that and weigh them accordingly in the context of all submissions.



Unit size and cost guidelines -

see the Market Study Report and the BATC developed "Specification Parameters" documents available online:

- Between 1,300 and 1,600 sf per unit depending on unit types
- Three bedrooms (two bedrooms plus flex space option) with two baths (additional rough in situation option)
- "Flex" live/work/BR space
- The unit heights must comply with zoning and planning requirements for the site.

Unit/Project Budget

- Entrants should bear in mind that the units are intended to be sold to owner occupants for between \$150,000 to \$175,000. Each submittal is required to include a per square foot building construction cost estimate of their design.

MN GreenStar Standards and Objectives

The Competition will incorporate CPED design directives that call for a development that meets a minimum MN GreenStar Bronze Level Certification for new construction. Their document, "[Minnesota GreenStar New Homes Checklist](#)" is available online at www.mngreenstar.org and will be required to be completed and included with each submission (include the completed worksheet in the sealed envelope containing your registration form and attached to the back of one your presentation boards). It is intended for the winning entry and built project to be registered, inspected and achieve MN GreenStar Bronze certification.

MN GreenStar will conduct at least one Introductory training session which provides an overview of MN GreenStar principles and a tutorial on how to use and complete their checklist and manual. This session is free of charge to registered entrants and is highly recommended for this Competition during the design competition phase.

The first session is scheduled for Thursday, March 18, 2010 from 12:00-2:00pm at the CPED office. A second session will likely be scheduled in early April. Updated information will be available on the Competition website.

CPED Guidelines

The City of Minneapolis CPED staff has provided guidelines and recommendations specifically addressing this Competition and contained in the document titled, "Highlighted Goals for Bearden Place Competition" and available to all registrants. The following items are addressed in this document and should be considered by entrants:

- **Orientation** - Project units should have a prominent orientation towards Plymouth Avenue that compliment the surrounding area but it is not a requirement of the entire design.
- **Setbacks** - While the CPED document indicates current front yard setback requirements along Plymouth (15 feet) and Sheridan Avenues (25.3 feet as corner lot), it is understood that the designs submitted for this Competition may require setback variance requests. Entrants should proceed with this in mind



- **Parking -**
 - Access parking by way of the alley off Sheridan Avenue
 - The vehicle parking requirement for the use is one space per dwelling unit
 - Minimize the amount of space devoted to parking and impervious surface
- **Garages**
 - Detached garages are allowed, but not preferred
 - Up to #2 parking spots on site per home and may include attached, detached, no garage or a combination at the discretion of the designer
- **Bicycle Parking** - Incorporate bicycle parking per Chapter 541 of the Zoning Code
 - The minimum bicycle parking requirement for a residential use with five or more dwelling units is 1 space per 2 dwelling units. At least 90% of the required bicycle parking must be long-term, meaning it shall be located in an enclosed area but not within the dwelling unit.
- **Height** - Cluster development 2.5 stories, not to exceed 35 feet
- **Public art/community green space** - Incorporate public art that respects and/or compliments the area's heritage (per policy 9.3 of the Comprehensive Plan).

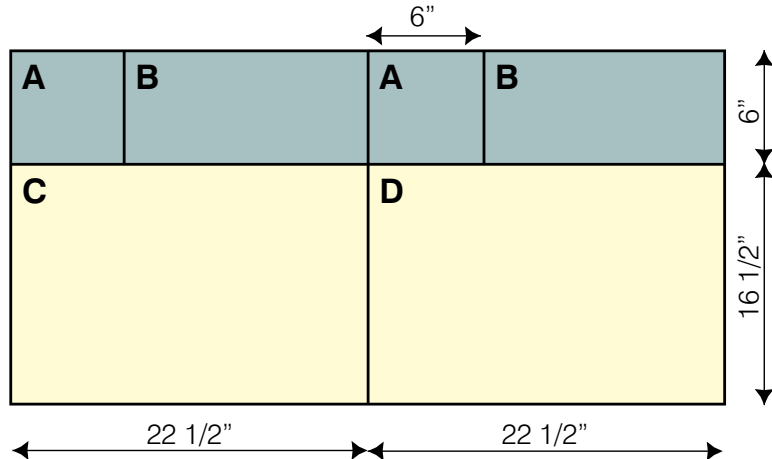
A conditional use permit (CUP) and a site plan review process will be required for any scheme with more than four units. The selected winning project team will be expected to participate fully in the approval process including necessary modifications required for project approval and construction.

Competitors may propose any site plan possibility for consideration by the jurors and eventually for site plan review if selected. This may include row house, wrap around, various unit combinations of doubles, triples and attached quads, court yard or other site design and unit schemes. Please refer to Chapter 530 site plan review for design requirements for 1-4 units and residential developments with more than 4 units for their designs.

The Competition-process and Schedule

Submission Deadline and Requirements

Submissions will be restricted to the following illustrated format; two (#2) 22 1/2" x 22 1/2"" presentation boards mounted on 1/4" foam core as shown.



- A** Project Name and short concept narrative
- B** Project diagrams and illustrations addressing submissions requirements and other design ideas
- C** Site plan with ground floor plan, other floor plans and variations
- D** Project elevations, images, and/or perspectives



AIA presentation board format

Boards may include photos, plans, renderings, text and other project information to fully illustrate and describe the project's design solution, intent, aesthetic and vision . Boards must include the following:

- **Area A** - Project name and concise description, its design intent, principles and diagrams in the space indicated in the presentation board graphic..
- **Area B**** - Project diagrams, illustrations and narratives depicting the design intent and principles, building project construction cost per square foot with any identified allowances factored in, sustainable features, materials and construction methods/ systems etc.
- **Area C** - Site plan (full property boundary to street curb) including ground floor plans indicating all relevant planning and design components; scale= 1/16" = 1'-0". Representative unit floor plans, variations and features; scale= 1/16" = 1'-0" with any additional informative plan variations scaled at the discretion of the designer. Identify the site's public space allocated for a future "public art" component that will be selected under a separate design competition.
- **Area D** - Project elevation(s) /digital images / perspective sketches. At least one view from the SE corner of the intersection looking NW is required

** Items identified for Area B may also be depicted in other areas of the presentation boards at the designer's discretion

No physical models will be accepted.

Entrant's names, logos or other identification shall not be displayed on the visible portion of the boards. Entrants must clearly mark on the upper left hand corner of the back of each board a designation "Brd #1" and "Brd #2" followed by their registration number on each board. They should also securely affix an opaque envelope, marked only with the Registration Number, to the rear of one of their Presentation Boards and sealed inside this envelope should be a copy of the Registration Form signed by all team members (if possible), the completed MN GreenStar worksheet, and a CD-ROM or thumb drive with electronic copy of the submitted boards in .pdf format. Prior to jury deliberations, the envelopes will be removed and the Registration Number and contact information confirmed. All submissions (boards and CDs) shall become the final property of CPED and entry in this competition grants CPED rights for future exhibition and publication purposes.

Competition entrants will retain all rights, including copyright, to their design.

No submitted materials will be returned to the entrants. CPED reserves the right to reject entrants due to non-conformance with the format requirements and to elect not to award a contract for further services after the jury selection for whatever reason.

Submissions are due at the offices of CPED on Wednesday, April 21st by 5:00pm. This is not a postmark deadline, the physical boards must be received at:

Bearden Place Housing Competition
c/o Katie White
City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
Suite 200 - Crown Roller Mill
105 Fifth Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401

City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development will make all final decisions on disputes or questions of interpretation arising out of the competition rules and requirements. All such determinations will be binding on all registrants and entrants in the competition. Any disputes arising from this competition should be addressed in writing to the Competition Administrator. The Competition Administrator has final authority in enforcing the provisions of these instructions.

Budget Goals and Narrative

Entries that demonstrate a conformance with the intended project construction budget and sales goals will assist the jury in its deliberations and finalist selections. As funding and construction partner in this project, the Builder's Association of the Twin Cities will be responsible for evaluating the submittal and will participate in maintaining the cost parameters set out in this program. Alternate construction techniques, materials and building systems will be fully considered and must be adequately described and demonstrated within the submittal.



Competition Materials and Considerations

A web site containing the Competition information, drawings and images can be accessed via the City of Minneapolis website starting Friday, March 5, 2010 at the following URL:

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/foreclosure/Foreclosures_Steps_to_Recovery.asp

Documents include:

- Competition Registration Form - Required
- Competition Program, Details and Requirements
- Area/Neighborhood Plan
- Specification Parameters
- Market Study Report prepared for Competition
- CPED Document: "Highlighted Goals for Bearden Place" Competition
- CPED reference documents:
 - [City of Minneapolis Goals](#)
 - [City of Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan](#)
 - [City of Minneapolis Zoning Code](#) (special attention to Chapter 530)
 - Chapter 530 - Site Plan Review
 - [Near North Neighborhood Profile](#)
 - [Minneapolis Greenprint](#)



Competition Jury

The 5 member invited Jury listed represents the City (CPED), the Builder's Outreach Foundation (BOF), the Northside community (NRRC), the University of Minnesota College of Design and a non participating licensed architect:

Tom Streitz	Director of Housing and Policy Development, City of Minneapolis
Sue Marshall	Builders Association of the Twin Cities (BATC)
Brain Bushay	NRRC (Northside Resident Redevelopment Council)
Thomas Fisher, Assoc. AIA	Dean, College of Design, University of Minnesota
Garth Rockcastle, FAIA	Dean, College of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, University of Maryland
<i>Competition Advisor</i>	<i>Jay H. Isenberg, AIA</i>

Complete juror bios may be viewed at

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/foreclosure/Foreclosures_Steps_to_Recovery.asp

The Jury will be charged with reviewing all anonymous submittals in a professional and non biased manner and select the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The first place team will then negotiate and be awarded a contract for the development of their submission and

construction of the project in partnership with members of the Builders Association of the Twin Cities (BATC). Prize money will be awarded for the top three selections as follows:

First Place + commission \$10,000
Second Place \$ 5,000
Third Place \$ 2,500

***Winning the Competition does not guarantee winning the Commission,
but will win the right to first negotiation.***

The jury will base its decisions primarily on the degree to which submitted designs address and satisfy the goals and values described herein. The jury may interpret the judging criteria at their discretion.

The Competition will also include an Exhibition of the finalists and other selected submissions at a location(s) and date(s) to be determined. By presenting an Exhibition of the submissions and conducting an open public presentation and discussion, both the neighborhood affected and the larger community will have an opportunity to engage, promote, argue and participate in the process of community building engendered by this Competition.



The Commission

The first place winner's design intent will be honored and have the opportunity to develop the design further in accordance with the sponsor's budget and together with BATC work toward a probable cost on the basis of these documents before proceeding with an agreed upon level of construction documents.

If the first place design competition winner is unable to work towards the client's budget, or the final cost estimate by BATC exceeds the sponsor's target budget, then the sponsor has the right to adjust its budget or to consider the second place winner's submission, followed by the third place selection.

Upon final negotiations the successful architect will enter a design-build services agreement with BATC with selected AIA Contract Documents expected to form the basis of negotiations for the contractual agreement among the parties.

The selected firm will work in conjunction with BATC members to assemble a professional consulting team for civil, structural and MEP services expected to be on a design/build basis and mutually agreeable to all parties.

Anticipated architectural service fees excluding structural engineering for design-build services are anticipated to be 5% of the building construction budget but subject to any agreed upon negotiated modifications.

The winning firm must present proof of professional liability insurance commensurate with the project size and complexity.

Eligibility and Registration

Eligibility

The competition is an open call to individuals, firms and students alike. However, each submittal must have a licensed architect currently registered in the State of Minnesota with professional liability insurance as registrant and responsible party throughout the entire process including the contract signature and construction phases.

Firms and individuals may submit multiple entries under separate registration.

Registration

There is no fee to register for the Competition. However, entrants **must** register for the Competition in order to receive a registration number required for submittal and located on the back of their presentation boards. Entrants are encouraged to register as early as possible but may register as late as the deadline for submission on April 21st.

There is no online registration for the Competition. Register for the Competition by downloading the Entry Registration Form available online at the Competition website. Mail, email or fax the completed form and address all Competition correspondence and questions to:

Katie White, Program Assistant and Competition Administrator

City of Minneapolis, Community Planning and Economic Development
Suite 200 - Crown Roller Mill
105 Fifth Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-673-5238 (o)
612-673-5100 (f)
Email: katherine.white@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Questions

All questions should be submitted via email to Katie White at katherine.white@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

All questions and answers will be posted online at the beginning of each week at:

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/foreclosure/Foreclosures_Steps_to_Recovery.asp

Questions will be answered until Monday April 12th, 2010.

Competition Schedule

Competition Announcement and Publication	March 5	2010
First Site Visit (12:00 noon at site)	March 17	2010
First MN GreenStar Introductory Session (2:00 pm)	March 18	2010
Second Site Visit (12:00 noon at site)	March 29	2010
Submissions Due	April 21	2010
Jury Deliberations and Announcement	April 23-24	2010
Public Presentations/Exhibition	June/July	2010
Contract Award/Design Services Documents	May - July	2010
Planning & Public Review Process	May - July	2010
Project Construction Start	Aug. - Sept.	2010