

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency met on Thursday, July 10, 2014, at Camden City Hall, 13th Floor Conference Room, 520 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey.

Chair Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10 PM. Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called roll.

Present: MT, VB (by phone), BM, and JV

Absent/Excused: EG and KH

Attendees: Saundra Ross Johnson, Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Johanna Conyer, Olivette Simpson, Sulena Robinson-Rivera, and Richard Rabinowitz CRA; Colandus “Kelly” Francis, Camden County NAACP and LaVerne Williams of Branch Village

Ms. Rhodes advised the Board that, pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice(s) had been posted in the Courier Post and the Philadelphia Inquirer as well as in the Office of the City Clerk.

Review of Minutes

Meeting Date	M	A	N	AB	Comments
June 5, 2014 June 11, 2014					There were no comments or questions.

Executive Director’s Report

Meeting Date	M	A	N	AB	Comments
July 10, 2014					<p>In addition to the previously submitted written report, Executive Director Saundra Ross Johnson provided an update on Economic Opportunity Act activities, namely: approval of tax credits for Holtec—a manufacturer of containers used to haul nuclear waste, El Centro refinancing, and the approval of funding from the Economic Recovery Board for environmental work at Pyne Poynt; all CRA-related projects.</p> <p>Ms. Johnson also informed the Commissioners of the completion and issuance of the RFP for development of over 400 parcels in Lanning Square. A mix of housing and commercial activities is desired. The RFP benefited from extensive collaboration with the Mayor’s Congress of Resident-, Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations as well as technical assistance from HUD. The RFP has a 90-day response period. Proposals are due October 3, 2014.</p>

VB = Commissioner Vance Bowman **EG** = Commissioner Edgardo Garcia **KH** = Commissioner Kenwood E. Hagamin, Jr.
BM = Commissioner Bryan Morton **JV** = Commissioner Jose Vazquez
MT = Commissioner Marilyn Torres

<p>Executive Director's Report (cont'd)</p>				<p>Staff is currently collaborating with representatives of Cooper Grant Neighborhood Association on an RFP for the development of market-rate housing. Issuance of the RFP is anticipated for late-July.</p> <p>An RFP for Cooper Plaza is in development as well.</p> <p>Ms. Johnson also extended an invitation for Commissioners to attend the July 16th Family Festival on behalf of the EDs and MEDs Taskforce.</p> <p>The Commissioners were advised to anticipate a discussion on CRA's revolving loan fund at the Monthly meeting as well.</p> <p>*****</p> <p>To provide an overview relating to Resolution 07-16-14B, Ms. Johnson introduced representatives of Christian Temple Church: Board Members Martha Cutbreath and Alyce Johnson as well as Architect A. Christianson.</p>
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Presentations

Ms. Alyce Johnson of Christian Temple Church presented the plan for expansion to include a dining hall and additional parking. If approved, CRA will receive market-rate compensation for the acquired parcels. The Site Plan was previously reviewed by the City's Business Growth and Development Team (BGDT) and Planning Board; a recommendation was afforded by BGDT. The proposed expansion has received support from congregants as well as residents. TD Bank has verified the church has funds sufficient to support the proposed construction. Both Mayor Redd and Gwendolyn Faison have honored the Pastor for his work.

Commissioner Bryon Morton asked where congregants are currently parking. Ms. Johnson informed the Commissioners that visitors are parking across the street.

Chair Marilyn Torres asked if the Church anticipates generating revenue from the dining hall through rentals and similar activities. Ms. Johnson stated their preference is to focus on religious gathering(s); not profits.

Ms. Torres asked if the church will pay the market-value for the parcels. Ms. Johnson affirmed.

Architect A. Christianson noted that the additional parking space will place the church within closer compliance with local parking codes. Christian Temple is currently operating through a variance on parking regulations. Expansion will provide for better trash disposal as well.

Mr. Morton asked if there will be a ramp. Mr. Christianson informed the Commissioners one slope is shallow enough, so steps aren't necessary.

Mr. Morton encouraged the presenters to consider adding a ramp and double-door installation to accommodate anticipated programming which will require deliveries of large quantities of goods.

Resolutions for Review and Action

		M	A	N	AB	
07-16-14A	Resolution Recognizing the Exemplary Service of Commissioner Louis F. Quinones with the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners					<p>This resolution was presented by Ms. Johnson. Ms. Johnson advised that family commitments required greater need of Commissioner Louis Quinones. Chair Marilyn Torres added that sometimes commissioners do not know they are appreciated and gave special recognition of Commissioner Bryan Morton's attendance during Little League baseball season. (Mr. Morton operates the Little League program in North Camden.)</p> <p>There were no further comments or questions.</p>
07-16-14B	Resolution Authorizing the Amendment of Various Remediation, Planning, and Acquisition Grants from the Camden Economic Recovery Board Relating to Scope of Work, Allocation of Funds, and Terms of the Grants					<p>This resolution was presented by Ms. Johnson. She noted it is a reconciliation of certain grants and extensions of others as outlined on the exhibit. CRA will not receive administrative funds for these grants. All funds go directly to the projects.</p> <p>There were no comments or questions.</p>
07-16-14C	Resolution Authorizing a Redevelopment Agreement with Boos States Development, LLC for the Redevelopment of Block 85, Lot 1 and Block 86, Lot 51 of the City of Camden Tax Map as a Family Dollar Store with Additional Retail Space (7th & Linden Site)					<p>This Resolution was presented by Mr. Asselta. He noted terms of redevelopment agreement are under discussion.</p> <p>Mr. Morton inquired about the status of outreach regarding rehabilitation of a park (Cornelius) located near the prospective development site and asserted the community has not been sufficiently engaged. Mr. Morton also expressed disappointment that his prior recommendation regarding rehabilitation of the park for use by Little League participants was not acted upon.</p> <p>Ms. Johnson advised that two additional terms have been added to the Redevelopment Agreement requiring community needs to be addressed through the administration.</p>

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07-16-14D	<p>Resolution Authorizing a Redevelopment Agreement with Boos States Development, LLC for the Redevelopment of a Portion of Block 844, Lot 13 of the City of Camden Tax Map as a Family Dollar Store (State & River Site)</p>				<p>City Attorney Marc Riondino stated the administration requested a structured process to which all entities should adhere regarding Community Benefits. He also informed the Commissioners that the issue of Community Benefits stemming from this redevelopment project has not been determined.</p> <p>Mr. Morton advised the Commissioners that the park is a City resource in dire need of support. There are no bathrooms or water fountains at the park. It once was a soft ball field. Currently, there is no place for girls to play softball.</p> <p>Mr. Morton also stated that too few jobs will result from the prospective development project (citing 5 construction jobs).</p> <p>Mr. Riondino encouraged the group to present a proposal to Mayor Redd.</p> <p>Mr. Bowman encouraged the administration to be responsive to the request. He also requested Chair Torres to serve as the spokesperson.</p> <p>Mr. Asselta stated he understands the concerns regarding a generic approach to community benefits.</p> <p>Ms. Torres concluded that we have to make this happen.</p> <p>There were no further comments or questions.</p> <p>This resolution was presented by Mr. Asselta. There were no comments or questions.</p>
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07-16-14E	<p>Resolution Designating Christian Temple Assembly Church of God, Inc as the Redeveloper of Block 582, Lot 13; Block 582 Lot 14; and Block 582 Lot 15 of the Camden City Tax Map Located in the Centerville Redevelopment Area and Authorizing a Redevelopment Agreement with the Redeveloper for Use of the Property for Parking for Church Facilities</p>					<p>This Resolution was presented by Housing Director Olivette Simpson. Details of the proposed project were provided during the report of the Executive Director.</p> <p>There were no comments or questions.</p>
07-16-14F	<p>Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with Ballard Spahr LLP for Legal Services in Connection with the Cooper Plaza and Lanning Square Redevelopment Areas for A Total Amount Not to Exceed \$28,500.00</p>					<p>The resolution was presented by Ms. Simpson. Mr. Bowman expressed a need for clarification on the properties entailed. He will follow up directly with Ms. Simpson.</p> <p>There were no further comments or questions.</p>

Chairperson's Remarks

None.

Public Comments

City Attorney Marc Riondino advised the Commissioners to anticipate a Walk-On Resolution at the Monthly Meeting regarding a Leave of Absence Request for a former CRA employee who was recently appointed to a new position by Mayor Redd.

Mr. Morton asked who is filling the position vacated at CRA and if the recently re-assigned employee will receive a salary increase. Mr. Riondino affirmed an increase in compensation.

Ms. Johnson introduced CRA intern Richard Rabinowitz and noted his expertise in cost-benefit analysis. He will present findings to the Board in August. Mr. Rabinowitz is a PhD candidate at Rutgers, The State University.

Mr. Morton asked if his analysis is purely monetary or is social value also for consideration.

Mr. Rabinowitz advised that his analysis is primarily financial, but he plans to include a social indicator or two.

Mr. Morton announced this would be his final meeting as a Commissioner. He encouraged the Board to keep the community in mind in assessing and/or awarding future projects. Ms. Torres encouraged Mr. Morton to reconsider. He declined. She also noted he is an asset to the Board, wished him good luck, and stated she hopes he will change his mind.

Concerning Resolution 07-16-14 E, Colandus "Kelly" Francis of the Camden County NAACP requested the street coordinates. Ms. Johnson advised that they are 9th & Chelton. Mr. Morton recommended adding street addresses to all future resolutions to further distinguish from lot and block numbers.

Mr. Francis also expressed concern about The Wilson building. He reported that his understanding is that the building was purchased by LEAP for a nominal amount, while valued at roughly \$3 million. Consequently, the City is losing tax revenue when the City can't afford to lose property to tax-exemption. He added that vertical structures are not the current model for academic facilities. Mr. Francis also posited the question as to whether a public school could own commercial property.

Concerning the RFP for Lanning Square, Mr. Francis asked if it is for the entire Lanning Square area, including the units in Lanning West. Housing Director Olivette Simpson stated it is not for the entire area and the full report is on CRA's website. Ms. Simpson will provide maps.

Concerning Resolution 07-16-14B, Ms. LaVerne Williams of Branch Village requested a copy of the Grants exhibit. She also expressed concern about the market-rate housing expansion and stated it will require residents have jobs that pay more and are permanent; otherwise outsiders will have to buy the new homes.

New Business

None.

Executive Session

None.

Old Business

None.

Adjournment

On a Motion made by Commissioner Jose Vazquez, seconded by Mr. Morton, this meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 PM.

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