

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, at Camden City Hall, City Council Chamber, Camden, New Jersey.

Chair Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 PM. Board Clerk Sulena Robinson-Rivera called roll.

Present: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, and MS

Absent:

Excused: IL

Attendees: Saundra Ross Johnson, Mark Asselta, Sulena Robinson-Rivera, Johanna Conyer, James Harveson, Olivette Simpson, and Kadeem Pratt CRA; Rev. Dr. Dana M. Green, Rev. Janice Bailey, Members of New Life Congregation, New Life Ministries; Kevin Golden of Cozen; Felix Torres-Colon of St. Joseph's Carpenters Society (SJCS); Sheila Roberts, Cooper Plaza Neighborhood Association; Kevin Sheehan, Attorney for Liberty Property Trust; Steve Holden of Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA); Dave Flowers, Jim Bannon, Rosemarie Hicks, Walt Garrison, and Barbara Kelley, CBCA/WERC; Laverne Williams, 218 Branch Village, Ali Sloan-El, 1242 Lakeshore Drive, and Councilman Brian Coleman,

Mrs. Robinson-Rivera advised the Board that, pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice(s) had been posted in the Courier-Post, the Philadelphia Inquirer, and the Office of the City Clerk.

Review of Minutes

Dates of Meetings- March 2 and March 9, 2016

Motion: VB, SD **Ayes:** MT, KH, JR, MS

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Ms. Torres asked all Commissioners if they had an opportunity to review the minutes. All affirmed. There were no further comments or questions.

Executive Director's Report

Date of Meeting- April 13, 2016

Motion: VB, MS **Ayes:** MT, KH, JR, MS

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: In addition to the report submitted during caucus, Ms. Johnson added, the HUD CHOICE NOFA was published and the CRA is working in collaboration with the City Administration and other partners to submit an application by the May 2016 deadline. She also acknowledged and expressed gratitude to Commissioners Sharma and Torres for attending the Federal Home Loan Bank forum hosted by the City of Camden.

Redevelopment Project Presentation

Felix Torres Colon of St. Joseph's Carpenters Society spoke to their proposal to acquire 460 Trenton Ave from the CRA. He shared the mission of SJCS is to help families improve their quality of life and to create safe neighborhoods through homeownership. Felix informed all of SJCS's commitment to educating current and future homeowners. SJCS's Homeowner Education Program has two main programs; Homeowner Academy and Home Maintenance Training Program. Completion of the Homeowner Academy is required for anyone interested in purchasing an SJCS home.

While SJCS is primarily known for their redevelopment of the East Camden, they have worked in other areas in Camden including, Cooper Plaza. To date, with support of local stakeholders including Cooper Health Systems and the Cooper Plaza neighborhood association, SJCS has renovated more than 47 properties in Cooper Plaza. SJCS owns and operates a contracting entity they use, in most projects, to complete the construction. They also allow the buyer to select the home of their choice. He further added that they do not commit or make homes available to buyers until the property is successfully acquired and other milestones are met.

Resolutions for Review and Action

04-13-16A Resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Camden County One-Stop/Work First New Jersey to Participate in the Community Work Experience Program (CWEP)

Motion: VB, MS Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16B Resolution Authorizing an Affiliation Agreement with Rutgers The State University School of Social Work/Transitions for Youth and Montclair State University Summer Housing and Internship Program (SHIP) 2016

Motion: VB, MS Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16C Resolution Authorizing a Professional Service Agreement with Renwick & Associates for Appraisal Services in Connection with the Proposed Sale of Certain Property in Block 105 on the Camden City Tax Map for a Cost Not to Exceed \$2,900.00 (10th & Linden Properties)

Motion: VB, KH Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16D Resolution Authorizing a Professional Service Agreement with Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc. to Develop a Brownfields Area-Wide Plan for the Mt. Ephraim Choice Neighborhood for an Amount not to Exceed \$164,674.00

Motion: MS, JR Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: KH Abstentions:

Commissioner Bowman asked which Neighborhood this is associated with. James Harveson, Director of Economic Development shared that Whitman Park is the neighborhood. There were no additional questions or comments.

04-13-16E Resolution Authorizing an Application for and Acceptance of a Grant from the New Jersey Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund for a Remedial Investigation of the Camden Laboratories Site (1667 Davis Street and designated as Block 1392 Lot 33 of the City of Camden Tax Map) in an amount not to exceed \$192,051.00

Motion: VB, KH Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)

04-13-16F Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of U.S. Bank National Association as Escrow Agent for the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency and to Establish Escrow Accounts in Connection with the Harrison Avenue Landfill Closure

Motion: VB, KH Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16G Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of a Pre-Qualified List of Environmental and Engineering Firms to Provide Environmental Services

Motion: VB, JR Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16H Resolution Authorizing the Amendment of Various Remediation, Planning, and Acquisition Grants from the Camden Economic Recovery Board By Extending the Term of Such Grants (\$1,935,072)

Motion: MS, JR Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

Commissioner Sharma asked the term of the grant extension. Olivette Simpson, Director of Housing, clarified the term as one year. There were no additional questions or comments.

04-13-16I Resolution Designating the Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society, Inc., a Non Profit, as Redeveloper of Block 1429, Lot 24 of the City of Camden Tax Map Located in the Cooper Plaza Redevelopment Area and Authorizing a Redevelopment Agreement with the Redeveloper

Motion: JR, MS Ayes: MT, SD, JR, MS

Nays: VB Abstentions: KH

Note: The title of this resolution as posted with the Office of the City Clerk and distributed should have reflected as documented here. All references to the authorization of a Cost Agreement should have been omitted. There were no additional questions or comments.

04-13-16J Resolution Authorizing a Professional Service Agreement with J. McHale & Associates, Inc. for Appraisal Services in Connection with the Proposed Sale of Certain Property Designated as Block 1429, Lot 24 and Block 1416, Lot 6 and the Proposed Acquisition of Block 1410, Lot 11 on the Camden City Tax Map for a Cost Not to Exceed \$4,000.

Motion: KH, JR Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

There were no questions or comments.

Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)

04-13-16K Resolution Approving the Amendment to Redevelopment Agreement between City of Camden Redevelopment Agency and New Jersey Economic Development Authority; Amendment to Declaration of Easements, Covenants and Restrictions by City of Camden Redevelopment Agency and New Jersey Economic Development Authority; Replacement of Designated Developer Sub agreement between City of Camden Redevelopment Agency and Camden Town Center, LLC

Motion: MS, SD Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

Commissioner Bowman requested additional information regarding the amendments to the plan. Kevin Sheehan provided an overview of the project for Commissioners who were not present when Liberty Trust made a presentation to the board. Following the CRA action there is a State appeal approval deadline in May 2016. He noted the residential portion of the project would be 80% market rate and 20% affordable. He also noted that some references to condos referred to commercial development as well as residential. Mark Asselta advised that there is a draft community benefit agreement for this project. There were no questions or comments.

04-13-16L Resolution Approving the Termination of Redevelopment Agreement, the Termination of the Permanent Easement and the Termination of the Construction Easement with the Delaware River Port Authority regarding Block 81.05 Lot 1

Motion: SD, VB Ayes: MT, SD, VB, KH, JR, MS

Nays: Abstentions:

Mark Asselta mentioned language within the resolution will be tweaked to include reference to approval of the DRPA. There were no questions or comments.

Public Comments

Note-Vice Chair Davis relieved the Chair during this portion of the meeting. The chair returned to the meeting shortly before the meeting adjourned.

Rev. Dr. Dana Green, wife of the late C. Ronald Green, provided some background of her church, New Life Ministries and its subsidiary Community Development Corporation. She also described the church's redevelopment prior experience with Grapevine Development LLC. Rev. Green referenced initial and subsequent discussions with NFI regarding proposed redevelopment near the church. Present at some of the meetings included Councilman Coleman and Uncommon Schools. She affirmed that a formal meeting with NFI, related to the church's parking needs is scheduled to occur at 10:00am on April 8, 2016.

Mark Asselta added that the redevelopment agreement has yet to be executed. Chair Torres and other Commissioners recommended that the agreement include a sufficient number of parking spaces to meet the churches need. Commissioners Bowman and Davis acknowledged a misunderstanding of details and dates of the communications between the church and redevelopers and they were hopeful that the upcoming scheduled meeting, Rev. Dr. Green referred to, will resolve concerns related to the church's parking needs.

Commissioner Bowman suggested the CRA institute a practice of providing the Commissioners evidence of community meetings as part of redevelopment project presentations.

Sheila Roberts of the Cooper Plaza Neighborhood Association advised how she and her neighborhood have overcome similar challenges and encouraged members of the Whitman Park neighborhood to remain involved and recognize the value of community participation in all matters.

Former City Councilman Ali Sloan-El reminded all of a previously written draft of a Whitman Park plan authored, in large part, by the late C. Ronald Green. He asked all to revisit and respect the elements contained within.

Laverne Williams requested clarification regarding resolution 04-13-16K and 04-13-16L. She was advised that this is the same project where she requested the inclusion of comprehensive and convenient New Jersey Transit bus routes be incorporated the waterfront project.

Councilman Coleman spoke to accountability and due diligence. He shared that the 2nd ward includes six areas and inquired about the status of affirmative action initiatives. Director Johnson advised that the process is unchanged. The administration is leading, managing, and tracking that effort. He also asked whether the affirmative action plan is included in redevelopment agreements. CRA counsel advised that every redevelopment plan includes references the City of Camden Affirmative action requirements. Redevelopers are mandated to comply.

Commissioner Davis asked whether redevelopers must include Community Benefit Agreements (CBA). CRA Counsel explained this is also a requirement in every agreement.

Commissioner Hagamin expressed his desire to see the CRA be more proactive in the hiring of City of Camden residents, including those who are recently released from incarceration. He suggested commissioners and others review the 2nd Chance Act. Ms. Johnson shared that the CRA seeks to do so. With the NSP2 projects, CRA met and exceeded job creation requirements.

Commissioner Bowman acknowledged that the CRA was created by Council Ordinance and reminded all that democracy shall rest with the people.

Councilman Coleman acknowledged CRA's achievements with respect to Section 3 and HUD requirements and his desires to obtain a better understanding of employment of City residents on current redevelopment projects, such as the 76's practice facility. Ms. Johnson reminded all the aforementioned project is subject to a deed conveyance and not a redevelopment agreement. Mr. Coleman shared some information he learned from an impromptu visit to the project site. He implored the commissioners to review the City of Camden Affirmative Action requirements.

Commissioner Ramos spoke to the City's employment challenges effecting, not only residents re-entering society, but, people like him and quoted, City of Camden Chief of Police, stating, nothing beats a bullet like a job.

David Flowers, a city resident of more than three decades and member of the Camden Business and Contractors Association (CBCA) offered his assistance to the CRA for tracking employment. He also suggested that CRA advise contractors to contact CBCA.

Jim Bannon of Stelwagon and CBCA encouraged all to visit the CBCA website and support various initiatives. He also added that his business is a Women Owned Business Enterprise (WBE.)

Mr. Sloan-El reflected on times past, when the CRA and member of City Council would collaborate differently than present day. He suggested attendees consider practices of previous administrations to compliment practices and procedures currently in place.

Rosemarie Hick, a small business owner and member of CBCA acknowledged her various efforts to navigate City of Camden contacts and small business resources. She and other expressed the importance of small businesses to the City of Camden and requested support.

Ms. Johnson urged the CBCA to suggest to their members monitor the CRA website, as well as that of the City of Camden and Housing Authority as each provides a number of RFP and bidding opportunities for their membership. CRA will also forward RFPs to the CBCA for distribution among its membership.

Walt Dixon of Contractor Service and CBCA asked how the CRA could be influential or provide resources in various areas. He also invited all to visit the CBCA website and attending an upcoming networking event.

Commissioner Davis expressed her support for small businesses.

Councilman Coleman volunteered to provide each CRA Commissioner with a hard copy of the City of Camden Affirmative Action Ordinance. Mark Asselta shared each redevelopment plan states the redeveloper shall comply with the City of Camden Affirmative Action Ordinance. Councilman inquired further with respect to enforcement mechanism CRA uses, and the penalty for noncompliance. Commissioner Torres recommended the CRA identify a person to enforce the Affirmative Action requirements where possible. Commissioner Bowman recalled the effectiveness of CRA staff member Dwaine Williams, when as mentioned previously the CRA exceeded hiring goals. Commissioner Bowman requested the authorization to create an Affirmative Action Oversight committee. Mark Asselta requested an opportunity to research the proper method to create such and will advise accordingly.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Chairperson's Remarks and Observations

She thanked all for attending and for all the good work.

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

This meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 PM on a motion made by Commissioner Ramos and seconded by Commissioner Hagamin.

V3