

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF HARRISBURG

Regularly Scheduled Meeting November 16, 2021 - 12:32 P.M.

The Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Harrisburg held a Regularly Scheduled Meeting on November 16, 2021, in Suite 405, of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Government Center, 10 North Second Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, at 12:32 p.m. by Stacia Zewe Board Chair.

HRA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT via TEAMS

Web-based Video Conferencing or Telephone

Nichole Johnson
Crystal Brown
Stacia Zewe
Daniel Leppo

ABSENT:

None

THE PUBLIC present: Matt Long with Harrisburg Commercial Interiors and Associates, Inc. (HCI), and Camille Hippensteel, resident of Capitol Heights.

Also present: Janell Weaser, Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Administrative Project Manager; Bryan Davis, HRA Executive Director; and Catherine Rowe, HRA Solicitor.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 19, 2021 were presented for approval. Ms. Brown moved to approve; seconded by Ms. Johnson. The motion(s) passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Reports for August and September were presented for approval; subject to Audit; Mr. Leppo moved to approve; second by Ms. Brown. The motion passed unanimously. The Treasurer's Report for October 2021 was presented for review.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Davis said you will not see it listed on the agenda, but he wanted to mention that each Board Member was sent the proposed budget for the new year 2022 to review. He noted that there is very little change from the previous years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hippensteel stated that she is not here representing herself. I am representing about two dozen Capitol Heights Residents. Ms. Hippensteel said there is a lot of development going on with MarketPlace and Capitol Heights. It is a lot to take in as a resident and the plans have changed significantly. She gave some printed hand-outs for the Board Members to read later. Ms. Hippensteel said basically we want a redesign. The hand-out is a review of some key issues that we are very concerned about.

Ms. Rowe asked Ms. Hippensteel to introduce herself and give her address.

Ms. Hippensteel stated her name and informed the Members that she lives at 1619 N. 4th Street. She and her neighbors are located within five proposed developments. We do want development in the

neighborhood but have some significant concerns with how much and the types. Ms. Hippensteel mentioned that when she purchased her home, she had studied the development plans. She had read the Redevelopment Authority's website of anticipating single family homes. We know that stuff changes. The unfortunate part is that we still own these homes, so the proposal of building 3, 4 and 5 story, 108 units with first floor commercial spaces is going to be problematic for us. We are an old fashion two story with a front and back yard to now be next door to a proposed five story block long enterprise across from another first floor commercial and a new parking garage with multiple converses coming from 3rd and 4th Streets. We are bordered by one way traffic streets and alleys with one way up and one way down and parallel parking in the front. We have a parking shortage already.

Ms. Hippensteel said they are talking about a food desert. We do not have that anymore. She referenced various exiting grocers. She voiced that the existing stakeholders should be given some protections.

Ms. Hippensteel said she took a big leap of faith with the prior developer. Had she known that her property was the last one sold and the developer was pulling out, she would not have purchased the house.

Ms Hippensteel asked where are the traffic studies? They have not seen any with a Federal Courthouse coming.

Ms. Hippensteel mentioned the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. They say that the missing middle right now is small multi-family builds like duplexes and bungalow courts that would integrate well with single-family housing in existing residential neighborhoods. The footprint is out there. She stressed more about the issues with not enough parking and said the Federal Courthouse Garage will not be enough.

Ms. Hippensteel stated, right now we have a peaceful neighborhood with about thirty children running around. She envisions them having to dodge the various traffic. We prefer duplexes with a small corner store. Ms. Hippensteel said with what is coming either buy us out or do something significantly different.

Ms. Zewe asked Ms. Hippensteel if she or any of the neighbors attended the Developer Design Meetings.

Ms. Hippensteel said Matt Long has done a couple of pop-ups and that leads to another issue. She mentioned having visited 130 homes in the neighborhood. Many had no clue that this was happening. She made a post on Facebook, but many people do not use Facebook that much. I tried to attend every meeting. She knows there is a Zoning Hearing coming up of which leads to other questions because right now the neighborhood is not zoned for commercial. Ms. Hippensteel stated that her neighbors have no clue as to where to go or who to talk to. She mentioned the Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to her neighbors. They did not know who you are. She read the Authority's Meeting Minutes. At first everyone was on board for Single-family homes.

Ms. Hippensteel added that HRA mentioned a housing study back in October of 2018. It said there is a lack of affordable quality family homes for Seniors in the city. She mentioned knowing Mrs. Bryce and how back in 2020 her plans were primarily for homeownership and some Market Rate rentals. Ms. Hippensteel said this is listed in the Minutes.

Mr. Leppo asked where are we in the Land Development Plan process.

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Mr. Long said our Phase I was approved and is now waiting on City Council to ratify it.

Mr. Leppo queried; the Planning Commission has already reviewed it.

Mr. Long affirmed.

Mr. Davis informed that Phase I includes land between Logan and N. 3rd, Hamilton, and Harris Streets. The parcel that fronts N. 3rd is where they propose mixed-use with a community space on the first floor and rentals above.

Ms. Zewe inquired about a zoning variance.

Mr. Long answered saying the zoning has been cleared and is complete.

Mr. Leppo asked when is the City Council Committee Hearing on this.

Mr. Long said they have been waiting for nine weeks and have just received word that the Council President will not add it to the agenda this year.

Mr. Leppo addressed Ms. Hippensteel, saying what you should do is contact the City's Clerk so you can be notified of when the committee meeting will be held for the land development plan. And contact the City's Planning Director, Geoffrey Knight. Let him know that you are interested in being notified of any zoning or land development that comes in. That way they will know when the application has been received and they can prepare their comments. Mr. Leppo said you know who Matt Long is and if you have not been in contact you can get in contact. These Developers are from the city. They are not people coming in and you can discuss the different merits and the different Phases.

Mr. Long concurred.

Mr. Davis expressed his appreciation to Ms. Hippensteel for coming and sharing with them. He will look at what she submitted and welcomed her to contact him. Mr. Davis said we can have conversations and moving forward he would also like to improve on how the public can be better informed.

Ms. Hippensteel mentioned a simple flyer in the neighborhood would help.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 32-2021, authorizing the Authority to approve (a) a Grant Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for funding renovations and improvements to the Harrisburg Transportation Center, in the approximate amount of \$3.5 million and (b) authorize the Executive Director

to execute contract(s) for the performance of the planned renovations and improvements. Mr. Leppo moved to approve; second by Ms. Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Davis informed that this Resolution was tabled at our last meeting for PennDOT and improvements at the Transportation Center. Thankfully your tabling of this Resolution helped because they came back with a pledge to pay us \$3,500 a month to utilize an empty suite at the Station instead of using a job trailer. They estimate approximately eleven months for construction. Mr. Davis said this gets us close to the \$40,000 that we initially said would be a reasonable compensation for us being a conduit of 3.5 million for improvements at the Train Station.

Mr. Davis reiterated that this Resolution Number 32-2021 is for PennDOT's performance improvements at the Harrisburg Transportation Center and the Authority is to be the conduit for the financing and the holder of the Construction Contracts. He added that PennDOT guaranteed they will cover any cost overruns.

Ms. Zewe inquired about the Authority holding the Construction Contracts.

Mr. Davis affirmed and said sometimes we hold the contracts and sometimes we do not. PennDOT stated that due to the nature of the finding they need to partner with the owner or the manager of the station. The Redevelopment Authority is the Master Lease Holder.

RESOLUTION NO. 34-2021, authorizing the Authority to extend the "*Potential Developer*" status to July 31, 2022 for Christopher/Erica Bryce and Harrisburg Commercial Interiors and Associates, Inc.'s (HCI) project of mixed-use residential building located on fourteen (1) parcels in the Midtown area. Ms. Brown moved to approve; second by Mr. Leppo. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Davis said this Resolution is for the existing Potential Developer Status with the Bryce/HCI Team's project of mixed-use located at the intersection of N. 6th and Hamilton Streets. Their proposed project is for mixed-use, first floor commercial space and residential on the upper floors. Mr. Davis said their status expires at the end of this month. We are asking the Board Members to grant an extension for another eight months up to July 31, 2022.

Ms. Johnson wondered why they are asking for an extension of eight months.

Mr. Long responded that over these past months they worked on a land swap with Vartan and acquired some lots from the Repository. He said about three weeks ago they received the Titles for the properties. Their next step is the zoning hearing scheduled in January 2022. We have been experiencing time restraints and needed more time to get to the next Phase for this project.

RESOLUTION NO. 35-2021, authorizing the Authority to extend the "*Potential Developer*" status to May 31, 2022 for On Hill Development Company's project of affordable residential apartments located at 1605-1613 Market Street. Ms. Johnson moved to approve; second by Ms. Brown. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Davis said this Resolution is similar to Resolution Number 34. The Authority has another Potential

Developer, On Hill Development Company with Shaun O'Toole and Jamien Harvey of the YMCA. They are asking for an extension of six month that gives them until May 31, 2022. Their project is for affordable apartments on the 1600 Block of Market Street. The lots on Market Street are buildable but have not been attractive to most developers.

Mr. Leppo relayed that they are narrow lots.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Rowe wanted to give counsel on a concern that Ms. Hippensteel had brought up earlier. She said the Authority makes decisions based on representations presented to them from Developers and there is not a whole lot the Authority can do if changes occur which happen in the natural development phases. What is important is those initial representations made to the Authority remain clear, as projects continue through to Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, and City Council. The Authority is not a gate keeper in terms of approval of final design or implementation of that design, but we certainly have a say for purposes of public input when it comes to what the Board decides at the outset.

Ms. Rowe addressed Ms. Hippensteel; I am saying this for your benefit as well to understand how this process works. And to also maintain a level of accountability for representations made when the Authority makes the approval at the outset when Developers come to you.

Ms. Zewe asked Mr. Davis how easy or difficult is it to update or make changes to the Authority's website. I was just thinking that it might be helpful to have a flow chart of the process and progress of each project. This could be something to keep the communities informed. Ms. Zewe said that she agreed with Ms. Hippensteel that if you are not familiar with this language or the process that things can be confusing. I am just wondering if there is something the Authority can do to and have it available on our website.

Mr. Davis responded by saying let me investigate it. We pay someone else to maintain the Authority's website. It is not easy for our staff to routinely make changes. He said we can look at some type of landing page for active projects that would be helpful for the public, community, and residents. We did something similar with the MarketPlace Townhomes when we had two proposals. The Authority posted information and invited the public to give their feedback. We also pushed this into social media and out to our email distribution lists. Social Media had given us the highest volume.

Mr. Davis inquired of Ms. Hippensteel how she had heard about that meeting because he recalled her being present at that meeting.

Ms. Hippensteel said that is the issue. A lot of people are not following social media. She knows of many who are abandoning Facebook all together because of the environment. Ms. Hippensteel said that way she heard about the meeting was through Mr. Long and the Bryce's visiting the neighborhood.

Mr. Davis also mentioned the "Nextdoor" social media platform.

Ms. Zewe commented that she believes Jacqueline Parker had used that when she was with the city.

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Mr. Davis concurred and said there is still the matter of what Ms. Rowe addressed. The Redevelopment Authority cannot control the things going through the Planning Commission. And it would be difficult to give a timeline or schedule to post for the public.

Ms. Hippensteel agreed saying that is the confusion. That is why I asked if this was the right forum. We do not know who is making the decisions.

Mr. Leppo suggested checking with the City's Planning Bureau. When he had managed the Planning Bureau, they had a list of concerned residents that they would directly call or send postal announcements. Later we started doing the same with emails. He is not sure if they still do that.

Mr. Long relayed they do not, but they are required to notify anyone within 100 feet when planning is in progress.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Secretary/Assistant Secretary