

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency **held a Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2019** Camden City Hall, City Council Chamber, in Camden, New Jersey.

Chairperson Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 PM. Board Clerk Sulena Robinson-Rivera called roll. Commissioner Ramos joined the meeting after roll call at 6:07pm. Commissioner Bowman joined meeting after roll call at 6:21 pm. Commissioners Leonard and Davis stepped out of the meeting, resulting in the meeting being out of order from 6:13pm to 6:15pm. Commissioner Leonard left the meeting at 6:40 pm.

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

Absent:

Attendees: Olivette Simpson, Mark Asselta, Johanna Conyer, James Harveson, and Sulena Robinson-Rivera, CRA; Shon Jablonsky, Apple Tree Homes LLC; Joe Sikora, Jinah Kim, Sikora Wells Appel; Richard DePetro, DePetro Real Estate; Greg LaVardera, Gregory LaVardera Arch; Blake Fitzgerald, Pennoni; Juan Vazquez, resident; Rebecca Velez, resident; Carlos Vazquez, resident; Tamie Pettiford, Realtor Work Here; Jonathan Latko, CGNA; Kelly Francis, NAACP; Cheryl Chandler, CGNA; Sonia Rivera-Perez, CGNA; Odir Chaves, resident

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 Meeting: October 9, 2019

Motion: SD, IL **Ayes:** SD, IL, MS, and MT

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Commissioners Bowman & Leonard were not present for the vote. There were no comments or questions.

Interim Executive Director's Report

Date of Meeting: November 13, 2019

Motion: IL, SD **Ayes:** SD, IL, JR, MS, and MT

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Ms. Olivette Simpson, Interim Executive Director reported that there will be a redeveloper presentation in connection with Resolution 11-13-19C. Ms. Simpson provided a background report for the board. CRA solicited proposals for a market rate/mixed-income housing development on the site of the former ABC Barrel Company, which is located in the Cooper-Grant neighborhood. The approximate one-acre project site has been the subject of extensive environmental remediation underwritten by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The former ABC Barrel site has long been targeted by the CRA and the local resident group - Cooper-Grant Neighborhood Association (CGNA) for infill residential housing. The site consists of a roughly one acre, irregularly shaped parcel located between North 2nd Street and North Front Street just north of Penn Street. The site is wholly owned by the CRA and is currently vacant and fenced off. There is a 0.59-acre area in the interior of the block that is subject to a Deed Restriction and NJDEP Conservation Easement. The conservation easement area must be developed as public open space.

The site was the subject of a previous CRA Request for Proposals in 2014 that was not awarded to complete required environmental remediation activities.

In April 2019, CRA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of market rate/mixed-income housing on the approximately one-acre property. The Request for Proposals was issued to the two developers who responded to an earlier Real Estate Expression of Interest (REOI). Both teams responded by the RFP due date of June 28, 2019. An evaluation and review committee was comprised of CRA staff, BRS Consultant, and two members of the CGNA. Ms. Simpson noted the review committee visited a site currently being developed by DePetro. In addition, the DePetro team attended the Cooper Grant Neighborhood Meeting held on Monday, November 4, 2019 to present the proposed residential project.

The DePetro team proposes to build 14 new single-family market/rate mixed-income townhomes on the site of the former ABC Barrel Company. Three of these dwelling units will be affordable to households earning up to 80% of the areas' median income.

Commissioner Bowman was not present for this report.

Redevelopment Project Presentations

Richard DePetro introduced his team and spoke to his development background. Mr. DePetro and his team presented the project. Commissioner Davis inquired regarding local hiring. Erin Crean confirmed the DePetro team will hire as well as purchase materials locally. Commissioner Davis also asked about communications with the community. Ms. Crean reported the team has and will continue communications and updates with CGNA throughout the development process. She reported a recently attended the CGNA Meeting. Commissioner Ramos asked about the timeline. Ms. Crean shared the project will take about 36 months to complete, once the redevelopment agreement is signed. Residents and members of the CGNA asked about tree species, street lighting, and opportunities for community input as to what is installed.

Jonathan Latko reported to the board he and Sonia Rivera Perez were active participants in the selection process representing the CGNA. He added this project has been a long time coming. He urged the board to agree that the time to move forward on this development is now, not to delay, and encouraged a yes vote for the Resolution. He also asked that the CRA monitor the marketing and sales of the homes. Other members of CGNA expressed concerns about security and how the project will incorporate security. The team intends to include cameras, lighting, fencing, and a design that promotes community policing. The plans for the park will be shared with the Metro Camden Police Department. Resident, Mr. Vazquez asked whether the street that will be created behind Linden Street can be named Jose Vazquez Way after his grandfather. He will email Erin Crean and the discussion will continue separately. Jonathan Latko supports the idea. Residents spoke in strong support of the redeveloper's proposed formation of a homeowners' association. Commissioner Bowman asked about the hours of the park. Ms. Crean advised proposed park hours will be from dawn to dusk (included on signage) and the park will be open to the public.

Commissioner Davis asked about the appraisal for the transaction. Director Simpson and Jim Harveson added the CRA secured an appraisal from three years ago in the amount of \$300,000, and an appraisal will be secured to establish the acquisition price. Commissioner Davis expressed the redevelopment agreement state the property is being sold for fair market value which shall be established by an appraisal, which as a policy is language incorporated within CRA redevelopment agreements.

Resolutions for Review and Action

11-13-19A Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with Pennoni Associates, Inc. for Environmental Risk Assessment Services in Connection with the Remediation of the Former RCA Building 8 Located on Block 72 Lot 1 of the City of Camden Tax Map in an Amount Not to Exceed \$50,666.00

Motion: IL, MS Ayes: VB, SD, IL, JR, MS, and MT

Nays: Abstentions:

Comments: There were no comments or questions.

11-13-19B Resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Federal Rent A Fence to Provide Construction Fencing at 100 Cooper Street for an Amount Not to Exceed \$1,200.00

Motion: IL, SD Ayes: VB, SD, IL, JR, MS, and MT

Nays: Abstentions:

Comments: There were no comments or questions.

11-13-19C Resolution Designating DePetro Real Estate Organization, LLC as Redeveloper of Block 62, Lots 17, 18, 19, and 20; Block 62.01, Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4; Block 62.02, Lots 24, and 25 of City of Camden Tax Map and Authorizing a Cost Agreement and Redevelopment Agreement with the Redeveloper for a Residential Housing Development in the Downtown Redevelopment Area

Motion: JR, SD Ayes: VB, SD, IL, JR, MS, and MT

Nays: Abstentions:

Comments: Commissioner Davis requested that future transactions include obtaining the appraisal prior to designating the redeveloper. There were no further comments or questions.

Public Comments

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Executive Session

None.

Chairperson's Remarks and Observations

None.

Adjournment

Commissioner Leonard made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Davis, all affirmed via voice vote and the meeting ended at approximately 7:00 PM.