

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency **held the Monthly Caucus on Wednesday, October 5, 2022** via tele-/videoconference.

Chairperson Ian Leonard called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Interim Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called roll.

**Present:** Ian Leonard, Maria Sharma, Derek Davis, Christopher Collins, Gilbert Harden, Sr., Tasha Gainey-Humphrey, and Jose Javier Ramos

**Absent:** N/A

**Attendees:** Olivette Simpson, Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Donna Arthur-Pettigrew, and Sulena Robinson-Rivera, CRA; Jack Layne, DCA; Shon Jablonsky of Apple Tree Homes, William Silverstein of GEI Consultants, and Trevor Vaughn of Urban Development Partners

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

### Review of Minutes

**Date of Meeting:** September 5 and 12, 2022

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Mr. Leonard verified that everyone had a chance to review the Minutes and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

### Interim Executive Director's Report\*

**Date of Meeting:** October 5, 2022

**Comments:** Interim Executive Director Olivette Simpson summarized key initiatives the agency has been undertaking, including:

#### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Parkside Business and Community in Partnership Project (PBCIP), as was recently authorized, also intends to submit an ASPIRE application to the State. This planned project will be located on Haddon Avenue and consists of 32 residential units, commercial space, and off-street parking.
- PBCIP will also begin construction of a 10-unit scattered site for-sale project shortly; it is funded by the NJ Department of Community Affairs Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Note: PBCIP was highlighted for its work at the recent Governor's Housing Conference.
- For the ABC Barrel Market-Rate Townhouse Development project, CRA and Michaels Development are working on agreements, which will lead to construction in 3rd quarter in 2023.
- Additionally, the Cramer Hill Senior Project closed on September 26, 2022. A 50-unit development by the Housing Authority and Michaels Development is now mobilizing for a construction start.
- Regarding 1800 Davis Street, CRA is working with Michaels Development and its partner Virtua Health as they submit to NJ Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency's board for mortgage financing approval. This project is to contain 47 units of senior housing and a 5,300-sq-ft health facility to be operated by Virtua Health. A closing is scheduled for early 2023.

**Interim Executive Director's Report (cont'd)**

**BROWNFIELDS PROJECTS**

- Ms. Simpson noted recent news articles pertaining to actions taken at the Yaffa/Weyhill Dirt Pile Site. This project is moving forward with a Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) engaged to characterize the contaminated soil material, leading to a plan for removal of the soil to appropriate disposal facilities for further assessment and remediation of the site. The execution of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) involving the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), City of Camden, County Health Department, and CRA was a significant milestone, in that the MOU allowed the partners to enter the site and not be subject to liability for any of the environmental conditions found. This process may be replicated for local governments to access other privately owned brownfield sites.
- For Elijah Perry Park, the City, Housing Authority, and CRA are working together on agreements, plans, and specifications for remediation leading to Park improvements. And, collectively, this group is working within a timeline to preserve some \$1.4MM in funding for construction of the Park improvements.
- It was also reported that CRA will be working with the City and Camden County to remediate and construct improvements to the Judge Robert Johnson Park. Several resolutions pertaining to this project are to be presented for authorization at this meeting.

*\*Note: Commissioner Tasha Gainey-Humphrey arrived as this portion of the meeting commenced.*

**Redevelopment Project Presentations**

None.

**Resolutions for Review and Action**

**10-12-22A Resolution Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement with the City of Camden for the Management of Funding and Environmental Services for the Robert B. Johnson Park Designated as Block 520, Lot 26; Block 522, Lot 9 (part), and Block 523, Lot13 on the City of Camden Tax Map in the Centerville Redevelopment Area**

**Motion:**

**Ayes:**

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:**

Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that this 15-acre site is located on the north side of Carl Miller Blvd. and in close proximity to the Isabel Miller Community Center. It is a City-owned open space heavily used by the neighboring community, particularly for football. This past August, it was determined that this site is contaminated with historic fill as well as hot spots. As a consequence, this Park site is closed. It is one of several parks that are being improved by Camden County. CRA will undertake the environmental remediation. This action seeks authorization to execute a Shared Services Agreement with the City to cover costs contracts for the LSRP and environmental consulting services, as well as administrative fee for CRA services. A corresponding action will be taken at the October 11<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting.

Commissioner Gilbert Harden asked if this site is commonly known as “The Pink Elephant.” Commissioner Christopher Collins confirmed.

**Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)**

Mr. Collins also inquired about when it became known that this site is contaminated.

Ms. Simpson reiterated earlier comments and informed the Commissioners that, since learning of the contamination in August, when the park was closed, critical actions were taken: A solicitation was issued to CRA's pre-qualified environmental firms for an LSRP. The County had several preliminary assessment reports completed as well. Not all conditions are known at this time. However, as details emerge, they will be provided for Commissioners.

Mr. Leonard noted that this sounds like a great project.

**10-12-22B      Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with TRC Environmental Corporation to Provide Environmental and Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) Services for the Robert B. Johnson Park Site Designated as Block 520, Lot 26; Block 522, Lot 9 (part) and Block 523, Lot 13 on the City of Camden Tax Map for an Amount Not to Exceed \$ 22,785.00**

**Motion:**                                **Ayes:**

**Nays:**                                        **Abstentions:**

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that, through CRA's environmental consultant, a Request for Pricing (RFP) was issued and 16 proposals were received. The proposals were reviewed and evaluated and the proposal from TRC was the highest-ranking. CRA is seeking authorization to enter into a contract with TRC for a period of one year in the amount specified in the title above.

**10-12-22C      Resolution Authorizing a Contract with Ambient Group LLC for the Environmental Remediation of City-owned Parcels Designated as Block 331, Lots 86 and 87 of the City of Camden Tax Map for an Amount Not to Exceed \$136,212.00**

**Motion:**                                **Ayes:**

**Nays:**                                        **Abstentions:**

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that this resolution relates to the remedial actions for the Yaffa Dirt Pile in Bergen Square. An Invitation for Bid (IFB) was issued to CRA's Pre-Qualified List of Environmental Firms for characterization, removal, and disposal of soil on two (2) City-owned properties, which are located adjacent to the Yaffa site. CRA is seeking authorization to enter into a contract with Ambient Group LLC, the lowest responsive bidder. This work will be funded via CRA and NJ Economic Development Authority-Brownfields Infrastructure Fund grants.

Commissioner Maria Sharma expressed concerns about the quantity of contaminated soil and the possibility of exposure to residents through contractor's removal of soil and migration of soil from the site in the process. She also asked to be informed of details when the plan is prepared.

Ms. Simpson explained, within the IFB, there is a health and safety protocol that must be followed. She agreed to share the plan along with Ambient's response to the requirements set forth in the IFB. She also clarified that the Ambient contract only pertains two (2) small parcels; not the entire Yaffa Dirt Pile. The plan for removal of the soil material from the larger dirt pile will be guided by the LSRP and is scheduled for mid-year of 2023.

**Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)**

**10-12-22D Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc. to Provide Environmental Management Services on an Hourly Rate Basis for a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$285,000.00**

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that CRA advertises for this service annually. An advertisement was published in the Courier-Post in September 2022 The Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on CRA's website as well. Only two (2) proposals were received. Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions (BRS) was deemed most-responsive and higher-ranking. They will be paid via CRA's Shared Services Agreements with the City as well as US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Hazardous Site Discharge Remediation Fund (HDSRF) grants.

**10-12-22E Resolution Authorizing the Amendment of Various Remediation, Planning, and Acquisition Grants from the Camden Economic Recovery Board to Extend the Term of Such Grants**

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that this measure is to extend the term of previously approved grants until funds are exhausted for various grant purposes.

**10-12-22F Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of 428 and 434 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Camden, New Jersey (Block 177, Lots 42 & 45 on the City of Camden Tax Map) Located in the Lanning Square Redevelopment Area for Purposes of Redevelopment**

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson informed the Commissioners that this area is highly desirable, marketable, and developable. The site fronts Martin Luther King Boulevard and is adjacent to City-owned and CRA-owned properties. The private owner of Block 177, Lots 42 and 45 notified CRA that they had an offer from a buyer. In order to retain the redevelopment potential for this area, CRA is seeking authorization to purchase this property.

**Public Comments**

None.

**Old Business**

*Action has not been taken regarding Resolutions 03-09-22 E & F.*

**New Business**

None.

**Executive Session**

Mr. Leonard advised of the need for an Executive Session to consider an Employment matter. CRA's Staff who support the Board's work were invited to remain present. Ms. Sharma made a motion to enter

into an Executive Session, which was seconded by Mr. Harden and affirmed by all in a Voice Vote. The Executive Session began at 6:32 PM.

The Public portion of the meeting resumed at 6:42 PM.

**Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

None.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Sharma made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Collins and affirmed with a Roll Call vote by all Commissioners. This meeting ended at approximately 6:43 PM.