

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency **held a Monthly Caucus Meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2019** Camden City Hall, City Council Chamber, in Camden, New Jersey.

Chairperson, Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:01 PM. Board Clerk Sulena Robinson-Rivera called roll. Commissioner Leonard arrived after roll at 6:03pm.

**Present: VB, JR, MS, and MT**

**Absent: SD and IL**

**Attendees: Mark Asselta, Johanna Conyer, James Harveson, Sulena Robinson-Rivera, and Olivette Simpson; LaVerne Williams, 1655 Park Blvd.; Pilar Hogan Closkey, Enrique Rivera, SJCS; and Kelly Francis, Camden NAACP**

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:** April 10, 2019

**Motion: Ayes:**

**Nays: Abstentions:**

**Comments:** There were no comments or questions.

### **Interim Executive Director's Report**

**Date of Meeting:** May 1, 2019

**Motion: Ayes:**

**Nays: Abstentions:**

**Comments:** Ms. Olivette Simpson, Interim Executive Director, introduced the redeveloper, St. Joseph's Carpenters Society (SJCS), and made several comments regarding the organization and its long-standing record of rehabbing properties in Cooper Plaza and East Camden. She reported that in 2018, CRA conveyed to SJCS conveyed 515 S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, the renovation of which is nearing completion. In addition, she reported that the organization is now providing housing related services and programs and rehabbing properties in the Cramer Hill neighborhood.

### **Redevelopment Project Presentation**

Pilar Hogan-Closkey provided an update on 515 S.7<sup>th</sup> Street which is currently being renovated with a construction finish dated estimated for the end of June 2019. Commissioner Torres asked about the sales price for the unit. Mrs. Closkey advised the unit will be sold for \$85,000. Commissioner Bowman asked the amount the CRA sold the property to SJCS. Mrs. Closkey advised that they purchased the property from the CRA for \$5,000.00 plus costs. She added the cost to renovate the property is roughly \$127,000. The gap in financing is covered by State-Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) funds, awarded to Cooper Hospital for various quality of life needs of the Cooper Plaza neighborhood. In Cramer Hill, SJCS is a partner with Coopers Ferry Partnership in a NRTC grant funded by America Water for Cramer Hill. Mrs. Closkey related that that SJCS' role includes the rehab and resale of vacant structures to market-rate buyers without deed restrictions. In addition, the Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC), CRA, and SJCS are one of the many partners in a HUD grant awarded for Comprehensive Neighborhood Investment (CNI) planning. Since community engagement under the grant is key, several community meetings have been held with Ablett Village and other resident groups in Cramer Hill. These meetings will continue to take place over a two-year period. Commissioner Torres asked whether SJCS has programs to assist existing homeowners with home repairs. Mrs. Closkey spoke of a program recently expanded to Cramer Hill provides workshops to property owners for small home improvement repairs. Commissioner

Torres asked how the community is advised of this program. Mrs. Closkey noted the program is promoted via flyers and in social media outlets including Facebook.

### **Resolutions for Review and Action**

**05-08-19A** Resolution Authorizing the Public Sale of Certain CRA Owned Properties and Establishing the Minimum Bids, Conditions and Restrictions for the Public Sale

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson introduced the resolution and provided comments. Commissioner Bowman urged the CRA to contact neighborhood groups in the areas where the property is located. Ms. Simpson responded that the CRA would send notices to those community development corporations in the city as well as persons who requested to be notified of land sales. There were no additional comments or questions.

**05-08-19B** Resolution Authorizing the Sale of Block 405 Lot 1 and Block 340 Lot 35 of the City of Camden Tax Map to XXX Pursuant to the Public Sale of Such Properties at Auction Held on May 8, 2019.

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Mr. Harveson, Ms. Simpson, and Mark Asselta, Board Counsel, spoke to the resolution. Commissioner Bowman asked whether this property is located within a redevelopment area. Mr. Harveson responded that it is not. There were no further comments or questions.

### **Public Comments**

Ms. Laverne Williams asked how CFP and the HACC were involved in the Cramer Hill work referred to in the redeveloper's presentation. Ms. Simpson advised that they are partners in the project and that CFP secured NRTC funds, which are funding a portion of the project. In addition, the HACC was a HUD planning grant for Ablett Village in which CRA and others are collaborating in the planning grant's implementation. Commissioner Bowman asked if Resolution 05-08-19B will create an opportunity to circumvent community engagement. Mark Asselta, Board Counsel, responded that this is how CRA must proceed as mandated by law. Commissioner Sharma asked what was on the site before. Mr. Harveson advised that the site is historically industrial. Mr. Harveson asked Commissioner Bowman who would be the point of contact for the community for Resolution 05-08-19B and he suggested Father Gerard C. Marable. Mr. Kelly Francis asked whether the City has disclosed its plans for the DPW site, and Ms. Simpson responded that the CRA is not aware of the plans for the DPW site.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Executive Session**

None.

### **Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

Thank you for the attending.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Ramos made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Bowman, all affirmed via voice vote and the meeting ended at approximately 6:40 PM.