

Garfield Redevelopment Agency
111 Outwater Lane
Garfield, NJ 07026

Minutes of Meeting held on
March 7, 2016

The Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Andreano at 7:05 PM.

The Vice Chairman announced compliance with the Sunshine Law.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The following commissioners were present:

Vice Chairman Arthur Andreano
Commissioner Arthur Rotio
Commissioner Peter Amadio
Commissioner Raymond Simione

Absent: Commissioner Ernest Rosolen
Chairman Roger Hetel
Commissioner Joseph Delaney

Others Present: Thomas J. Duch, Esq., Executive Director
Frank Regan, Esq., GRA Attorney
Beth Calderone, Stenographer
Patricia Esposito, Asst. Secretary
Roy Riggitano, Finance Officer

MINUTES

Executive Director Duch asked for a motion to adopt the minutes from the February 1, 2016 meeting. A motion to adopt the minutes was made by Commissioner Amadio, seconded by Commissioner Rotio and passed on voice vote.

Review of Professional Agreements by Francis Regan, Esq. Mr. Regan advised that at the last meeting resolutions were adopted to appoint professionals. Mr. Regan received a proposal for planning services from Burgis Associates. He advised that their proposal was consistent with their proposal with one exception. The fee for services is \$130 per hour and fee for principal services is \$145 per hour. Mr. Regan received an agreement from Lerch, Vinci & Higgins for the Redevelopment Agency Audit in the amount of \$6,600 which is consistent with their proposal. He also has a form of agreement from DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP for

legal services which is consistent to the proposal. Executive Director Duch advised that per the Agency's review, he will execute on behalf of the Redevelopment Agency.

Executive Director Duch acknowledged the presence of Mr. Mark Schaevitz on behalf of Paragon Realty. Executive Director Duch asked him to appear to give the Agency an update on the Kalama property. Mr. Schaevitz was duly sworn in. Business address 1 Paragon Drive, Montvale, NJ. Mr. Schaevitz complimented the City on the renovations in the Court Room. He advised that he has two separate updates to report on. One is environmental; they are still working on two aspects at the site putting chemical injections in the ground and monitoring it. The owner is hoping that come the first quarter of 2017 they will have enough results to complete the process by monitoring 8 rounds to satisfy the program. With respect to the contract they have requested execution copies. He is cautiously optimistic that they are about to go into contract with the seller. Their team has changed yet again. Every time they change there are new people to go through and new things to be dealt with. Hopefully when he comes back again he will be under contract and coming before the Agency with an actual plan.

Executive Director Duch advised that he spoke with Mr. Schaevitz about the Office of Smart Growth in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Alan Miller, who was the Redevelopment Coordinator, Brownfields Program Manager for the Office for Planning Advocacy (he has been reassigned to the Department of Environmental Protection) did indicate that they would be willing to consider making Garfield an example of how you could expedite the development of this type of sites. His successor is Jerry Scharfenberger. Mr. Scharfenberger did advise that they are going to select two communities where they would appoint interagency work groups to expedite the development of these types of site. Executive Director Duch advised that at the Council Meeting the next day he would ask the Mayor and Council if they would agree that the City could participate. Executive Director Duch also asked Mr. Schaevitz if they would agree to participate. What this essentially does is put all different state agencies and federal agencies in one place at one time. They would assist us in preparing what we would like to do with the project. They would be able to tell us whether there are any opportunities for any type of funding to assist. Mr. Schaevitz has indicated that he would be willing to be a participant. Again they are choosing two communities; right now they have spotlighted four.

The other item that was discussed was if the Agency is still interested in acquiring the area along the river. Mr. Duch indicated to Mr. Schaevitz that the Agency is interested. Executive Director Duch advised that that was part of the talk initially when this property came up. The City would like to do something with a Riverwalk from Monroe Street to Passaic Street. The City made application to Bergen County and were awarded a Floodplain Acquisition Planning Grant. The four properties that are immediately south of Mr. Schaevitz's property have been appraised and those appraisals have been provided to the County. The County is working on a study right now. The plan for this walkway would be more like a berm where it would be raised up a little bit to look down at the river. It is in the very early planning stages.

Mr. Schaevitz thanked the Agency for its continued and extreme patience.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2016-09 – Authorizing the Extension of the Option of Paragon Realty to Redevelop Kalama Site Resolution moved by Commissioner Amadio, seconded by Commissioner Rotio and approved on roll vote.

VOUCHERS

Finance Officer Riggitano presented the bills for payment: North Jersey Media - \$415.14, Beth Calderone - \$200.00, DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP - \$234.15, Burgis Associates - \$1,991.25, Thomas J. Duch - \$270, Burgis Associates - \$4,775.00. Motion to pay bills made by Commissioner Simione, seconded by Commissioner Amadio and approved on roll call vote.

Executive Director Duch made the following comment publicly since it was made at a public Council Meeting. In order to do redevelopment of the scope needed on Passaic Street, there is a need to have the ability to condemn property. He explained to the Mayor and Council that the lack of ability to condemn property would mean, to this day, we would not have completed the Riverfront Park. Three of the properties along the river were condemned. Councilman Calandriello has expressed that he has no willingness to condemn at any time. The other Council Members had voted that they would support condemnation. At the last Council Meeting Deputy Mayor Mati advised he was having second thoughts. We do need four to be on board in order to proceed. Executive Director Duch asked Mr. Regan, since he has a lot of experience in the redevelopment of Rahway as a planner and as an attorney. Mr. Regan has a question regarding whether the Council is reluctant to authorize the use of condemnation through the redevelopment plan. He would think that they would want the agency to be the entity that undertakes any condemnation. They could make that decision on whether they want to maintain that authority themselves or direct the agency to do it. Mr. Regan spoke about condemnation being an important tool in redevelopment. He also advised that the law heavily favors the property owner so they make out very well. Executive Director Duch asked Mr. Regan if he would be willing to address Mayor and Council on this subject and he advised that he advised that he would be happy to.

Executive Director Duch asked Mr. Mirandi of Boswell Engineering for an update on the Sketchley property. Mr. Mirandi advised that they have been in communication with the developer. The contractor, Decker and Decker, did address the concerns the Bergen County Soil Conservation District and Boswell Engineering had with the base of Schley Street next to the adjoining property on the south side of Schley Street. The Agency may recall that there are no stormwater structures or piping on Schley Street, so water from Chestnut Street runs straight down the street and on to the property. So at the entrance area where previously we had the contractor have a ditch that ran well into the property to accept and convey stormwater, there is evidence of erosion along that area. The contractor had to come in and put several loads of riprap or stone at that area to keep the erosion away and strengthen that area. The contractor has also addressed the fencing along the southerly side of the property. Bergen County Soil Conservation felt the site was maintained in good condition during the course of the winter. The developer's representatives were on-site at that meeting. They were directed to address a couple of minor items and they are. They indicated to us that they expect to be back with the site work contractor come March or April. It was also indicated that their engineer, MCB is finalizing items such as sanitary sewer repairs as well as storm water items. The site also has issues with water to the facility and also water capacity and water pressure. He expects to hear from their engineer with the next week or so.

Commissioner Rotio asked if there will be any progress any time soon. Mr. Mirandi advised that the site was supposed to be remobilized in March or April. The site contractor is awaiting direction. Meridia has put all their efforts in another project to get that done. Commissioner Rotio is concerned about the site being dormant over the summer and the large dirt mounds drying out and the area becoming a dust bowl. Mr. Mirandi advised that they may have to bring in water lines from Outwater Lane or Chestnut Street. Mr. Mirandi again advised that they are supposed to be back on site in March or April

Mr. Mirandi reported on HP Garfield on River Drive. The developer has made significant progress in getting rid of the mound of dirt on the south side of the apartment buildings. That area has been cleaned up. Received plans in Boswell office today for retaining walls at the northeast side of the property. Boswell will be reviewing the plan.

Mr. Mirandi reported that the Coremark property is in good shape. They have shut the fountain down for the winter.

Mr. Mirandi stopped at the Vornado / New Bridgeland / Urban Edge development today. Saw the general contractor. The steel is up and basement block work is ongoing. He reminded them of some soil erosion control and addressed cleaning up the drive area. That project is moving along fairly well.

A question was asked about the condos on River Drive by HP Garfield being turned over to the condo association and if the developer's financial obligations to the City are finalized. Executive Director Duch advised that they were not and there was a meeting scheduled for 10:00 AM the next day with the developer. The developer has to get his certificates of occupancy on his final two buildings and he has a number of issues he has to address there.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

CITIZEN REMARKS

No citizens and taxpayers

Motion to close the meeting at 7:35 PM by Commissioner Simone, seconded by Commissioner Amadio and approved on roll call vote.