

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency **held the Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, May 11, 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, Derek Davis, Gilbert Harden, Jose Javier Ramos, and Marilyn Torres  
**Absent:** Maria Sharma  
**Attendees:** Olivette Simpson, Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Donna Arthur-Pettigrew, Robert Quevedo-Rodriguez, and Sulena Robinson-Rivera, CRA; Jack Layne, DCA; Trevor Vaughan of UDP; Mark Boogaard and Thomas Roberts, Esq. of the Neighborhood Housing Solutions, Inc. (NHS), and an unknown Guest (*Blair-NHS Board On-Screen ID*)

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:** April 4 and April 11, 2022  
**Motion:** MT, GH **Ayes:** IL, DD, GH, JR, MT  
**Nays:** **Abstentions:**  
**Comments:** None.

**Interim Executive Director's Report**

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2022  
**Motion:** JR, GH **Ayes:** IL, DD, GH, JR, MT  
**Nays:** **Abstentions:**

*NOTE: Board Counsel Mark Asselta asked the Board Clerk to verify that everyone in the Waiting Room had been admitted and stated that no one is excluded from participating. Ms. Rhodes confirmed that everyone had been admitted.*

**Comments:** Interim Executive Director Olivette Simpson added to the previously provided written report. She announced that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to soon make funding awards of several brownfield grants. Two applications were submitted by CRA.

An application for additional Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) for up to \$5 million is pending to supplement \$2.5 already received by the Agency. EPA is a great partner in this area and made substantial investments in the city's neighborhoods where the legacy of past industries and contaminants affecting vacant and underutilized properties is most evident. Prior RLF funds have been applied to: Andujar Park (North Camden), Camden Labs (Whitman Park), City-owned property adjacent to the Yaffa dirt pile (Bergen Square), Knox Meadows (North Camden), and the Reliable Tire Site (Gateway). Should CRA's \$5 million request be awarded, the new supplemental remediation funds will be used for Building 8 (Downtown), Federal Street Corridor (Marlton), Yaffa larger dirt pile clean-up (Bergen Square), and Elijah Perry Park (Centerville).

The second application submitted is for environmental assessment funds in the amount of \$500,000 for the Federal Street Corridor.

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

Also of significance: Michaels Development and Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC) have requested an expedited closing for the Phase 2 Cramer Hill Senior Residential Project under the Ablett Village CHOICE Implementation Grant. They propose taking title in mid-June and advancing construction soon after.

Additionally, CRA is working through the terms of a possible Shared Services Agreement with the Camden County Improvement Authority (CCIA) for demolition of 1800 Davis Street to jumpstart development of the three-story office building/residential development and several properties within Lanning Square; both previously authorized. This \$1.4 million demolition effort is to be funded by a grant to CCIA.

Commissioner Marilyn Torres inquired about the location of the Federal Street project. Ms. Simpson will provide additional details following this meeting.

Ms. Torres also asked if the Davis Street Site has been committed. Ms. Simpson confirmed that there is a Redevelopment Agreement with the Michaels Development Organization. Michaels will partner with Virtua Health. They propose a first-floor medical facility and residential units will be constructed above. Financing for the project is before New Jersey Mortgage Finance Agency (NJMFA) this month.

**Redevelopment Project Presentations:**

None.

**Resolutions for Review and Action**

**05-11-22A      Resolution Amending Resolution 11-12-16C Authorizing an Agreement with Cooper's Ferry Partnership Now Known as Camden Community Partnership Concerning Management of a Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Grant for Environmental Remediation of the Proposed North Camden Waterfront Park in the North Camden Brownfield Development Area**

**Motion: MT, JR      Ayes: IL, DD, GH, JR, MT**

**Nays:                      Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This is a follow-up to an authorized 2016 Resolution. This resolution is presented to amend the prior Resolution for changes in the organization name from Cooper's Ferry Partnership to Camden Community Partnership and in the Park sources of funding. This \$5.4 million-plus park will honor the longstanding North Camden Resident and Planning Board Member Rodney Sadler. Further financial details were provided in the written package. Ms. Torres inquired about the park's footprint. Director Simpson will circulate this.

**05-11-22B      Resolution Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement with the City of Camden for the Management of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Sub-Grant for the Environmental Remediation of Block 1302, Lot 2 of the City of Camden Tax Map in the Gateway Redevelopment Area**

**Motion: GH, DD      Ayes: IL, DD, GH, JR Interim Executive Director's Report**

**Nays:                      Abstentions: MT**

**Comments:** This is a follow-up to Resolution 03-09-22F, by which a sub-grant was authorized to the City for removal of underground storage tanks and environmental cleanup of the site. This Resolution seeks to authorize the Agency to manage the environmental cleanup and subgrant funds on behalf of the City.

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

**05-11-22C Resolution Amending Resolution 06-09-21G Authorizing the Public Sale of Certain CRA-Owned Properties and Establishing the Minimum Bids, Conditions, and Restrictions for the Public Sale**

**Motion:** GH, MT      **Ayes:** IL, DD, GH, JR, MT

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

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson advised that this Resolution seeks to amend the list adopted in June of 2021. Ms. Torres requested a copy of the Property List. Ms. Simpson will provide another copy of the list.

**05-11-22D Resolution Authorizing a Further Extension of a Leave of Absence from Employment with the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency for Vincent Basara**

**Motion:** MT, GH      **Ayes:** IL, DD, GH, JR, MT

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

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson advised that Mr. Basara has been on leave from CRA since 2014 and is currently engaged by the City as the Director of Communications. The State requires authorization of this leave of absence on an annual basis.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Asselta of the Brown & Connery Law Firm made a statement that he acts as Solicitor and CRA's Board Counsel. He recognized that several representatives were present to discuss the Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) proposal submitted to the CRA and announced the procedures by which the public portion of the meeting would be conducted.

Mr. Asselta acknowledged that a proposal for the development of three vacant lots on Summit Street had been received and distributed to the Commissioners. Neither the merits of the proposal were to be examined, nor any votes taken. No Resolution concerning this matter was on the agenda.

Anyone who wanted to speak was invited to do so. This portion of the meeting would be subject to the standard 3 minutes (with discretion of the Chair to extend).

Mr. Asselta advised of next steps: CRA will invite NHS to a meeting to be attended by the Board of Commissioners' Chair and CRA Staff (the Interim Executive Director), where NHS will present its proposal, and CRA staff will ask questions and follow with a recommendation to the Commissioners. Additionally, CRA also is working on a maintenance plan for the vacant properties. This also will be discussed at the meeting.

Chairman Ian Leonard called for speakers. There were none.

A motion to close this portion of the meeting was made by Ms. Torres and seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Harden. This was affirmed via Voice Vote by all Commissioners.

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

None.

**Executive Session**

None.

**Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

None.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Torres made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Harden and affirmed via Roll Call vote by all Commissioners. The meeting ended at approximately 6:32 PM.