

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2013

1. At 6:06pm, Vice Chairman Peter Sciarretta called the special meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Peter Sciarretta, Vice Chairman
Michaëlle Jean-Pierre, Secretary//Treasurer
Taylor R. Molgano
Mayra M. Rios

Staff:

Dr. Tommie Jackson, Interim Executive Director
Rachel Goldberg, General Counsel
Durelle Alexander

Absent:

Christopher D. Meek, Chairman

2. Southeast Quadrant

(a) **Trinity/Status Report** - Attorney Goldberg reported that she had just received the monthly status report from Trinity, noting the following: (i) the foundation is currently being poured; (ii) a tower crane has been erected on the site; (iii) excavation is on-going and backfill is 60% complete, and (iv) the overall project is 11% complete as of July 31, 2013. She noted that they are on schedule and in the past week, the site has changed dramatically with steel starting to come out of the ground. Attorney Goldberg also noted that the developer has discovered an in-ground oil tank on one of the properties. She said, "Since we sold the property 'as is' the City and the Commission have no exposure. As I review the reports from Trinity's environmental people, I'll have a better understanding. It is important to note that this discovery has not slowed the pace of construction activity."

Attorney Goldberg also reported that the proposed \$400,000.00 loan agreement from the City to the Commission is on hold. She said, "Dr. Jackson and I have been trying to meet with City Corporation Counsel Joseph Capalbo and the Mayor to review and further explain the issues involved. We are in agreement that the Commission cannot responsibly vote to pay out of its funds \$400,000.00 and thereby leave the URC with a half years' operating expenses. There was a case in Pennsylvania where a Board was held personally liable when they allowed, through non-action, their entity to go out of business. We need to meet with the Mayor to explain how the City can improve its position; i.e., approving the loan wherein Trinity will pay the City 6% interest for three years as opposed to the City writing a check for \$400,000.00 which it will never get back." The item on the Board of Representatives Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee agenda was tabled at its last meeting. It is on their agenda for August 27th and without any action by the Administration, they will continue to table the item.

(b) **Tresser Boulevard Sliver Parcel/Status Report** – Attorney Goldberg reported that Cushman and Wakefield appraised the sliver parcel located on Tresser Boulevard by St. John's Church for \$18,500.00; further, that she is preparing a contract for sale of land and for review and approval by the Commission, the Planning Board, the Board of Finance and the Board of Representatives. The Commission has received a check from the

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Church for the cost of the appraisal report and Attorney Goldberg is waiting for comments on the proposed contract from their legal counsel John Leydon, Jr.

3. Mill River Corridor Project Plan Amendment/Status Report

Attorney Goldberg reported that the Board of Representative's Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee met on July 23, 2013 and, following discussion, approved the plan amendments 4-1-0 (4 in favor, 1 opposed, and no abstentions). At the regular meeting of the Board of Representatives on August 5, 2013, the resolution to approved the plan amendments passed 19-8-2 (19 in favor, 8 opposed, and 2 abstentions). The border boundaries have now been extended both to the north and south and the changes will be incorporated into the Mill River Corridor Project Plan.

4. Agency Administration

(a) **Budget** – Executive Director Jackson reported that he had thoroughly reviewed the budget adopted by the Commission on July 11, 2013 which reflected \$13,300.00 in reductions recommended by the Budget Committee. He recommended further reductions as follows: eliminating two office phone lines leaving two in-coming lines and the fax, reducing the budgeted amount from \$3000.00 to \$1950.00; reducing the budgeted amount for office supplies from \$4000.00 to \$3000.00; reducing the budgeted amount for dues, publications and subscriptions from \$2500.00 to \$1500.00, and reducing the amount under miscellaneous by an additional \$500.00. Attorney Goldberg said, “Just a point of procedure. We have a standing Budget Committee (Commissioners Sciarretta & Rios) which should review budget proposals. Since Commissioner Jean-Pierre as secretary/treasurer automatically becomes a member of this committee, the Chairman needs to appoint a second member. Following this appointment, the Commission should follow the same process as before, with recommendations coming from the Budget Committee to the full Board.” Discussion ensued. Dr. Jackson noted that, in his opinion, further savings could be found in the existing budget.

(b) **Personnel** - Executive Director Jackson reported that, upon review of the Personnel Policies originating in 1969 with subsequent updates, they were “outdated and in need of a critical update.” Attorney Goldberg noted that the policies had not been reviewed in detail since the eighties, although she had started revisions since then that had been tabled. It was the sense of the Board that an update was necessary and this should be referred to the Personnel Committee. However, the Chairman needs to appoint a second Committee member to serve with Commissioner Molgano before the Committee meets.

5. Adjournment

(a) **Walking Tour** – A walking tour of the URC's projects and properties has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 3, 2013 at 1:00pm. The meeting will convene in the Commission's office.

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- (b) **Next Meeting Date** – The Annual and Regular meetings have been scheduled for Thursday, September 12, 2013 at 6:00pm.

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Molgano made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michaëlle Jean-Pierre
Secretary/Treasurer