

**HARTFORD REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MARCH 12, 2009**

**PLAZA LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**260 CONSTITUTION PLAZA**

**5:00 P.M.**

**JOURNAL**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Good evening everybody. Welcome to the Hartford Redevelopment Agency regular meeting today, March 12, 2009, here at the plaza level conference room, 260 Constitution Plaza.

**I. Roll Call**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Commissioner Arena?

COMMISSIONER ARENA: Present.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Commissioner Bonafonte is not here. Commissioner Casares is here. Commissioner Harris is not here. Commissioner Leonard-Woods is not here. Commissioner Lopez-Hernandez?

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ-HERNANDEZ: Here.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Commissioner Sierra?

COMMISSIONER SIERRA: Here.

**II. Approval of the Minutes of the January 8, 2009 Regular Meeting**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Next on the agenda is approval of the minutes for the January 8, 2009 regular meeting. And in that package is the minutes of the meeting that was held. If anyone hasn't had a chance to review, you can do it now.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any comments? Any additions? Any corrections? Being none I make a motion we accept.

COMMISSIONER SIERRA: I second it.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**The motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2009 regular meeting passed 4-0.**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Motion passes. All right. Next on the agenda, Parkville Municipal Development Plan.

MR. BARE: Can we have the record reflect one abstention since Commissioner Arena wasn't present?

COMMISSIONER CASARES: He wasn't present, but he doesn't abstain.

MR. BARE: What do the bylaws say if you're not here?

COMMISSIONER CASARES: You can or can't. It's up to the individual.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: I've already asked the question.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: That's what we were whispering about.

MR. BARE: Now it's on the record.

### **III. Projects in Planning**

#### **A. Parkville Municipal Development Plan**

##### **1. Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Parkville Municipal Development Plan**

MR. PANAGORE: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, board members. You have before you on the agenda the Parkville Municipal Development Plan. We were before you as reflected in the minutes of January 8th to go over the plan. We're back before you with revisions to that plan.

You have a memo dated March 10<sup>th</sup>. You actually have a memo dated March 6<sup>th</sup>, and a second memo dated March 10<sup>th</sup>. There are two significant changes to the plan I'll go over in just a minute. But the two significant changes are noted in the memo. First, following a review by our planning consultant an additional option for the Bartholomew Avenue extension have been included in the plan and the maps to show the roadway alternatives, basically to set up the left or right side of the property; and inclusion of the demolition of an obsolete power plant at 17-35 Bartholomew Avenue.

The entire plan is available on the Planning Division website. At the conclusion of the presentation we have more information we can go over with you. Our consultant is here as well as Planning Director Roger O'Brien. We will be asking consideration of a resolution approving the Parkville Municipal Development Plan that is in your packet.

If you bear with me and take out your two versions of the document version dated March 3 and another dated January 8<sup>th</sup> you'll find the yellow highlights in the first version will show the changes that have been made. These are only the pages that have been changed. And in the faded color, March version, you will see the changes themselves. So you can look at the two pages like this. I apologize. I wanted to do it all in one document, but – So essentially you have a clean version and the red line version in yellow.

You'll see as we go through it on page 4 up above, action one. We had 12 specific actions. There are now 13 specific actions since it includes the demolition. And preliminary cost estimates have been revised from 25.6 to 25.9 on page 58. We deleted the I-84 ramps and the alignment reference in the next paragraph as well. On the following page, page 6, we deleted or modified under each action a revised cost estimate for each of the actions. The same thing on page 7, the cost estimates have all been updated and revised. Page 8, similarly, the estimates have been revised. On page 17 under market assessment, second paragraph, modification in the first sentence, the deletion, "a greater percentage of the mixed use property," as it repeats the second sentence. Just a sentence that was not useful.

Next modification -- I have noted further minor notations. Next modification I have is on page 43. We anticipate ten acquisitions as opposed to the eleven. And Roger, Burt the acquisitions from ten to eleven cuts out which parcel.

MR. SACCO: Doesn't cut out any.

MR. O'BRIEN: Technical correction.

MR. PANAGORE: Again, the deletion for the I-84 ramp alterations in the middle of page 4; a scribner's error on page 45 under A-7. And the remaining modifications are to the map I believe.

MR. SACCO: Yes.

MR. PANAGORE: There's one more on page 54, just a scribner's error under primary administrator. On page 63 we also have deletion on the above land value of modifications, just again correcting the language of the sentence structure, no substantial change. In terms of map changes --

MR. SACCO: The map changes, because of the two modifications Mr. Panagore indicated we had to modify the maps. Accordingly, we had to add the demolition of the old power house building, and also add the second alternative access road. All the map changes reflect only those two items and a date. There are ten maps in the set. There are a bunch of exhibits in the set, but they didn't indicate the second alternative change. We made the alternative change and updated the map.

MR. PANAGORE: Demolition of the power plant building, updating the second alternative of the road, those scribner's errors. Those are the major changes between the document today and the document presented in January. With that I lay before the board resolution approving the Parkville Municipal Development Plan and would be willing to answer any questions board may have of staff.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any questions or commissioners' comments?

MR. O'BRIEN: I just wanted to --Your resolution specifically says that you're making specific findings as shown in the plan. And there are three or four that I wanted to put on the record.

MR. PANAGORE: For municipal development plan the board does -- The plan makes the findings, not the board. Whereas on urban renewal plans the board makes the findings. But with that said you were saying, Roger.

MR. O'BRIEN: I just wanted to note the plan makes the findings the public benefits including revitalized neighborhood, stabilized economic base will outweigh the private benefits. And the current uses of property are obsolete, deteriorated, and in poor layout; and would not be appropriate for integration in a new development. And the primary purpose of the plan as shown is to revitalize a portion of Hartford, provide stable conditions for citizens, improve infrastructure. And the primary purpose of the plan is not to increase local tax revenues. Those are the points as David points out that the plan does make.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any questions by commissioners? Motion is in order.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: Move to accept a resolution approving the Parkville Municipal Development Plan.

COMMISSIONER SIERRA: Second the motion.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**The motion to accept a resolution approving the Parkville Municipal Development Plan passed 4-0.**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Motion passes. Next on the agenda, Broad Park.

#### **IV. Projects in Execution**

##### **A. Park-Squire-Wolcott Street Project**

1. Consideration of Resolution Approving the Waiving of the Tentative Developer Deposit Policy for Broad Park Development Corporation for 17-19 Squire Street in the Park-Squire-Wolcott Street Project.

MR. GEATHERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At our November agency meeting you approved Broad Park Development Corporation and designated them as tentative developer for 17-19 Squire Street. The proposal is to develop 12 units of supportive housing, renovating the building at 17-19 Squire Street, and construct an addition that will house 12 units total with an adjoining lot at 20

Wolcott Street. Broad Park just recently, on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, received necessary ZBA variances, five in total, relative to various things they needed regarding the development. And they have a proposal before the planning and zoning commission for necessary review and consideration. And that should be coming up in the next month or so. They're still working on the financing, things of that nature. And they're requesting an extension of 90 days with a forfeiture or a waiver of our normal 25 percent tentative developer policy where 25 percent of their deposit they have given us would go hard. Staff is recommending we do that based on their due diligence and milestones they have achieved. Raquel is here in the audience.

COMMISSIONER SIERRA: When I read it, it was 180 days.

MR. GEATHERS: They are requesting 180 days. But we are recommending 90 days. Their letter requested 180. But staff is recommending 90 days.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: Why are we cutting it in half?

MR. GEATHERS: It's staff's recommendation.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: You just said they're still looking for financing.

MR. PANAGORE: Nothing would deter the board from a further extension. The idea is to keep people moving forward, to keep this matter before the board and the attention of the board. So there would be a check in, not six months from now, but three months from now given the fact the board has already approved a time frame. And if the board granted an extension after that for Broad Park to come before the board, state reason, and then request the board grant another extension.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: The reason being hardship of financing today. I don't want them to start this project and be against the clock and whatever institutions they are financing with to have a problem. As long as they can come back.

MR. GEATHERS: More so they have about \$1.6 million committed from HUD in the form of a grant of which there's statutory approvals that have to take place. The reason why we nominated them back in November is they had to show HUD they had site control. This project was originally sited for --

MS. RIVERA: -- 54 Huntington.

MR. GEATHERS: And the Asylum NRZ at the 11th hour did not approve the project. We worked with them to find another location. We had the property available on Squire Street. And 20 Wolcott Street is under the control of the Housing

Division. Typically when we would nominate a tentative developer 25 percent of their deposit would go hard. If the project does go through then the money gets credited toward their land price. This is a good milestone to have them come back in. They're getting financing through the Federal Home Loan Bank, and as well as working with our Division of Housing.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: The only reason I'm asking is with all the effort put into this we're not constricting them to a deadline, and they are able to get this project done.

COMMISSIONER SIERRA: What are the some of the stumbling blocks to get the financing?

MR. GEATHERS: Not stumbling blocks. They originally were going to file for state tax credits. They're not available. The Federal Home Loan funds will be applied for in April. There might be another source as well through DECD. When I say Federal Home Loan that's a grant. It's more they needed to get some type of site control, a document which is our tentative developer designation, to show HUD they have site control. Otherwise that \$1.6 million would have been recaptured by HUD.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: I think it's an ambitious project, and a 90-day check in is good. Six months is a little too much for myself to be asking. I'm just curious as to how do you feel.

MS. RIVERA: We're fine with that recommendation. We can always come back and request another extension. We're working diligently with the financing. I appreciate your concern about the economy out there and how hard it is. Federal Home Loan Bank is announcing there's going to be issues with them. But it will be fine for us to come back and continue.

MR. GEATHERS: Couple other noteworthy items as well: They currently operate a facility on Hudson Street called Hudson View Commons similar to this, exact same grant they got from HUD. As well as they did receive from -- after a lot of input from Frog Hollow NRZ, they got a letter from them saying they support the project.

MR. PANAGORE: Mr. Chairman, there's a resolution at the end of your packet.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any other comments, questions from commissioners? I'd like to make a motion approving the waiving of the tentative developer policy for 17-19 Squire Street. Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER ARENA: Second.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**The motion to approve the waiving of the tentative developer deposit policy for Broad Park Development Corporation for 17-19 Squire Street in the Park-Squire-Wolcott Street Project passed 4-0.**

**V. Executive Director's Report**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Motion passes. Next on the agenda is the executive director's report.

MR. PANAGORE: Mr. Chairman, you have in your package a letter dated February 23<sup>rd</sup> from Warwarme, a letter of interest.

MR. GEATHERS: In your package you have a letter of interest from Warwarme, LLC for development of a steel fabrication plant in our Colt Park project. One of the partners in the project is Gil Addo, who is chairman of the design review board and a structural architect and engineer. I've been working with him in concept regarding this project for the better part of seven months or so.

They currently have a facility in Bloomfield. With the work they are getting now they've outgrown their facility. They've looked at property in Bridgeport, property in Meriden. They want to be here in Hartford.

We're working with them to prepare the proposal. I met with them. Wayne Benjamin and I are looking at issues regarding incentives from the state. Their proposal is about 80 percent complete as we speak. We're close to getting it completed. And we're hopeful we'll have them on the agenda for the April or possibly May meeting. I think we might get them there for April.

We're looking at 40 plus jobs. They're talking about an affiliation between Buckley and the technical schools. They're involved in a lot of steel construction piece components of projects; schools here in Hartford, hotels, nationwide. They're doing work all over the country.

MR. PANAGORE: We'll be back to you in a month or two.

The other item is regarding the recently adopted urban renewal plans. We're continuing to talk to each of the owners within those areas. But in terms of our activity if the board was obligated at any point in time to undertake an eminent domain action for any of those property our estimate, just to give you an idea of the time frame of the process with recent changes to the state law as a result of the Kelo case down in New London, is approximately 42 months.

The first thing you would do in the process would be appraisals of the property in question. Even if you acquire the property voluntarily you can do an appraisal. But in order to

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set the table we have gone out through the procurement department for professional appraisers. We've had seven respondents. Mark and staff are reviewing those right now. Those appraisers, we expect to retain a number of them rather than just one or two. So we have a stable of appraisers to go to. And any acquisition or any voluntarily sale of land would require two appraisals.

We are prioritizing in terms of activity the downtown north urban renewal area, in common parlance the butt ugly building. So that is prioritized. We're continuing to move on those activities as well. I'll answer any questions the board might have this evening about anything that's going on.

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any questions?

#### **VI. Other Business**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Any other business? Public comment?

#### **VII. Adjournment**

COMMISSIONER CASARES: Motion to adjourn is in order.

COMMISSIONER ARENA: Second.

**The hearing was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.**

Respectively submitted,



David B. Panagore  
Director/Secretary