

ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

February 28, 2006

Virtua Health Camden

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Board present: Reverend J. C. Jones, Vice Chairman; Marge DellaVecchia representing Commissioner Susan Bass Levin; Chief Operating Officer, Randy Primas; Mayor Gwendolyn Faison; City Council President, Angel Fuentes; Mayor James M. Maley, Representative of the Regional Impact Committee; Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr.; and Public Members: Rosa Ramirez, William Hosey, Robert Milner, and Rodney Sadler.

Also Present: Lisa Thornton of the Governor's Authorities Unit; Assistant Secretary, Maureen Hassett; Elizabeth Renaud, Deputy Attorney General; EDA staff; and guests.

Absent: Michael Livharcik, designee for State Treasurer Bradley Abelow; Legislative Members: Assemblyman Joseph Roberts and Senator Wayne Bryant.

Vice Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Ms. Hassett announced that notice of this meeting has been sent to the Star Ledger, the Times, the Courier Post and the Philadelphia Inquirer at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, and that a meeting notice has been duly posted on the Secretary of State's bulletin board at the State House.

A quorum of the ERB Board was present.

Vice Chairman Jones asked for a motion to approve the December 20, 2005 minutes of the Board.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Hosey SECOND: Mr. Sadler AYES: 10

Mayor M. James Maley entered the meeting at 10:10.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Vice Chairman Jones asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the first agenda item, the Heart of Camden (P016954). Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve a \$1,150,000 infrastructure grant to The Heart of Camden ("HOC") to fund Phase I of the Environmental Mitigation and Landscape Master Plan ("EMLMP") for the Waterfront South neighborhood of Camden.

The Camden Waterfront South Restoration Project is a multi-year effort to restore the historic Waterfront South neighborhood ("neighborhood") while addressing the issues that have caused its decline. Several non-profits, the City of Camden ("City") and State are working with the citizens of Waterfront South to improve the quality of life for residents while mitigating the effects of Waterfront South's industrial neighborhoods.

Ms. Hassett pointed out that the proposed project seeks to implement Phase I of a comprehensive three-phase EMLMP that will total over \$3.5 million. The EMLMP will help revitalize the South Camden community. The EMLMP involved identifying specific sources of a particulate matter in the neighborhood and using best practices in landscape design to mitigate the effects. The effort was comprised of three main areas of focus: 1) creating buffers between residential and industrial users; 2) vegetating vacant lots; and 3) increasing planting cover on walls and roofs, as well as creating sinks to absorb swirling particulate matter from poorly maintained roadways.

HOC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community-based organization that was established in 1984 in response to the desperate need for decent affordable housing in the South Camden neighborhood. One of its primary goals is to renew and maintain the housing stock in Waterfront South while increasing the opportunity for homeownership for as many families as possible in a neighborhood that is safe and secure.

HOC will work closely with the City and the Camden Redevelopment Agency (“CRA”) to identify the ownership status of land parcels to be landscaped and will initiate a partnership agreement with the City to coordinate a streamlined process for implementation. HOC will oversee the administrative duties and project management of the implementation of Phase I of EMLMP. HOC has identified two candidates that can perform all the duties identified with this project, both with significant environmental experience and degrees in the field. Project management duties include preparation of bid specifications, review of proposals, coordination with City agency for permits, etc, oversight of contractors, and working with the Waterfront South Science Advisory Board (“SAB”).

Vita Nuova, LLC, (“Vita”), a leading national consultancy working on the revitalization of environmentally impacted sites and neighborhoods, spearheaded the development of the EMLMP. Vita has worked in the neighborhood for the last four years, analyzing the environmental challenges.

Birdsall Services Group (“Birdsall”) is a leading NJ-based firm serving dozens of municipal and private clients across the State of New Jersey. They have provided landscape design and engineering services to the project, as well as coordinated the compilation of the Landscape Master Plan and Cost Estimate. Birdsall brought superior multi-disciplinary support and local knowledge to the project.

The SAB has been instrumental in the development of the EMLMP by providing significant input and guidance to the landscape architects and will. The SAB will serve as an on-going guide to the neighborhood in addressing long-term environmental issues and providing support for restoration in the area.

The project area boundaries were determined by identifying the residential neighborhood and incorporating many of the local industries that impact the neighborhood. It is bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the north, I-676 to the east, Ferry and Jefferson Streets to the south and west to the Delaware River.

This application would fund Phase I of III Phases of the EMLMP and provide a basis for long-term improvement to the restoration of this area. Phase I includes 1) 100% linear tree buffers between the neighborhood and industry to the west and consists of using trees and shrubs to maximize the effectiveness of visual screen and air purification capability of sloped areas and also the maintenance for a period of 2 years; 2) streetscape construction on Ferry Avenue between Broadway and 4th Streets which involves concrete and curb removal, installing new curbs and sidewalks, mulching, installing shrubs and lighting; and 3) 20% of the open space construction planned for the Delaware-Atlantic Greenway Millennium Trail which includes planting various trees and shrubs, removing existing trees and vegetation, seeding, earth work, fencing, lighting, installing benches and trellises and paving. The project is expected to be completed within two years.

The total project cost is \$1,350,000. The applicant is requesting a \$1,150,000 ERB grant for the project. ERB funds will leverage \$100,000 pledged by the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (“CCMUA”) for the part of the project adjacent to their building on Ferry Avenue. In addition, \$75,000 has been pledged by Sacred Heart Cathedral towards enhanced streetscaping on Ferry Avenue around the Church to supplement the basic streetscaping and \$25,000 has been pledged by the South Jersey Port Corporation (“SJPC”) to help with buffer maintenance.

Ms. Hassett stated that the ERB funding would be disbursed in tranches. The initial tranche will be used to implement the residential streetscapes. Upon completion and satisfactory inspection by the architect, the second tranche of funding will be disbursed for the linear buffering throughout the industrial areas. Upon completion and inspection of linear buffering, the third tranche of funding will be disbursed for vegetating lots and planting wall coverings.

City Council President Fuentes inquired about the tree maintenance.

Helene Pierson, Executive Director, Heart of Camden stated that Phase I of the EMLMP included maintenance for a period of 2 years.

William Hosey wanted clarification regarding when the maintenance clock started for the trees.

Mujiba Parker replied that the maintenance clock started upon installation of the trees.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND: Mayor Faison AYES 9

Robert Milner abstained from the vote. He owns a drug store in the project area.

Vice Chairman asked Ms. Hassett to present the M & A Holdings Co., LLC (Camden Yards Steel) project (P017125).

M & A Holdings Co., LLC (Camden Yards Steel) is a steel processing and distribution center. The Applicant is owned equally by Michael Amato and Alan Kanoff who started the Company in February 2001. Camden Yards Steel operates from a 60,000 square foot facility located at the Broadway Terminal in Camden, NJ. Camden Yards Steel is an existing customer of the Authority having received a \$600,000 LDF loan and a 25% guaranty of a \$1,100,000 bank loan from Sun Bank for the equipment needed for the start up of the business.

The Company has flourished; created twenty-one new jobs in the City, and has handled our loans as agreed. The Applicant seeks assistance to purchase a new 96"-wide steel processing line that will allow the Company to add product lines for existing customers and open up new markets that are currently unavailable with the its existing 72"-wide processing machinery.

The Borrower continues to operate profitably despite the decline in the price of steel in 2005. Approval is recommended based on historical debt service coverage of the proposed loan, and adequate collateral coverage. In addition, the acquisition of the new equipment will assist the Applicant to operate more efficiently, expand its market, and create nine new jobs in urban aid Camden

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND: Mayor Faison AYES: 10

Vice Chairman Jones asked Ms. Hassett to present the Terraces Modification. Ms. Hassett explained that at the December 23, 2003 ERB Board Meeting, the Members approved a \$2,039,500 Recoverable Grant to the ABC Corporation and the Camden Redevelopment Agency for the Terraces Demolition Project. The project involves the acquisition of properties, relocation of residents, demolition of structures, and redevelopment of the land.

The modification request presently before the Members is to include the acquisition of 14 vacant lots on Arlington Street as a part of the Terraces Project. The Workable Relocation Assistance Plan approved by the NJ Department of Community Affairs for the Terraces Project includes the Arlington Street properties. This project requires another reallocation of funds because the original relocation costs were overestimated, and the acquisition, titlework and appraisals were underestimated for the Terraces project.

Ms. Hassett noted that page 2 of the memo provides a line-by-line reallocation of the funds and the modification does not require a change of the amount of ERB funding request.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Council President Fuentes SECOND: Mr. Sadler AYES: 10

Vice Chairman asked Ms. Hassett to present the YMCA of Camden County, NJ Capital Improvement Project (P17094).

Ms. Hassett acknowledged Dr. Mary Jane Barretta, and Dr. Mimi Coffey, whom were in attendance representing the YMCA. The ERB application outlines upgrades to the YMCA Camden facility located on 3rd & Federal Street. The Camden YMCA is a 38,000 sf facility on 2 acres of land. The ERB public purpose grant will be used for constructing space to be leased by Acelero Learning-Camden Early Head Start ("Acelero"), who provides childcare to low income families with children ages 3 and 4; constructing space to house a Visitor Center, renovating and equipping the YMCA health, wellness and recreation center, installing air conditioning and repaving the parking lot.

The total project cost is estimated at \$2,018,235, which includes costs related to the YMCA's other two facilities in Voorhees and Berlin. The applicant is requesting a \$552,968 ERB public purpose grant to fund a portion of the Camden project improvements, which totals \$1,105,936. ERB funds

will leverage \$1,450,000 from Commerce Bank and the YMCA will infuse \$15,267 of equity expected to be raised through a mini capital campaign of \$461,000.

ERB's financing will be secured by a performance mortgage of which 10% will be forgiven each year over a ten-year period, provided the YMCA operates the facility as stated.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Council President Fuentes SECOND: Mayor Faison AYES: 10

Vice Chairman Jones asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the Annual Qualified Municipality Capital and Economic Recovery Program Report. Ms. Hassett stated that Pursuant to Section 45 (c) of the Municipal Rehabilitation and Economic Recovery Act, the Camden Economic Recovery Board is required to submit to the Governor and the New Jersey Legislature a report of general project categories and description of proposed projects and the amount estimated to be expended on each project for the ensuing year. The report is to be consistent with and reflective of the goals and priorities outlined in the Strategic Revitalization Plan and the Capital Improvement and Infrastructure Plan.

To date, staff has reviewed approximately 75 applications of which 44 are approved for a total of approximately \$111 million in grants, recoverable grants and loans. These projects total \$501 million of investment leveraging \$390 million in other public and private financing, resulting in the creation of 510 full time jobs and generating approximately \$1.7 million in additional revenue to the City via real estate taxes and service charge agreements. The balance of the applications received represents 12 pending, 10 deferred and 9 withdrawn or declined.

Ms. Hassett referred the Members to an ERB Fund Approval report, which outlines the allocated funds for the approved projects within the five established funding categories. In addition to ERB activity, a summary of the Technical Advisory Committee Report was available which provides a comprehensive description of the economic initiatives supporting the revitalization of Camden. Ms. Hassett noted that the report is presented for information only.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND: Mayor Faison AYES: 10

Vice Chairman Jones requested comments from the Members.

Mayor Faison noted a need for more information on various programs for members of the public. To this effect, she stated that her office hosts a Community Outreach meeting every 4th Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center in Camden. Interested parties should contact the Mayor's office to be put on the list.

In a twist on the normal procedure, Maureen Hassett called on Joan Gray, Director Ambulatory Services – Virtua Health Camden to give a few welcoming remarks. Ms. Gray welcomed the Members of the board and public and stated that Virtua is continuing with their tradition of excellence. Ms. Gray stated that Virtua Health has many tenants including the Camden City Police department, the Dept. of Urban Development, New Covenant Fellowship Community Development Corp. and Camden Community Connections.

Vice Chairman Jones requested comments from the public.

Mr. Colandus “Kelly” Francis, President NAACP of Camden County stated that he didn’t hear much of the Heart of Camden project which was the first agenda item presented the board. He asked what else the project entailed besides the planting of trees.

Ms. Hassett stated that Phase I of the ERB request is for linear tree buffers between the neighborhood and industry, streetscape construction to improve the area on Ferry Avenue between Broadway and 4th Streets, and 20% of the open space construction planned for the Delaware-Atlantic Greenway Millenium Trail which includes planting various trees and shrubs, and removing existing trees and vegetation.

Mr. Francis also informed the board that he and other members of the NAACP were invited by Yale Law School for their work of 35 years of work in affordable housing and efforts to outlaw exclusionary zoning. He stated that lawyers from around the world attended this event and he was honored to represent Camden.

Frank Robertson, Chairman, Advisory Board of the Camden Salvation Army, located at 915 Haddon Avenue stated that they recently received \$57 million from the Kroc Foundation to construct a community center. He mentioned they were the only community organization in New Jersey to be selected out of 8 finalists, and one out of 32 selected to participate in the United States.

Joanne Held, Retired Project Manager for NJDEP stated that particulate matter in parts of Camden was very high compared to other parts of the state. She mentioned that DEP’s strategy was to vegetate empty lots and she was pleased to see the joint effort to beautify the Waterfront south.

Gloria Marie Lake, Owner of Gloria’s Cleaning Service, located on 939 Morton Street stated that her cleaning service has been in operation since 2002 and has not requested financial assistance as of yet. Ms. Lake stated she is a third generation business owner whose family has long-standing roots in Camden. She also stated they have a proud tradition of hosting festivals and community activism.

Andrew H. Kricun, Deputy Executive Director, Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority stated the agency has spent approximately 10 – 12 million for odor control in South Camden and hope to produce an ultra low sulphur fuel.

At Vice Chairman Jones’ request Ms. Hassett read the 3rd paragraph from page 5 of the HOC board memo, which highlighted efforts by the CCMUA in mitigating the odor problems in South Camden. Vice Chairman stated that although he was one of the loudest complainers, he had no idea how much money was being spent to alleviate the problem.

Carrie Magee, of the New Jersey Tree Foundation stated they were proud to support the Heart of Camden project by providing trees.

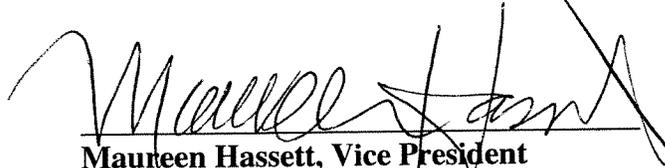
Helene Pierson, Executive Director, of the Heart of Camden expressed her gratitude to the Members for their support and recalled how COO Primas challenged the HOC to step outside of the box in their approach to helping the residents of Camden.

In addition to attending the meeting, the Heart of Camden brought students from the Sacred Heart Cathedral School to the board meeting. Some of the children presented Mayor Faison with cards thanking her for her assistance and publicly thanked the board for its support of the project.

Father Doyle, of the Sacred Heart Cathedral stated it was a happy day and he was grateful to be alive to see the State, County and City all working together to tackle the air problems in the Waterfront South. He also mentioned that with continued success Camden could be a model for other cities.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Hosey and seconded by Mr. Sadler, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Certification: The foregoing and attachments represent a true and complete summary of the actions taken by the State Economic Recovery Board for the City of Camden at its meeting.



**Maureen Hassett, Vice President
Strategic Partnerships, EDA
Assistant Secretary, ERB**