

STATE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

April 27, 2004

The Camden County Council on Economic Opportunity

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Board present: State Treasurer John E. McCormac, Chairman; Mayor Gwendolyn Faison; Chief Operating Officer Randy Primas; Reverend J. C. Jones, Vice Chairman; Marge DellaVecchia representing Commissioner Susan Bass Levin, Public Members William Hosey, Robert Milner, Rodney Sadler, Rosa Ramirez, City Council President Angel Fuentes; non-voting Legislative Member, Senator Wayne Bryant, and non-voting member Louis Capelli for Freeholder Director Jeffrey Nash.

Absent: Tonio Burgos representing Alfred Koeppe, Chairman of the NJ Economic Development Authority; Assemblyman Joseph Roberts, Legislative Member.

Also Present: Assistant Secretary, Maureen Hassett; Deputy Attorney Generals Anthony DeFelice and Bette Renaud; and guests.

Chairman John McCormac called the meeting to order at 10:10 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.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Chairman McCormac asked for a motion to approve the March 23, 2004 minutes of the Board.

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

Chairman McCormac introduced Margaret Henry Parker, Associate Director of the Camden County Council of Economic Opportunity (CCOEO) for opening remarks. Ms. Parker welcomed the ERB members and all attendees of the meeting. She noted that the CCOEO has focused on economic recovery for the City and its residents for the last 36 years. For the past seven years, CCOEO has been providing energy efficiency tactics for more than 137 low-income families. Their program helps prepare homes for inclement weather by providing and installing storm doors and windows among other improvements. She indicated that the Department of Community Affairs gives an award every year to an agency that best uses its weatherization funding. For the last 6 out of 7 years, the CCOEO has won the "Golden Hammer" award, and they'll find out in June if they've won for the 8th year in a row. Ms. Parker welcomes the opportunity to publicize their success. Lastly Ms. Parker noted that the CCOEO will host a

summer program for students who have completed the 10th grade, placing them in public sector jobs that are linked to their career goals.

Chairman McCormac asked Assistant Secretary Maureen Hassett to present the Qualified Municipality Open for Business Program. Ms. Hassett stated that the program is consistent with the Act and that the EDA Board would be responsible for administering the program. Staff are currently developing an application and informational materials that will be given to the ERB when completed. The Program is based on credits against corporate business tax. Businesses moving into New Jersey would be eligible for up to 100% incentive and businesses looking to expand in Camden will be eligible for up to 75%. The EDA will work closely with the CRA on this program. The Qualified Municipality Open for Business Program was presented for informational purposes only.

Ms. Hassett then presented the Annual Qualified Municipal Capital and Economic Recovery Program Report and stated that this report is also in compliance with the Act which requires a series of reports to be submitted to the Board. Several reports have already been presented to the Board including the financial plan submitted in the fall of 2003. The Annual Qualified Municipality Capital and Economic Recovery Program report describes ERB activities over the last year and provides information about other projects in Camden funded by other state agencies. To date, the ERB has reviewed 40 applications of which 15 are approved for a total of \$51 million resulting in 246 full time jobs and 4,063 construction jobs.

Chairman McCormac asked Ms. Hassett to present the next item for Board approval, which was for a \$3,232,000 grant to Camden Redevelopment Agency (“CRA”) via a management agreement with Cooper’s Ferry Development Agency (“CFDA”) on the Interior Gateway Phase II project (P01544). Ms. Hassett noted that Tom Corcoran and Anthony Perno of CFDA were both present at the meeting if anyone had questions.

Ms. Hassett presented a summary overview of the project, which is consistent with the Strategic Revitalization Plan and the Capital Improvement and Infrastructure Plan and the City Master Plan. The Interior Gateway Project (IGP) is a multi-phased, \$32 million rehabilitation project focused on rebuilding Camden’s downtown infrastructure. The project is in an employment opportunity area bounded by Mickle Boulevard, the Ben Franklin Bridge, I-676 and Delaware Avenue. The project scope involves engineering, design and construction work for five primary infrastructure elements: utility rehabilitation, sidewalk replacement, street construction and re-surfacing, signage and park rehabilitation. This project will complement the recent property development in the Cooper Grant Neighborhood as well as developments by Camcare and Pennrose.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Fuentes

SECOND: Mr. Primas

AYES:10

Chairman McCormac asked Ms. Hassett to present the public purpose grant request for \$500,000 from Vesta Camden Urban Renewal, LLC – Liberty Park Townhomes Learning and Services Center (P015418). Vesta-Camden Urban Renewal LLC’s (Vesta) is proposing to construct a 4,200 square foot Learning and Services Center (Center) that will provide educational and social services to the residents of Liberty Park. The requested funding will leverage \$18.4 million in other public and private funding. The Center will be an asset to Vesta’s vision for the Liberty

Park neighborhood, and support not only its town home residents, but the neighborhood as a whole. While Vesta's request for ERB funding represents 50% of the eligible Public Purpose Project costs, it constitutes less than 3% of Vesta's total \$18.9 million commitment to the Liberty Park neighborhood. Vesta has agreed to pay a PILOT to the City of Camden. The project is located in a transitional area.

Reverend Jones asked about the definition of affordable housing in terms of this project. Jack Kerry, of The Kerry Company, responded that residents of Liberty Park Townhomes receive Section 8 assistance and income is limited to 0% to 50% of the median income for the area.

Council President Angel Fuentes asked if Vesta has purchased the Centennial Village Apartments in Cramer Hill as part of this project. Mr. Kerry indicated he was not aware of this. Mr. Primas indicated that he recently met with representatives from Centennial Village Apartments and that there had been no indication that the apartments were for sale. Rosa Ramirez asked if the Learning Center was located in a transitional Neighborhood. Ms. Hassett indicated that it was.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Sadler

SECOND: Ms. DellaVecchia AYES: 10

Chairman McCormac asked Ms. Hassett to review the recoverable grant request for \$1,550,000 from the Cooper's Ferry Development Association's Waterfront Parking project (P015790) which was presented as a handout. Ms. Hassett noted that grant would help fund the construction of temporary and permanent parking facilities north of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge for the NJ Department of Corrections, Camden Riversharks, Tweeter Center, and for businesses and employees of all other waterfront attractions. The project will provide 1,000 new parking spaces. Ms. Hassett indicated that the ERB grant would be reimbursed to the extent that language specifically reimbursing the ERB or its agent for the project is included in the State's FY 05 budget that is subject to approval by the New Jersey Legislature. Ms. Hassett also noted that the project would be fast-tracked to meet the upcoming summer season.

The Treasurer asked for comments.

Angel Fuentes asked if the Department of Corrections would own the parking lots. Senator Bryant answered yes. Mr. Fuentes noted that there was no mention of any Camden City Parking Authority involvement. Senator Bryant clarified that the City Parking Authority was not involved. Council President Fuentes continued that a lot of young people would be looking for summer job opportunities for events parking. Anthony Perno of the CFDA responded that they should contact the Riversharks directly for job information.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Sadler

SECOND: Mr. Hosey

AYES: 10

Chairman McCormac asked for Ms. Hassett to present the Technical Advisory Committee Report. Ms. Hassett noted that LC Communications had finalized with the EDA a Business Employee Incentive Program grant for the creation of 50 new jobs worth \$654,750 over 10 years.

The School Construction Corporation has unveiled plans for the new H.B. Wilson Elementary School. This will be an 87,000 s.f community -based school that will accommodate Pre-K to 6th

graders. It's located on 8th and Woodlawn streets. Construction is scheduled to begin next spring.

Randy Primas stated that L3 Communications had recently held a job fair. He stated that they're looking for 200 engineering positions, which is a good sign of the expanding job market in Camden.

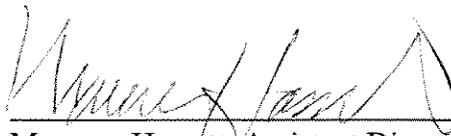
Chairman McCormac requested comments from the public.

Colandus Francis, President of the Camden County Branch of the NAACP, brought a large picture exhibit to the floor that highlighted the success of several children from Camden. The NAACP is a sponsor of Academic, Cultural, Technical, and Scientific Olympics ("ACTSO") and the Camden Chapter recently sponsored 7 students in the competition held in Newark, NJ. Students from all over the State of New Jersey participated and two students from Camden, Michael Jackson and Keith Long, won medals and would represent the State of New Jersey at the national event to be held in July, 2004. He also mentioned that some Camden students his organization sponsors had recently participated in an International Choir competition and won the "Golden Cup Award", for the second year in a row.

Chairman McCormac informed everyone present that the next meeting would be held on May 21, 2004 at the Camden Empowerment Zone.

There being no further business, on a motion by Reverend Jones, and seconded by Mr. Primas, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 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, Assistant Director, EDA
Assistant Secretary, ERB