

ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

May 23, 2006

Camden County Council of Economic Opportunity

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; Michael Livharcik, designee for State Treasurer Bradley Abelow; and Public Members: Rosa Ramirez, William Hosey, and Rodney Sadler.

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

Absent: Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr.; Legislative Members: Assemblyman Joseph Roberts and Senator Wayne Bryant and Public Member: Robert Milner.

Vice Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 10:03 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 March 28, 2006 minutes of the Board.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Sadler SECOND: Mr. Primas AYES: 8

Rosa Ramirez entered the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Vice Chairman Jones called on Margaret Henry Parker, Associate Director, Camden County Council of Economic Opportunity (CCCOEO) to deliver the welcoming remarks. Ms. Parker welcomed the board and all present. Ms. Parker stated that the CCCOE has an emergency services program for residents who need assistance paying rent, mortgage, gas and electric bills or fuel bills. Ms. Parker also stated that they administer a program to help women become self sufficient and they've recently embarked on a similar program for men entitled OMAR. Ms. Parker advised the members that the CCCOE would celebrate 40 years of helping the community with a party this summer.

Vice Chairman Jones asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the first agenda item before the board.

Prior to proceeding with the summary, Ms. Hassett briefly advised the board that the Fair Share Northgate II Associates project would not be heard at the meeting due to recent developments.

Ms. Hassett proceeded with the first agenda item stating that the project (P016572) is a modification to the CHCDC Nueva Vida Homes market-rate home ownership project in the Cramer Hill section of Camden. The modification involves the allowance of income restrictions to be placed on two (2) of the fourteen (14)-unit housing project.

The CRA owns the land and has adopted a resolution authorizing the agency to enter into a purchase option agreement with CHCDC for the transfer of the sites and the conveyance of the land. The CRA has acknowledged that the land will be sold to CHCDC for \$109,589, at an average cost of \$7,828 per unit once all the financing commitments are in place.

Due to a 13% increase in construction costs the total project increased from \$2,784,501 to \$3,080,155, resulting in an increase in the average per unit cost from \$198,893 to \$215,725. As a result, other sources of financing needed to be secured to fill the financing gap. The City has identified HOME funding for this need but pursuant to the program guidelines, income restrictions must be applied.

Staff has reviewed the modification request to allow income restrictions on 2 of the 14 market-rate home-ownership units because HOME funds will be used on these units.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Hosey SECOND: Ms. Ramirez AYES: 7

Randy Primas, COO of the City of Camden abstained from the vote due to his CRA membership.

Mayor Faison, City of Camden abstained from the vote due to her membership.

Council President, Angel Fuentes stated that he was in receipt of a letter from the NJ Dept of Community Affairs advising him that he is able to vote on matters in the Cramer Hill neighborhood where he owns real estate.

Vice Chairman Jones asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the next agenda item, Respond, Inc. (Respond) New Worker Job Development Center modification (P015442). Ms. Hassett stated that at the June 22, 2004 ERB and the July 13, 2004 NJEDA Board Meetings, the Members approved a \$1,000,000 public purpose grant for the New Worker Development Center. The project consists of the renovation of two commercial properties located on North 8th Street to house a variety of social service programs for the residents of Camden as well as Camden County. Respond has invested \$350,000 of its own funds to purchase the two properties.

Commencement of the project was delayed as a result of several factors. First, the approval from the USEDA for the \$1.2 million grant for the project was received in May 2006. The USEDA grant's commitment is valid until December 31, 2007. During this time, Respond was working with United Way, Campbell Soup Foundation and other foundations to solicit funds for an in-house project manager. These funds did not materialize. Respond began work on the project a prospective construction manager who consequently was not chosen to manage the project.

Respond's limited staff capacity resulted in the delay in preparing a request for proposal for construction management of the project.

Respond recently issued a scope of services of which three construction management firms replied. Respond has narrowed the candidates down to two firms. By the end of this month, Respond will select one construction management firm for the project. Staff is requesting an extension of the commitment of the \$1,000,000 public purpose grant to Respond until December 31, 2007.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Primas SECOND: Council President Fuentes AYES: 8

Rodney Sadler abstained from the vote due to an affiliation with Respond.

Vice Chairman Jones requested comments from the Members.

Marge DellaVecchia informed the Board that on May 9, 2006 the NJHMFA approved funding to 3 projects in conjunction with the state environmental protection agency.

- RCA Victor Lofts
- Harrison Avenue site of Salvation Army Kroft Foundation, and
- The J. M. Hardware Store located on Federal Street

Vice Chairman Jones requested comments from the members of the public.

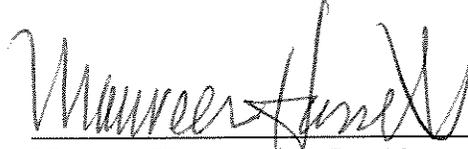
Frank Fulbrook, President of the Cooper Grant Neighborhood Association commented on the recently approved Cooper Grant Homes project. He advised the board that although financing was in place and the project was ready to begin they could not begin work without a "No Further Action" letter from DEP.

COO Randy Primas replied that he would meet with representatives of City Hall and follow up on the "No Further Action" letter.

Mr. Colandus "Kelly" Francis, President NAACP of Camden County stated that the organization recently took part in the ACTSO competition where 40 Camden HS students traveled to Rosa Parks High School in Paterson, NJ to compete in academic contests. The Camden High School students came away with 24 medals, 9 gold, 7 silver, and 8 bronze. Eight students were chosen to travel to Washington DC to take part in the national ACTSO competition.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Hosey and seconded by Council President Fuentes, the meeting was adjourned at 10:36 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maureen Hassett", written over a horizontal line.

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