

ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

Waterfront Technology Center at Camden

June 21, 2007

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Board present: Chairperson Chairperson Kolluri, designee for State Treasurer Bradley Abelow; Brett Waters representing Judge Theodore Davis, Acting COO; Dennis Kille representing Mayor Gwendolyn Faison; Tina Vignali representing City Council President Angel Fuentes; Marge DellaVecchia representing Commissioner Susan Bass Levin; Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr., and Public Members: Robert Milner, and Rosa Ramirez.

Also Present: Assistant Secretary, Maureen Hassett; Bette Renaud, DAG; and EDA staff.

Absent Reverend J. C. Jones, Vice Chairman; Secretary Caren Franzini, designee for EDA Chairman Carl Van Horn; and Legislative Members: Assemblyman Joseph Roberts, and Senator Wayne Bryant, and Public Members: William Hosey and Rodney Sadler.

Chairperson Kolluri called the meeting to order at 10:02 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.

Chairperson Kolluri asked for a motion to approve the May 29, 2007 minutes of the Board.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND Ms. Ramierz: 7

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Laura Wallick, Regional Director, Business & Community Development - South, NJEDA welcomed the board members to the Waterfront Technology Center at Camden. Ms. Wallick stated that the EDA is especially proud of the facility as it serves as a testament to the progress Camden has made, and also represents a notable example of the public sector and the private sector partnering together to revitalize an area and help it reach its full potential. Ms. Wallick stated that the facility continues to play an important role in Camden's renaissance, it is likewise enhancing the city's standing as a hub for research and development activities, bringing new jobs to the area and helping to spur private investment. She noted that in 2006 the Center welcomed its first tenants, Gestalt, ACIN's Camden Center for Entrepreneurship in Technology, and the Rutgers Camden Technology Campus. She further noted that the tenants are expected to create 319 new, full-time jobs in the city, and two other companies, both awaiting lease finalization, will create an additional 29 new jobs.

Chairperson Kolluri requested Maureen Hassett to present the item before the board.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members were being asked to approve Camden Redevelopment Agency – Parkade Building/Roosevelt Plaza project (P17939). Ms. Hassett explained that the modification would allow the \$3 million ERB infrastructure grant to be used exclusively for acquisition of the leasehold interest in the building contingent upon the CRA securing an

amendment to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and subdivision approval to allow for commercial development around the perimeter of the project site. The ERB grant will become recoverable from the proposed commercial development.

Ms. Hassett stated that on February 27, 2007, the Members of the ERB Board approved a \$3 million non-recoverable infrastructure grant to fund the acquisition and demolition of the Parkade Building and the restoration of Roosevelt Plaza, which is adjacent to Camden City Hall in the Central Business District of Camden. At the time of approval, it was envisioned that the project would re-create Roosevelt Park.

Ms. Hassett pointed out that recently, the CRA has been approached by a private company to consider the construction of two commercial buildings on the north and south ends of the Parkade Building/Roosevelt Plaza property, facing Market and Federal streets. In order for the CRA to consider this request, the Downtown Redevelopment Plan will require an amendment to allow for commercial development on this parcel of land that was previously designated to be a park in perpetuity.

In addition, the DEP has requested that its funds be used only for the development of the park. The ERB funds would then be used toward the purchase of the leasehold interest.

The ERB funding was approved as a non-recoverable infrastructure grant because the property was to remain a park in perpetuity. However, with the proposed amendment to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan to include commercial development on the site, the ERB grant will become recoverable and the NJEDA will file a mortgage on the property. Upon the sale of the subdivided parcels of the land for private development, the NJEDA/ERB will require 50% of the sales proceeds up to \$3 million.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND Mr. Milner AYES: 7

Ms. Kolluri asked Ms. Hassett to present the next item before the board, the Cooper's Ferry Development Association, Inc. Parking and Infrastructure Improvements project (P017891). Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve a modification to the project scope and increase the amount of the ERB recoverable infrastructure grant to Cooper's Ferry Development Association Inc. ("CFDA") from \$2,000,000 to \$2,042,000. Funds will be provided from the Downtown Revitalization and Recovery Fund established through the "Municipal Rehabilitation and Recovery Act" ("Act"). Repayment of the ERB grant will occur through federal grants appropriated in 2005 and 2006 totaling \$2,042,000.

The project scope consisted of demolition, removals, excavation, drainage, paving, line striping, stoning on geotextile, lighting, fencing, sidewalks and landscaping. Specifically, improvements were to be made to the CRA/City owned VIP lots across from Tweeter. These improvements included the installation of storm drains, paving, striping and fencing and result in approximately 200 spaces. In addition, the SJPC agreed to relocate the Champion Trucking operation from its current location on 2nd Street to a vacant and underutilized facility located on 2nd and Atlantic. Clearing and paving this site will result in approximately 900 additional spaces.

Ms. Hassett stated that subsequent to approval, design documents were finalized and construction bids were secured. The revised budget totals \$2,078,225, which is substantially within the original estimate with some line item re-allocations. The cost savings from these

items were re-allocated to pavement, sidewalks and curbing to maximize the use of the lots and increase the parking supply by approximately 10%. To support the \$78,225 budget increase, CFDA is requesting the ERB increase the amount of the recoverable grant by \$42,000. This increase will be repaid from the 2005 and 2006 federal appropriations. The balance of funds, \$36,225, will be funded by the CRA with ERB funds previously approved for the Central Waterfront Temporary Parking project.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND Mr. Milner AYES: 7

Ms. Kolluri asked Ms. Hassett to present the next item before the board, the NJEDA Waterfront Landscaping Project. Ms. Hassett stated that the Members were being asked to approve a \$50,000 infrastructure grant to the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (“NJEDA”) to fund a portion of Phase I of the Waterfront Landscaping Project costs for Downtown Camden. These funds will be provided from the Downtown Revitalization and Recovery Fund established through the Municipal Rehabilitation and Economic Recovery Act.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Waterfront Landscaping project is a public/private, multi-year effort to beautify the City’s Delaware River waterfront as a means of enhancing its aesthetics and economic potential as a major regional destination. This effort is also intended to provide an enhanced amenity to City residents and those working in the Downtown area.

Ms. Hassett pointed out that the \$200,000 budget for the project would be contributed by five parties: Camden Parking Authority, the County of Camden and the Authority (through this proposed grant), at \$50,000 each; and Camden Town Center and the Adventure Aquarium, at \$25,000 each. The five entities either own or operate facilities within the project’s “Planting Area” which is bounded by Market Street, Delaware Avenue, Federal Street and the Delaware River. Cooper’s Ferry Development Association (“CFDA”), a local non-profit corporation, will coordinate the planning and implementation of the Project on behalf of the funding entities.

This request would fund a portion of Phase I of the project, which covers the 2007 planting, and maintenance season.

Ms. Hassett stated that the requested \$50,000 will be in the form of a non-recoverable infrastructure grant, and that the disbursement of ERB funds will be contingent upon receipt of the executed Memorandum of Understanding by CFDA and the five parties funding the work.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND Ms. Ramirez NO: 3

Dennis Kille, Tina Vignali, Brett Waters, and Lopa Kolluri abstained from the vote.

Mr. Milner stated his dissatisfaction with the collaboration, as he believed the Tweeter Center should contribute.

Ms. Hassett stated that Tweeter is not a landowner in the project area.

Mr. Cappelli also objected to the project.

Ms. Kolluri asked Ms. Hassett to present the final item before the board, the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency project (P16969). Ms. Hassett stated that the Members were being asked to approve a modification to the \$5,000,000 ERB loan to HMFA for the Citywide Home Improvement Program ("CHIP") to allow for up to \$30,000 in ERB funds to be used for life/safety concerns as well as exterior improvements and to allow for any earned interest and/or recovery of ERB grant funds to be reinvested in the CHIP as long as the program is operational.

Ms. Hassett stated that on November 22, 2005, the Members approved a \$5,000,000 non-recourse loan to HMFA to fund a portion of the CHIP. The program was envisioned to support repairs of approximately 1,000 single-family owners occupied homes located throughout the City of Camden over a five-year period. ERB funds were approved to be used for Phase I to provide recoverable grants of up to \$20,000 per qualified homeowner to upgrade major systems and fund exterior improvements.

Based on the initial applications received and reviewed for eligibility, many homes need improvements in excess of \$20,000 in order to address all of the life/safety concerns and make improvements to the exterior of the homes. Although there are other funding sources committed to the CHIP, HMFA is requesting that each individual project have only one funding source and for the ERB funding per home be increased to a maximum of \$30,000. It is expected that during Phase I of the program, the ERB funding along with DCA and City resources will still be able to meet or surpass the goal of improving 250 homes through this approach as not all households are anticipated to have this level of need.

In addition, the HMFA is requesting that any interest income earned on the disbursements of ERB funds be reinvested into the administration of the program. Lastly, the HMFA is requesting that any funds recovered from homeowners who sell their residences within 5 years of the date of their mortgage with the EDA be reinvested into the CHIP if the program is still operational.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. DellaVecchia SECOND Mr. Milner AYES: 7

Chairperson Kolluri requested comments from the members.

Bob Milner inquired about the status of the 301 Market Street project. Tina Vignali stated that Camden City Council approved a resolution for alternate designs, which should result in productive responses for the needs of the public. Carlos Morales of the CRA stated that no ERB funding dollars have been spent to date.

Bob Milner inquired about the status of the Sears Office building. Maureen Hassett stated that the New Jersey Historic Council and the DEP were meeting at the time of the ERB meeting and hopefully information would be forthcoming.

Rosa Ramirez stated that she felt the ERB Town Hall meetings were a success, and it was good to see the residents come out and speak about their concerns. She noted that although the City departments heads for there, she wasn't sure if residents were able to speak with them directly. She also wondered if the concerns of the residents were being followed up. Brett Waters responded that Yolanda Neely, and Julio Flores of the Mayor's office were in attendance at all Town Hall meetings. Ms. Neely and Mr. Flores assembled the complaints and distributed them

to department heads with contact information for all residents who spoke. He further assured Ms. Ramirez that each resident who spoke would be individually contacted to address his or her particular concern.

Ms. DellaVecchia stated that it was effective to tailor the presentations to the particular venue for the Town Hall meetings and suggested that the meetings be held on a monthly basis.

Lou Cappelli stated that Camden County was sponsoring a joint newsletter with the City of Camden to keep residents informed. He also invited the ERB to contribute information and make it a three-way collaboration.

Dennis Kille stated that the Mayor's office was working on a new system where callers would be given a ticket number, which would be used to follow complaints and gather feedback on an ongoing basis. He stated that the product developer asked the City to test market the system and that if successful the company would market on a national basis.

Chairperson Kolluri informed board members the New Jersey Tax Lien Financing Corp. met on May 17, 2007, including Treasurer Abelow, Judge Davis and City Council President Fuentes. She stated the meeting was a good start and they were focusing on processing tax collections to the City of Camden and redevelopment of projects for affordable housing and plan follow up meetings a couple times a year.

Chairperson Kolluri requested comments from the public.

There were no comments from the public.

There being no further business, on a motion by Council President Fuentes and seconded by Chairperson Kolluri, the meeting was adjourned at 11:01 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