

ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

January 30, 2014

36 West State Street, Trenton, Camden, NJ

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Board present: Paul Macchia representing DCA Commissioner Richard Constable, III; and Maureen Hassett designee for EDA Chairman, Al Koepe.

Members of the Board present via conference call: Alberta Hyche, Chairperson, designee for State Treasurer Sidamon-Eristoff; Marc Riondino designee for Mayor Dana Redd; Jason Asuncion designee for City Council President Francisco Moran; and Public Members: Robert Milner, Rosa Ramirez, and Rodney Sadler.

Also Present: Bette Renaud, DAG; and EDA staff.

Also Present via conference call: Amy Herbold, Governor's Authorities' Unit.

Absent: Legislative Member Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr., Non-Voting Member; and Public Member William Hosey.

Chairperson, Alberta Hyche called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Ms. Hassett announced that notice of this meeting had been sent to the *Star Ledger*, the *Times*, and the *Courier Post* 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 Hyche asked for a motion to approve the October 29, 2013 minutes of the Board.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ms. Ramirez SECOND: Mr. Milner AYES: 8

Chairperson Hyche asked Ms. Hassett to present the next item before the board, the Amendment to ERB Guide to Program Funds. Ms. Hassett stated that the Members were asked to approve the extensions of six different projects being administered by the Camden Redevelopment Agency.

Chairperson Hyche asked Ms. Hassett to present the next item before the board, the amended scopes of work, reallocations of funding and extensions of the subject six grants to the Camden Redevelopment Agency.

Ms. Hassett stated that over the years of the Camden Economic Recovery Board (ERB), the CRA has played a vital role in working to redevelop the various neighborhoods and meet the needs of the economic recovery of the City of Camden. During this period ERB has funded a total of 20 CRA managed projects totaling approximately \$35 million. CRA and EDA staff have worked together on the requests presented here analyzing the work yet to be done and the timelines needed to complete the remaining project.

Chairperson Hyche asked if the CRA was required to seek and extension prior to the expiration of the current term. Mr. Macchia stated that it was allowable to seek extensions at this time.

Ms. Hassett summarized the highlights of the each project as follows:

1. Neighborhood and Redevelopment Planning Grant I – P15686

Ms. Hassett stated that on March 23, 2004 the Members approved a \$641,250 grant to help fund a portion of 7 neighborhood plans and 14 redevelopment plans for the City of Camden. The 7 neighborhood plans to be completed included: Centerville, Fairview, Liberty Park, Morgan Village, Parkside, North Camden and Whitman Park. The 14 redevelopment plans included Bergen Square, Cooper Plaza, Central Waterfront, Downtown Camden, Gateway, Lanning Square, Liberty Park, Marlton, Morgan Village, North Camden, Rosedale, Stockton II, Waterfront South and Whitman Park.

Ms. Hassett added that even though North Camden continues to be a priority for the City, current planning needs have shifted in support of activities for the City of Camden South Camden neighborhoods, including Whitman Park. ERB funds will be used to leverage a \$30 million implementation grant opportunity issued by HUD in which ERB funds will be allocated for an area in need of redevelopment study and redevelopment plan for Whitman Park. To date, \$490,216 in ERB funds has been disbursed to fund the completion of 11 of the plans. There is a remaining grant balance of \$233,729.

The Members are asked to approve the extension of the term of the grant retroactively from May 19, 2013 to September 30, 2015. The Members are also asked to approve a reallocation in the amount of \$107,290 of the remaining funds which will be used to fund the North Camden Waterfront Redevelopment Study and Plan, the North Camden Residential Redevelopment and Study Plan and the Whitman Park Study and Plan in order to meet the City's current redevelopment planning needs.

Mr. Macchia asked for clarification on which 11 projects were completed. Ms. Olivette Simpson, Camden Redevelopment Agency stated that 11 of the 17 redevelopment plans were completed. She added that several of the projects were involved in litigation and did not go forward.

2. Planning Grant Phase II – P16904

Ms. Hassett stated that on November 22, 2005, the Members approved a \$445,050 planning grant to the CRA to prepare 5 neighborhood plans, a City-wide Housing Production Strategy, a City-wide Industrial Site Inventory, and develop a Project Decision Model.

Originally, CRA planned to produce five neighborhoods plans for the Gateway, Bergen Square, Central Waterfront, Cooper Plaza, and Marlton neighborhoods at a cost of approximately \$75,000 per plan. Delays in advancing these plans resulted due to changes in administration and from various lawsuits filed related to several previously approved plans.

Activities completed under this grant include Redevelopment Legal Plan Review (Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan), a Citywide Replacement Housing Strategy Report, Industrial Sites Inventory and a Management Contract with the Fels Institute. To date, \$190,000 in ERB funds have been disbursed. There is a remaining available grant balance of \$254,550.

Mr. Macchia asked how this phase differs from Phase I. Ms. Simpson stated that Under Phase II there would be an Area in Need of Redevelopment Study.

Ms. Hassett asked for clarification on whether the Bergen Square project was being amended or restarted. Ms. Simpson stated that no work had occurred and that the CRA wanted to restart Bergen Square.

Mr. Macchia asked to what extent Phase I funding used for Bergen Square and Morgan Village was available. Ms. Simpson confirmed that the CRA had access to the other funding to complete the above projects.

Ms. Hassett added that she understood that the Neighborhood Plans for Bergen Square and Morgan Village went forward, and down they're drilling down to actually complete the projects.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to 1) approve the extension of the term of the grant retroactively from December 31, 2010 to June 30, 2015, and 2), approve a modification of the scope of work and the reallocation of \$195,600 of the remaining funding in the amount of \$254,550 for the preparation of the redevelopment studies plans for Bergen Square (\$100,000) and Morgan Village (\$95,600).

3. Tire and Battery Remediation – P20266

Ms. Hassett stated that on February 11, 2008, the Members approved a \$700,000 non-recoverable infrastructure grant to the CRA to support the environmental remediation work plan for the former Tire & Battery site located at 1350 Admiral Wilson Boulevard, which is in the Gateway Redevelopment Area of the City of Camden.

The Project Development Agreement between the CRA, the City of Camden, Camden County and New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) obligated the CRA to acquire and remediate the Site. In addition to the ERB grant, the CRA obtained two New Jersey Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund (HDSRF) grants and three US Environmental Protection (EPA) Brownfield Cleanup Grants to fund the remediation. To date 11 underground storage tanks were emptied and removed, contaminated "hot spots" were excavated and a clean fill cap was constructed. A No Further Action (NFA) for soils was issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on August 31, 2010.

The CRA has an on-going obligation to monitor the contaminated ground water associated with the site. Recently, CRA entered into a professional services contract in the amount of \$135,000 with Langan Engineering (Langan) to complete the ground water monitoring. It is anticipated that the monitoring will be completed by December 31, 2014. To date, \$224,854 in ERB funds has been disbursed. There is a remaining available grant balance of \$475,146.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve an extension of the term of the grant retroactively from March 31, 2013 to March 31, 2015 to allow for the performance and close-out of these professional services.

4. Mixed Site Acquisition – P20265

Ms. Hassett stated that in March 2008, the Members approved a \$1,561,975 recoverable infrastructure grant to the Camden Redevelopment Agency to fund the acquisition of 137 vacant lots and buildings within the City of Camden.

In 2009, CRA was awarded an \$11.9 MM Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) Grant from the Housing & Urban Development. CRA began implementation of the NSP2 program in March of 2010; which was subject to an expenditure deadline of February 2013.

CRA has acquired 48 through Tax Lien Finance Corporation (TLFC) foreclosures. CRA acquired an additional 14 in TLFC foreclosures in Cramer Hill in December 2013. With the use of the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) grant funds, which it was awarded in 2009, CRA also acquired 69 additional vacant properties in Lanning Square. These activities will total 133 properties acquisitions in Lanning Square. To date, \$852,475 in ERB funds has been disbursed. There is an available grant balance of \$709,500.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve 1) an extension to the term of the recoverable grant retroactively from March 31, 2011 to June 30, 2015 in order to allow sufficient time to complete the entire acquisition project, and 2), a change in the scope of the project, allowing up to \$60,111 to be used for boarding up vacant structures, maintaining vacant lots (clearance of debris and mowing), and demolition of unsafe and blighted structures. Additionally, CRA requests the use of funds to acquire up to 17 City owned and 51 privately owned vacant properties.

Mr. Macchia asked if any of the 137 properties acquired under NSP2 funding, count against the remaining fund balance. Ms. Simpson stated that under the federal grant, the CRA had acquired properties and used TLFC properties acquired under ERB as leverage. Ms. Olivette Simpson, Camden Redevelopment Agency added that the NSP2 funding needed to be used by January 2013, and that the prior properties counted against the fund balance.

5. Cooper Plaza Acquisitions – P20263

Ms. Hassett stated that on March 28, 2005, the Members approved a \$1,532,950 recoverable infrastructure grant to cover the acquisition of 161 vacant lots and buildings within the Cooper Plaza neighborhood in the City of Camden.

On April 6, 2010, the term of the infrastructure grant was extended to June 30, 2011 through delegated authority.

Ms. Hassett noted that in 2009, the CRA was awarded an \$11.9 MM Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) Grant from the Housing & Urban Development. CRA began implementation of the NSP2 program in March of 2010; which was subject to an expenditure deadline of February 2013. Cooper Plaza is a designated HUD target area under the NSP2 program. Eligible NSP2 activities included the costs associated with the acquisition, demolition, improvement, and maintenance of vacant tax foreclosure properties land banked for future redevelopment purposes.

As of December 2013, CRA has acquired 99 TLFC foreclosures in Cooper Plaza. With the use of funds, CRA also acquired 22 additional vacant properties in Cooper Plaza. These activities total

121 properties in Cooper Plaza. To date, \$757,606 in ERB funds have been disbursed. There is an available grant balance of \$775,344.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve 1) an extension of the grant retroactively from June 30, 2011 until June 30, 2015 and 2), a change in the scope of the project, allowing up to \$31,447 to be used for boarding up vacant structures, maintenance of vacant lots (clearance of debris and mowing), and demolition of unsafe and blighted structures. Additionally, CRA requests the use of funds to acquire up to 21 City owned and 31 privately owned vacant properties and a grant extension of three years to complete the entire acquisition project.

Mr. Macchia asked if there were other funds being used for the Cooper Plaza project. Mr. Riondino replied that the City working with Cooper Hospital under the Eds and Meds program to acquire various properties and using different sources of funding and leveraging properties.

6. Central Waterfront & Temporary Parking – P16137

Ms. Hassett stated on September 20, 2004, ERB approved a \$3,910,500 recoverable grant to fund the construction of temporary parking facilities in the Central Waterfront neighborhood. The scope of the project included the development of 154 properties. The scope also included the relocation of residents, demolition of structures, and the construction/improvement of 1,500 temporary parking spaces to support the parking requirement for waterfront entertainment center activities.

She noted that on October 3, 2006, ERB approved an increase in the amount of the recoverable grant from \$3,910,500 to \$5,000,000, supporting an increase in costs for acquisition, relocation, and demolition costs. On May 12, 2010, the term of the grant was retroactively extended from November 30, 2009 to November 30, 2010 through delegated authority. On June 19, 2012, the term of the grant was retroactively extended from November 30, 2010 to December 31, 2012 through delegated authority.

Ms. Hassett pointed out that five properties remain to be acquired within the approved budget and the requested extension period. The structures on these properties were demolished and lot improvements were completed. The estimated budget necessary to complete the acquisition of these five (5) properties is \$376,131.79. To date \$4,916,423 in ERB funds have been disbursed. There is an available grant balance of \$83,577.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Members are asked to approve an extension to the term of the \$5,000,000 recoverable grant to the CRA Central Waterfront Parking Project retroactively from November 30, 2010 to June 30, 2015 in order to allow the CRA to acquire five remaining properties and complete the Project.

Mr. Macchia asked if there was any extra funding available other than the grant balance of \$83,577. Ms. Simpson confirmed that the CRA had access to the other funding to complete the above project.

Ms. Hassett stated that disbursements of all funds for the above presented projects will be subject to the EDA's receipt and satisfactory review of related invoices, contracts for services, fee schedules and reports detailing the scopes of work and related time schedules.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Milner

SECOND: Mr. Riondino AYES: 8

Chairperson Hyché requested comments from the members of the public.

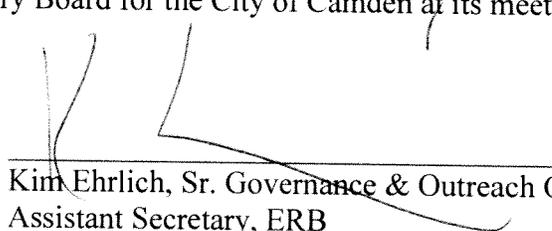
There was no comment from the public.

Ms. Hassett asked Ms. Simpson to share some highlights of CRA activities.

Ms. Simpson stated that the CRA has worked diligently utilizing the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program to meet a very aggressive timeline. They also worked with M & M Developers, St. Joes Carpenters Society, and Camden Lutheran Housing among others on new housing construction. She noted that some of the new homes have sold for up to \$219,000.

There being no further business, on a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Ramirez and Ms. Hassett. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

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.



Kim Ehrlich, Sr. Governance & Outreach Officer, EDA
Assistant Secretary, ERB