

Garfield Redevelopment Agency

MINUTES

Monday, April 3, 2023

7:00 PM Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Garfield Redevelopment Agency meeting for Monday, April 3, 2023 was called to order at 7:16PM.

2. SECRETARY'S OPENING STATEMENT RE: SUNSHINE LAW

Notice of the time, date and place of this meeting has been provided at least 48 hours in advance and in accordance with the applicable New Jersey statutes: (1) by publication in The Herald News and The Record both of which are official newspapers of the City of Garfield; (2) by posting of the notice of meeting on the Community Bulletin Board at the municipal building; and (3) by filing a copy of the notice with the City Clerk.

3. FLAG SALUTE

4. ROLL CALL

In attendance were Vice-Chairman Amadio and Commissioners Delaney, Easom, & Scudillo, therefore, there was a quorum. Also, in attendance were: Erin Delaney – Redevelopment Agency Director & Secretary, Santo Alampi – Redevelopment Agency Attorney, Denise Ingui – Redevelopment Agency Assistant Secretary, Redevelopment Agency CFO – Dr. Giovanni Cusmano, and Stenographer Beth Calderone.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Delaney made a motion to approve the March 13, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Easom. The motions carried unanimously by those present.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

8. VOUCHERS

It was noted by Dr. Cusmano that there would be an amendment to the vouchers in order to be able to pay Ms. Calderone for her services this evening. Ms. Delaney also stated that Check #1581 should be removed and voided as it was previously paid and the City would be reimbursed directly from the vendor. Commissioner Easom made a motion to accept the vouchers presented by Dr. Cusmano, as amended, which was seconded by Commissioner Scudillo. The motions carried unanimously by those present.

9. RECOMMENDED ACTION BY COUNSEL

There was no recommended action by counsel.

10. PRESENTATION BY DMR ARCHITECTS

Ms. Delaney introduced Francis Reiner from DMR Architects to the Agency. She noted that Mr. Reiner is in attendance to discuss a project that has been proposed by Mayor Rigoglioso, however, the project would entail a feasibility study and an investigation study for an area in need of redevelopment, of which the City does not have the finances for. Ms. Delaney advised that, typically, the City fronts the money for investigation studies and is reimbursed by a developer once they are named and an escrow account is set up. However, in this particular case, the costs are higher than usual as a feasibility study is also needed.

Mr. Reiner discussed the project, of which he said several developers have expressed interest in, which would involve a new community center and residential/retail space along Midland Avenue from Krakow Street to Elizabeth Street. Mr. Reiner advised that the Bergen County Improvement Authority (BCIA) would fund the project/bond and that the PILOT payments received from the residential/retail property would be used to pay down the debt service to the BCIA. He went on to detail that until the feasibility study is done, economics cannot be estimated.

The Commissioners raised questions regarding whether or not discussions have been held with the entities currently operating at said locations. Mr. Reiner noted that the feasibility study would determine the exact square footage that is needed to support the library, Boys and Girls Club, senior center, and recreation center in the community building. If the study is approved, DMR Architects would have discussions with all entities about their programming needs. They also questioned who would be responsible for obtaining the two private properties. Mr. Reiner advised that the developer would likely incorporate space for the Dunkin' Donuts in their development and would acquire the remaining commercial property through negotiations. Ms. Delaney asked, given that the majority of the property is owned by the municipality and would be used by the developer, what would the City receive in return monetarily for their land. She noted that through the proposed plan with the BCIA, the City would essentially be funding the cost for the community center with no contribution from the developer. Mr. Reiner advised that this would have to be discussed with the named developer. Additionally, Ms. Delaney stated that the City has discussed going to the BCIA for a joint fire house/DPW building and inquired if the community center project would hinder BCIA approval for this project. Mr. Reiner advised that the BCIA would have to provide an answer on this question.

The Commissioners asked Dr. Cusmano if there are funds available to cover the costs, of which he stated he would need to look into. They requested they have the total balances of available funding, not including escrow accounts, at the next meeting before making a decision. They also asked if there is a chance that the Agency does not get refunded for the studies and Mr. Reiner advised that there could be if the project does not move forward and a developer is not named.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Delaney shared Commissioner D'Agostino's resignation letter for the record.

12. CITIZENS REMARKS

It was noted for the record that no members of the public were in attendance.

13. FUTURE MEETING

It was announced that the next meeting will be held on Monday, May 1, 2023.

14. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Amadio and seconded by Commissioner Easom to adjourn. The motions carried unanimously by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC
Redevelopment Agency Director/Secretary