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NEW BEDFORD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

June 7, 2018

6:00 P.M.

608 Pleasant Street, New Bedford, MA
2nd Floor Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES OF THE NEW BEDFORD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the Notice of Meeting (attached), a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the New Bedford Redevelopment Authority (NBRA) was held at 6:00PM on June 7, 2018, at 608 Pleasant Street, New Bedford, MA, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Present:

New Bedford Redevelopment Authority Board: David Kennedy, George Smith, Celia Britto

Staff:

Patrick J. Sullivan, Director, DPHCD, Kirsten Bryan, Acting City Planner, DPHCD

Guests:

None

1. Call to Order

Chair Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

2. Roll Call

Chair Kennedy called the roll. A quorum was present and voting throughout

3. Approval of Minutes

Chair Kennedy asked Mr. Smith and Ms. Britto if they were compelled to approve the minutes from the previous NBRA meeting held on March 20, 2017. Mr. Smith made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Britto. With all in favor, the minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting were approved.

Old Business:

There was discussion on a property located at 424 S. Front Street, a house located on the corner of S. Front Street and Blackmer Street. The house was acquired by the Redevelopment Authority, and to date has remained vacant. It was originally part of a plan to expand Blackmer Street to improve access to the Standard Time Field development. This topic prompted discussion among the board to develop a comprehensive inventory of properties owned by the Redevelopment Authority. Chair Kennedy stated that he had a list of properties, to which Director Patrick Sullivan encouraged Chair Kennedy to share the list with him and Ms. Bryan. Mr. Sullivan also mentioned that a GIS map could also be developed internally to visually display the properties within the NBRA's ownership.

New Business:

1) Update of Draft Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan

Mr. Sullivan provided a brief update on the status of the Draft Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan. He stated that comments submitted to the consultant have been synthesized into the Draft Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan. The draft document was being sent to the State DHCD to obtain feedback prior to a formal submission. Mr. Sullivan also explained that the consultants, Harriman Associates, would be providing a detailed presentation to the NBRA and the Planning Board to obtain input and provide feedback. This meeting would be provide an opportunity for both the NBRA and the Planning Board to participate in a public input process.

In reviewing the Draft Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan, Mr. Sullivan stated that the plan focused on Focus Area North, and Focus Area South. Upon a question from Mr. Smith regarding potential acquisitions, Mr. Sullivan stated that the Focus Area South identified, the Eversource and Sprague sites being listed in the potential acquisitions. And in Focus Area North, the former Revere Copper Site was listed as a potential acquisition. That designation would allow the NBRA to acquire the properties if necessary or desirous.

There was additional discussion among the board regarding the presentation that would be given by the consultant. Mr. Sullivan explained that the presentation would provide an overview of the executive summary, plan and goals with a question and answer component. In addressing when the board could expect a presentation from the consultants, Mr. Sullivan said that the presentation should take place in the near future.

2) Opportunity Zone Presentation

Director Patrick Sullivan provided an overview of Opportunity Zones spearheaded by New Jersey Senator Cory Booker and South Carolina Senator Tim Scott. Opportunity Zones are now a part of the federal tax reform law and aim to promote capital investment in low-income communities.

Mr. Sullivan explained that New Bedford selected four Census tracts to designate as opportunity zones (tracts ending in -1900, -1800, -1300 and -1200). In response to a question of Mr. Smith's regarding zoning, Mr. Sullivan stated that compliance with zoning is required. Chair Kennedy explained that the initiative was similar to the Economic Target Areas and would be very important in the city's waterfront areas. Mr. Sullivan shared a map of the city which included the tracts designated as Opportunity Zones.

3) Other Business

The board members discussed a potential date for the next meeting would be scheduled, and engaged in a discussion relative to establishing regularly scheduled meetings. The board expressed their interest in scheduling regular meetings on the first Wednesday of each month, beginning in August. As such, the next meeting was scheduled for August 1, 2018 at 6PM.

Following the scheduling of the August meeting, Chair Kennedy repeated that he would share his list of the NBRA-owned properties to which Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Bryan confirmed they would follow up on developing an inventory for the properties.

Without any further business, Chair Kennedy invited a motion to adjourn, which was made by Mr. Smith, and seconded by Ms. Britto. The meeting was adjourned at 6:48PM.