

Rochester Land Bank Corporation
Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2016
City Hall, Rm. #223-B
30 Church Street,
Rochester, NY 14614

Board Members Present: Andrea Guzzetta, Kim Jones, Gary Kirkmire, Dana Miller, Carol Wheeler

Board Members Absent: George Parker, Kate Washington

Non-Board Members Present: Margot Garcia, Maritza Mejias, Rianne Mitchell, Kathy Sheets, Scott Smith

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Carol Wheeler, Board Chair.

The minutes from the last meeting were distributed. Andrea Guzzetta moved that the minutes be approved; Gary Kirkmire seconded. The motion was approved by the board.

In the absence of George Parker, Carol Wheeler called for the election of a Secretary Pro tem. Gary Kirkmire nominated Andrea Guzzetta. No other nominations were made. Carol Wheeler then called the question and the board voted to elect Andrea Guzzetta as Secretary Pro tem.

The board then discussed Resolution No. 8 of 2016 to authorize donation of four properties to the City of Rochester. Gary Kirkmire asked if the board had discussed the properties before. Kathy Sheets explained that three of the properties had been acquired at the November tax foreclosure auction and the board had authorized acceptance of the fourth as a donation from Wells Fargo Bank at the April meeting. Dana Miller asked when the donation would go before City Council. Margot Garcia answered that the item was on the June City Council Agenda. Dana Miller made a motion to donate the properties to the City. Kim Jones seconded it. The board voted to approve the motion.

Next, the board discussed Resolution No. 9 of 2016 to accept donation of a property from the RHDFC. Kathy Sheets explained that 43 Sterling Street, the subject property, had originally been intended for use in the HOME Rochester program, but had become too deteriorated to be suitable. Dana Miller asked what the disposition plan for the property was. Kathy Sheets answered that the Board previously passed Resolution No. 2 of 2016 to include the property in its CRI grant demolition program provided the RHDFC transferred ownership to the Land Bank and added that the adjoining owner has expressed interest in purchasing the property as a side lot. Dana Miller asked whether demolition was the only disposition considered. Maritza Mejias explained that the property has a great deal of toxic mold. Dana Miller then asked whether the contamination in the house would create additional liability for the Land Bank. Gary Kirkmire explained that mold in the demolition debris is not considered to pose the same risk as something like asbestos. Gary Kirkmire moved that the Land Bank accept the donation of 43 Sterling Street. Andrea Guzzetta seconded the motion. The board voted to approve the motion.

The board next discussed the Land Bank's possible participation in the 2016 Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. Kathy Sheets explained that the Pulaski Library project is again the best fit for the categories of funding offered and has been encouraged by the City's Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development. The description of the project submitted to the Regional Economic Development Corporation (REDC) last year and a draft of the resolution that the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) requires be submitted with the application was distributed to the board. Carol Wheeler asked the source of the matching funds. Kathy Sheets answered that for the 2015 application, the City had committed \$500,000 and the Land Bank had passed a resolution to devote \$30,000. Carol Wheeler said that the City's Office of Innovation had approached her to find out if the Land Bank would be preparing a CFA application and, if so, for what project and what amount so as to coordinate the request to City Council. Andrea Guzzetta asked whether the Land Bank would submit its own application or if it would be a part of the City's application. Kathy Sheets explained that the Land Bank would be included in the City Council legislation authorizing application for funding because of the City's funding of the project, but that the Land Bank's application is separate from the City's. Kim Jones asked why the project wasn't funded last year. Kathy Sheets said that the feedback shared with her was that the application was unsuccessful because it did not identify an end user for the building. Unfortunately, the condition of the building makes it unsafe to show to prospective developers until the repairs that are the subject of the application are made. Dana Miller asked what makes the building unsafe. Kathy Sheets explained that the condition of the roof has resulted in continued water infiltration and the building now has a significant mold problem. Dana Miller asked if anyone has expressed any interest in the building. It would otherwise seem that investing so heavily in it might be an unwise use of funds. Kathy Sheets answered that there had been recent public interest in the building as two City Council members had contacted her. There has been some suggestion of an end use that would contribute to the identity of that portion of Hudson Avenue as an education corridor – Franklin High School and Head Start are located at the same intersection and there are also nearby charter schools. The Hudson Avenue Business Association identified the building as a neighborhood asset.

The 2015 application included drawings prepared by Providence Housing in response to the City's 2013 Request for Proposal. The drawings received tentative approval by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the OPRHP, but Providence had a change in leadership in the interim and decided not to pursue the project. The director of Home Leasing also stepped forward and said it would take on the project at a request from the City. Carol Wheeler said that the building was within the 14621 neighborhood and innovation area and is mentioned in the Northeast development plan. Carol Wheeler also mentioned that the former director of Providence Housing, who had had the drawings prepared, is now an independent consultant who might be willing to partner with the Land Bank to pursue some of the new multi-family housing funding at the state level to make the CFA application more viable. Kim Jones asked if there were another project worthy of submission that might have a better chance of being funded. Kathy Sheets explained that an analysis of the CFA funding opportunities available meant that this was the only one that coincided with the types of activities that are within the Land Bank's sphere. There is no funding available for residential capital improvements or for addressing non-residential structures in isolation from a downtown development plan. Carol Wheeler asked if there might be a way to position it as a transformative project. Kathy Sheets outlined the items included in the previous application – the demographic needs of the location, the disinvestment in the area, the building's inclusion in the National Register and its role with St. Stanislaus Church, which has a local historic designation, as a neighborhood anchor at that intersection. The application also mentioned the potential reuse that had been tentatively approved by SHPO. Andrea Guzzetta suggested it might be useful to reach out to the previously interested developers for letters of support. Carol Wheeler called for a vote on the draft resolution that would be included in the application. Kim Jones moved that the Land Bank submit a CFA application for stabilization and remediation of the

Pulaski Library per the terms of the resolution. Gary Kirkmire seconded the motion. The board approved Resolution No. 10 of 2016 authorizing the CFA application and accepting funds should they be awarded.

The next item on the agenda was the Ongoing Action Plan. Carol Wheeler noted that some of the discussion items listed needed updated target dates. Kathy Sheets suggested that the findings of the Risk Mitigation Working Group and the Board Self-Evaluation report be added to the agenda for the July meeting as that will be the beginning of the new fiscal year. Carol Wheeler recommended that the Project Development Committee be added to the agenda for the August meeting. Kim Jones suggested that the discussion about collaborating on development projects might benefit from advice from John Sidd at the June meeting. Kathy Sheets asked Land Bank staff to do some research to clarify what the NYS Grants Gateway expects to see in a Professional Development Plan. Carol Wheeler asked the staff to find out when early-bird registration for the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference ends.

Next, Kim Jones presented the Treasurer's Report and the CRI Grant Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.

ATTEST: 
George Parker – Secretary, Rochester Land Bank Corporation