GREATER SYRACUSE
LAND BANK

Minutes
Greater Syracuse Property Development Corporation
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
8:00 AM Tuesday, September 17, 2024
233 E. Washington Street; City Hall; iLab, 2nd floor
Syracuse, NY 13202

Board Members Present: Patrick Hogan, Nancy Quigg, Jonathan Link Logan, Michael LaFlair
Board Members Excused: Oceanna Fair
Others Present: Katelyn Wright, John Sidd, Shavel Edwards, Joel Kaigler, Luke Avery-Dougherty, Shannon Knickerbocker, Dave Rowe, Craig Swiecki, Cimone Jordan, County Legislator Maurice Brown

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I. Call to order
Pat Hogan called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

II. Roll Call
Mr. Hogan noted that all board members except for Oceanna Fair were present.

III. Proof of Notice
Mr. Hogan noted that public notice of the meeting had been properly posted.

IV. Minutes
Mike LaFlair moved to approve the minutes of the August 20 meeting. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 20, 2024 MEETING.**

V. Executive Summary & Financial Statements
Ms. Wright asked if there were any questions about the financial statements. There were none.

VI. New Business
A. Authorize Sale of Multiple Properties
Katelyn Wright summarized the purchase offers received. Jonathan Link Logan moved to authorize the sale of multiple properties. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF MULTIPLE PROPERTIES.**

B. Authorize Sale of 829 E. Hiawatha Blvd. to Valiant Real Estate USA Inc.
Ms. Wright directed the board's attention to an article describing the adjacent development planned by Valiant Real Estate USA Inc. and noted that it is being supported by SIDA and the City. She explained that they wish to purchase this property as a vacant lot for a price equal to the cost of demolition. Jonathan Link Logan asked what they plan to do with the lot afterwards and Ms. Wright noted that it seems they just want to eliminate the blighted buildings in front of their project and keep these lots as green space.

Jonathan Link Logan moved to authorize the Land Bank to sell 829 E. Hiawatha Blvd. to Valiant Real Estate USA Inc. for a price equal to the cost of demolition, contingent upon the Land Bank completing the demolition prior to closing. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO SELL 829 E. HIAWATHA BLVD. TO VALIANT REAL ESTATE USA INC. FOR A PRICE EQUAL TO THE COST OF DEMOLITION, CONTINGENT UPON THE LAND BANK COMPLETING THE DEMOLITION PRIOR TO CLOSING.**

C. Contract for Demolition of 829 E. Hiawatha Blvd.

Ms. Wright noted that they had put this project out to bid back in February and that they asked their contractors if they could still honor those prices. Scanlon increased his price by $1,000 due to increased tipping costs. The current prices are reflected in the executive summary. She explained that she was seeking authorization to contract with the lowest bidder – Crisafulli.

Nancy Quigg moved to authorize the Land Bank to contract with Crisafulli for the demolition of 829 E. Hiawatha Blvd. Mike LaFlair seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO CONTRACT WITH CRISAFULLI FOR THE DEMOLITION OF 829 E. HIAWATHA BLVD.**

D. Modify sale of 129-31 Baker Ave.

Ms. Wright explained that the board previously authorized them to sell 129-31 Baker to Doughlas Maragh as a side-lot, but in the interim he'd transferred his adjacent rental property into an LLC owned by him and his son-in-law Marlon Simmons. Side-lots must be held in the same name as the adjacent property in order for the resub map to be recorded and so they need the board's authorization to sell to both individuals. She was therefore seeking to modify their contract and authorize the sale to 127 Baker LLC, of which Doughlas Maragh and Marlon Simmons are the only two members.

Mike LaFlair moved to authorize the Land Bank to modify the terms of the sale of 129-31 Baker Ave. as described above. Jonathan Link Logan seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO MODIFY THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT TO SELL 129-31 BAKER AVE AS DESCRIBED.**

E. Authorize the Land Bank to contract for stabilization work at 201 W. Kennedy St.

Ms. Wright explained the unusual scope of work and the rain screen wall system planned for this address and summarized the bids received. She recommended the board authorize the Land Bank to contract with Randy Vadala for the window-related tasks, JK Construction for the porch, and G&C Construction for the siding.

Nancy Quigg moved to authorize the Land Bank to contract with multiple vendors for stabilization work at 201 W. Kennedy St. per the staff's recommendation. Mike LaFlair seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO CONTRACT WITH MULTIPLE VENDORS FOR STABILIZATION WORK AT 201 W. KENNEDY ST. PER THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION.**

F. Purchase offer from Women's Economic Institute for properties on South Ave.

Ms. Wright reminded the board that in December 2021 they accepted an offer from the Women's Economic Institute (WEI) to buy several properties on South Ave. where they planned to use 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to build about 60 units of senior apartments in two buildings with commercial on the ground floor. They applied with a co-developer who was experienced with real estate development and with utilizing LIHTCs. The contract was signed in April 2022, giving WEI 2 years to secure a LIHTC award. In April 2024, at the end of those two years, we became aware that WEI had cut ties with that co-developer and not secured a new one and had not completed the following due diligence items required by their contract:

- *Buyer shall provide evidence of financial ability to complete the Development Plan and* [WEI had yet to submit a complete application for LIHTCs]
- *obtain necessary Site Plan approval(s) on or before the end of the Due Diligence Period or Seller may cancel this Contract at Seller's option by written notice* [WEI had not applied for site plan approvals]

So in May 2024 the board voted to terminate the contract with WEI. At that time we told them that this didn't preclude them from applying again, but that to consider an offer we would need to see that they have developed a complete LIHTC application and brought more experienced practitioners onto their team.

Ms. Wright explained that WEI has since secured an experienced co-developer (although they've never done any upstate projects), a GC, an architect, and a property manager, but their LIHTC application is incomplete and the deadline to apply is the day after this board meeting.

After some discussion all board members present agreed that since there was no complete LIHTC application there was not a complete proposal for them to take action on at this time.

Ms. Wright also reminded the board that they had asked her to leave these properties off the market until September in case WEI planned to submit an application for the next LIHTC round. After some discussion the board instructed Ms. Wright to put the properties back on the market.

VII. Discussion

A. 2025 Funding Request submitted to Onondaga County

Ms. Wright shared a memo that Chairman Pat Hogan sent to County Executive Ryan McMahon in August. She explained that the County Executive's draft budget has been submitted to the legislature and it includes the same amount for the Land Bank that they received in recent years - $250,000. She asked County Legislator Mo Brown if he had any additional insight. He indicated that he and a few other legislators are advocating for a budget amendment to increase the amount budgeted for the Land Bank.

B. Purchase 211 E. Raynor, 1216 and 1218-20 S Salina Street from SIDA

Ms. Wright explained that she has been discussing these lots with SIDA and that they plan to order appraisals, which they are required to do prior to a sale. Ms. Wright suggested that it would likely make sense for the Land Bank to make an offer equal to the appraised value, but that she will keep the board apprised as those appraisals come in. She referred to maps in their agenda packet showing how each parcel would be part of a larger site assemblage. After some discussion the board agreed that pursuing these assemblages was in the Land Bank's interest.

C. Apply for LBI funds

Ms. Wright explained that they have now spent 75% of their current LBI grant and are eligible to apply for more. She reminded the board that last month they discussed making their next LBI application just for new construction to support their AHOP plans with Jubilee, but that HCR staff indicated a possible willingness to run two LBI contracts concurrently if they are for different purposes and encouraged them to apply for more demolition and stabilization now and then to apply for new construction if AHOP is awarded. AHOP program staff indicated that this would be acceptable to apply for AHOP without necessarily having the LBI match secured yet at the time of application. With that in mind, Ms. Wright indicated that they plan to apply for the $2 million maximum request projecting $1,140,000 for demolitions and $760,000 for stabilizations and $100,000 for program delivery. After some discussion the board agreed that this was a good approach.

D. Apply for NYS HOME funds

Ms. Wright indicated that renovation specs for the four homes listed in their packets are currently out to bid and that they plan to apply to NYS HCR for HOME funds to subsidize these renovations once those numbers come in. She reminded the board that these would then be sold move-in ready to owner-occupant buyers. She indicated that they may apply for up to $250,000/house in HOME funding. All agreed this was a good course of action assuming the bids come back showing that they can be done with $250,000/house or less.

E. Plans to apply for EPA Cleanup Grant(s) this fall

Ms. Wright explained that after recent further discussion with the EPA and their legal counsel, they decided they might not be ready to apply for a cleanup grant for 500 Hawley Ave., commonly known as Patrick's Dry Cleaners, because they would have to take title prior to submitting the grant application and they don't yet have sufficient assurance from the EPA that they won't try to recover cost of interim removals and testing from the City or the Land Bank or explaining who might be on the hook for the cost of testing and remediation at neighboring properties. So, they are instead planning to apply for two properties the Land Bank already owns. 917 Montgomery, a former auto repair shop, needs soil remediation and underground tank removal. 541 Seymour (commonly known as the Consolidated Industries Building), a 35,000 sq. ft. manufacturing building, requires demolition to complete soil remediation under the foundation slab; they will apply for funds to cover the (costly) demolition and soil remediation. All board members present agreed with these plans for both properties.

VIII. 211 Ashworth Place

Mike LaFlair moved to enter executive session to discuss current litigation. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CURRENT LITIGATION AT 8:40 AM.**

Jonathan Link Logan moved to authorize the Land Bank to settle current litigation against the Land Bank related to property located at 211 Ashworth Place in the City of Syracuse for $190,000 contingent upon the Land Bank selling 211 Ashworth Place for at least $263,000 within one year. Nancy Quigg seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO AUTHORIZE THE LAND BANK TO SETTLE THIS LITIGATION FOR $190,000 CONTINGENT UPON THE LAND BANK SELLING 211 ASHWORTH PLACE FOR AT LEAST $263,000 WITHIN ONE YEAR.**

Jonathan Link Logan moved to leave executive session and resume regular session. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO LEAVE EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RESUME REGULAR SESSION AT 8:56 AM.**

Jonathan Link Logan reported that action was taken in executive session and that minutes would be available in accordance with New York Public Officers Law.

IX. Adjournment

Jonathan Link Logan moved to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Quigg seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:57 AM.**