

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Housing Opportunity Fund Advisory Board of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, Conference Call.

April 2, 2020 – 9:00 A.M., E.S.T.

Members Present: Messrs. J. Bey, K. Build-Hudson, J. Jackson, M. Lane, M. Masterson, D. Tillman
Mmes. L. Andrews, J. Deming, T. Kail-Smith, D. Walker, A. Walnoha, K. Ware-Seabron, M. Winters

Members Absent: E. Johnson, S. Su, & S. Tilghman

Staff Present: Messrs. C. Alcorn, J. Carter, D. Geiger, B. Morgan, Mmes. V. Hage, J. Smith Perry, G. Taylor

A. Public Comment

Celeste Scott, Pittsburgh United asked how the HSP COVID-19 is progressing and how people are accessing those funds. Also, as the state of emergency has been extended, is it possible to receive more money for this fund?

B. Roll Call

Ms. Smith Perry called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

C. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from the March 5, 2020 Meeting

The minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on March 5, 2020 were approved as written and previously distributed.

D. Flats on Forward - Recommend the approval of Rental Gap Program (RGP) funding in the amount of up to \$585,000 for the development of Flats on Forward in Squirrel Hill. The deed restrictions will be tied to 5 units at or below 30% AMI and 17 units at or below 50% AMI. The commitment will expire on August 2, 2020.

Staff Report

This project is a 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) project that will provide a total of 43 units of affordable housing at or below 60% AMI. There will also be 10,000 square feet of leasable commercial space. The developer is Flats on Forward, LP consisting of ACTION-Housing, Inc. ACTION-Housing is also the non-profit applicant.

Mr. Alcorn stated that the development is a mixed-use building with 43 apartments all at or below 60% AMI. The first floor will be 10,000 square feet of retail commercial space. The project has been brought before the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition and they support the project. 25% of the units will go to individuals with disabilities. There will be 5 units will be at or below 30% AMI, 17 units will be at or below 50% and the remaining 21 units will be at or below 60% AMI. The amount requested from the HOF Rental Gap Program is \$585,000 which will be paired with a \$665,000 RHDIP loan from the URA. The affordability term is 40 years. The LIHTC credit equity provider is National Equity Fund Inc. but there will be other sources going into the total. Action Housing's management company, "Supportive Housing Management

Services” will provide supportive services. In addition, there will be a preference for 25% of the units to be rented to individuals with disabilities and those units will receive additional supportive services through a partnership with Achieva.

Linda Metropulos, Action Housing was on the conference call.

Ms. Metropulos stated that Action Housing is excited to be able to construct a building next to Krause Commons which is very much in demand. This is a really important building in the neighborhood, and it will be able to provide amenities and active services to the community.

Ms. Deming asked about the status of the other funding sources.

Ms. Metropulos stated that the \$1,000,000 RACP funding was received and the \$1,000,000 PHFA PHARE funds were approved. Action Housing is contributing a good portion of the developer fee and there are a few things still pending. However, Action Housing is optimistic that all the sources will be approved in the next few months.

RECOMMENDATION 9 (2020)

Joanna Deming made the motion for D. Flats on Forward - Recommend the approval of Rental Gap Program (RGP) funding in the amount of up to \$585,000 for the development of Flats on Forward in Squirrel Hill. The deed restrictions will be tied to 5 units at or below 30% AMI and 17 units at or below 50% AMI. The commitment will expire on August 2, 2020. Adrienne Walnoha seconded. Lena Andrews, Jerome Jackson, Derrick Tillman abstained in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy.

E. North Negley Residences – Recommend the approval of Rental Gap Program (RGP) funding in the amount of up to \$585,230 for the development of North Negley Residences in Garfield. The deed restrictions will be tied to 6 units at or below 30% AMI and 17 units at or below 50% AMI. The commitment will expire on August 2, 2020.

Staff Report

The project is a 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) redevelopment that consists of the rehabilitation and renovation of the B’Nai Israel Synagogue located at 327 N. Negley Ave. into forty-five (45) total units. Of the 45 units, 38 will be affordable to households at or below 60% AMI. The developer is 327 NN LLC consisting of Catalyst Communities LLC. The nonprofit applicant for the HOF funding is Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation.

Mr. Morgan stated that Catalyst Communities is requesting \$585,230 in HOF Rental Gap Program (RGP) funds for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the B’Nai Israel Synagogue. The project is broken up into two phases. Phase I includes the addition of two stories to the existing two-story classroom wings for the construction of 45 total units, thirty-eight units will be affordable at or below 60% AMI. The second phase will focus on the rehabilitation of the rotunda into community servicing offices and a community gathering space.

There will be 6 units at or below 30% AMI, 17 units at or below 50% AMI and 15 units at or below 60% AMI and the remaining 7 units will be at market rate. The HOF RGP loan is at a 0% interest rate for a term of 30 years and the units will remain affordable for a term of 40 years. The cashflow received by the URA

will be split with a URA RHDIP loan in the amount of \$414,770. Currently, the 50% cashflow determination is still under discussion with Catalyst Communities as PHFA PHARE funds and HACP funds are part of the project.

Tamara Dudukovich, Catalyst Communities and Rick Swartz, Bloomfield Garfield Corporation were on the conference call.

Ms. Dudukovich stated that Catalyst Communities is really excited to be advancing this project with Beacon Communities which will serve as the property manager and service provider. It is a spectacular structure that will be repurposed for housing.

There are several significant things to point out. One is the participation of the HACP in providing 10 project-based voucher units for this development. The other is that the development team received the PHFA Innovation and Design award last year. Also, the participation of the Bloomfield Garfield Corporation will help to create a community serving space that speaks to the values and principles pertaining to sustainability and affordability.

Mr. Swartz stated that BGC is very pleased with the project that Beacon Communities and Catalyst Communities have brought to the community. The community space that will be created in the vacant synagogue sanctuary is anticipated to be a space unlike anything else in the East End. The vision is for a multi-cultural center that would be open and inviting to people of all walks of life to be able to have a number of types of events at the center. The design that the organizations sponsored was a major step in getting the community's support for the project. This project will benefit not only people who are looking for affordable housing, but also the Negley Avenue Corridor.

RECOMMENDATION 10 (2020)

Mark Masterson made the motion for E. North Negley Residences – Recommend the approval of Rental Gap Program (RGP) funding in the amount of up to \$585,230 for the development of North Negley Residences in Garfield. The deed restrictions will be tied to 6 units at or below 30% AMI and 17 units at or below 50% AMI. The commitment will expire on August 2, 2020. Megan Winters seconded. Lena Andrews, Jerome Jackson, and Derrick Tillman abstained in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy.

F. Update regarding the April 30th Housing Event and the 2019 Annual Report

Staff Report

Ms. Smith Perry stated that the April 30 Housing Event has been postponed and staff are not sure when it will be rescheduled due to the stay at home order. An RFP was sent to the 11 firms that were on the slate for the annual report. However, due to the COVID-19 issue, there wasn't much response. Therefore, the RFP has been extended until April 6. The 2019 annual report needs to be completed by June 30, 2020.

G. Programmatic Updates, Expenditures, and Impacts

Staff Report

Ms. Smith Perry stated a column was added for the 2020 funds in the programmatic updates because the allocation plan has been approved. Also, the FSDP commitment numbers for Manchester Row were omitted from last month's report and have been added this month. In addition, the two RGP awards that were presented today fully allocated the remainder of the 2019 RGP available funding. The RGP RFP will be taken off of the website and a 2020 RGP RFP will be issued over the summer.

A few weeks ago, there was an emergency conference call made to the Board members to move \$300,000 of the Demonstration Program funds to a special portion of the HSP for COVID-19 victims. The Urban League of Pittsburgh is administering the program.

Mr. Carter stated in the first week of the HSP COVID-19 program, the Urban League received 500 applications for assistance. Of that number, 215 were city residents. There is a significant number who were outside of the city or that did not qualify. Today, an automated text message was sent to the 215 city residents relaying what the next steps are. The non-city residents were informed that they do not qualify. Staff has been working to reach out to organizations that support immigrants to ensure that there is global access to the program.

Ms. Smith Perry stated in the federal stimulus package, there is some funding for homeless prevention. There have been discussions about how the flow of the funding from the federal government should be set up for the agencies that need funds to provide assistance.

Mr. Tillman asked if there is another resource for people who live outside of the city, and are they being connected to that resource if available?

Council President Kail Smith stated there have been a lot of requests from people living outside the city for assistance. Can there be a discussion with the county about what route people can take and can that information be shared with the public?

Ms. Smith Perry will have a discussion with Allegheny County and the Dept. of Human Services and report back to the board on those conversations.

Ms. Hage stated that as of April 1, the 211 line with the United Way is up and running. 211 will serve as the entrance point for the HSP program. If a caller is not eligible for the HSP program, they will receive additional resources from 211. Anyone calling in for the COVID-19 HSP program will be referred to the Urban League.

Ms. Deming asked how COVID-19 is affecting the other programs.

Ms. Smith Perry stated that the City has temporarily suspended construction inspections and construction in general. It is affecting the home repair programs a little bit. If people are in an emergency situation, they are still being moved forward so that the project will be ready for construction once the stay at home order is over.

Mr. Carter stated there are 30 HAP projects that will be ready when operations are back up. The one barrier has been in notarizing documents, but a solution has potentially been found for that issue. The construction band is limiting what can be done, but some contractors are applying for waivers. At present one of the contractors has been granted a waiver.

H. Announcement – The April HOF Advisory Board Meeting will be held in City Council Chambers on May 7, 2020.

I. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.