

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Housing Opportunity Fund Advisory Board of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, City of Pittsburgh YouTube channel.

July 2, 2020 – 9:00 A.M., E.S.T.

Members Present: Messrs. K. Build-Hudson, J. Jackson, M. Lane, D. Tillman
Mmes. L. Andrews, J. Deming, S. Tilghman, A. Walnoha, K. Ware-Seabron, M. Winters

Members Absent: J. Bey, E. Johnson, T. Kail-Smith, M. Masterson, S. Su (resigned) & D. Walker

Staff Present: Messrs. J. Belton, J. Carter, D. Geiger, E. Miller, P. Robinson. Mmes. B. Benjamin, V. Hage, D. Hilmer, S. Madden, S. Shore, J. Smith Perry, G. Taylor

A. Public Comment

Celeste Scott, a community liaison representative for Pittsburgh United and Pittsburghers for Urban Transit thanked the staff for coming to the recent meeting with the CDCs, community groups and community members and hopes to be able to continue that communication. In addition, they would like to continue to advocate and make the programs successful for the people that they are meant to impact.

B. Roll Call

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

C. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from the June 4, 2020 Meeting

The minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on June 4, 2020 were approved as written and previously distributed.

D. Presentation by the CMU CREATE Lab

Anne Wright from CMU CREATE Lab stated the CREATE Lab is a community technology empowerment lab that works with various community groups in different ways. The project called EarthTime is a demographic mapping and community engagement tool. Ms. Wright gave a presentation about the tool. At the end of the presentation the Advisory Board asked questions.

Ms. Walnoha asked how the HOF would be able to use this information for planning moving forward?

Ms. Wright can work with someone to help them to use the tools and learn what there is available. Also, there is the potential of starting up a data sharing agreement that would allow a more direct look at the impacts of the HOF programs.

Ms. Smith Perry stated the URA and HOF are planning to work with Ms. Wright and will share their data.

E. Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) Program Administrators– Recommend the approval of the contract amendments for administrators for the HSP / HSP-COVID Programs.

Staff Report

Mr. Carter stated that contract amendments are being requested for Hilltop Alliance and Action Housing to award them 2019 allocations. They have both finished their 2018 allocations and this will allow them to work with projects that are in their pipeline. The request is for a \$300,000 increase for Hilltop Alliance and a \$350,000 increase for Action Housing.

RECOMMENDATION 13 (2020)

Joanna Deming made the motion for E. Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) Program Administrators—Recommend the approval of the contract amendments for administrators for the HSP / HSP-COVID Programs. Jerome Jackson seconded. Lena Andrews and Derrick Tillman abstained in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy. Motion carried.

- F. For-Sale Development Program (FSDP) Predevelopment Loan in the amount of \$ 45,000 for the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation / Larimer Consensus Group For-Sale Development in Larimer**

Staff Report

Mr. Miller stated that the request is for a \$45,000 predevelopment loan that the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) would use for design development, acquisition, and if necessary, engineering and other tasks necessary for a construction closing in early 2021. The units are expected to be completed in 2021. They are partnering with the Larimer Consensus Group (LCG) on this project. LCGs role specifically has been from a fundraising aspect and as they move forward, they will be consultants for select contractors. The term of the loan is 0% interest rate with an affordability period of 10 years.

In the For-Sale Development Program guidelines, as the funds are structured as a loan and are going to be paid back, they are subject to a 10-year deed restriction. The deed restriction will be on the two units for 10 years. The total pre-development costs are \$90,000. Outside of the \$45,000 FSDP loan, the PHDC has a line of credit where they will obtain \$25,000 to fund the predevelopment uses and also in conjunction with a LCG request of \$20,000 from Bridgeway for a pre-development grant that is expected to be awarded in the month of July. In discussions with PHDC if the grant from Bridgeway is not received, PHDC will be able to draw from a separate line of credit. This project will be subject to MWBE protocols as per URA standards.

Mr. Lane asked what the approximate asking price will be for the units. Also, as the loan will be affordable for 10 years, are there other covenants that will keep it affordable longer or is the goal to have it affordable for 10 years?

Mr. Belton stated that an asking price has not been set, but it the intention to make the units affordable to households at 80% AMI. The goal is to have the affordability period for 10 years.

Ms. Tilghman asked in other situations where there is a 99-year affordability period and a low-income buyer is selling the home, how long do they have to wait to find another low-income buyer before they can sell their unit? For a low-income buyer, their home is the way that they are earning wealth for themselves and their families.

Ms. Smith Perry stated that the legislation does not identify what a payoff calculation can be for a homeowner and how much the sales price can increase. It is a question that needs to be addressed and may be one where the developers should identify the payoff calculation upfront.

Ms. Ware-Seabron asked how it is determined whether a project will be a loan or a grant.

Ms. Smith Perry stated for the For-Sale development in Larimer is part of the TRID in East Liberty and Bakery Square. It is anticipated that the TRID proceeds will be able to pay off the loan. The HOF funds were needed two months prior to receiving the TRID funds.

RECOMMENDATION 14 (2020)

Sonya Tilghman made the motion for F. For-Sale Development Program (FSDP) Predevelopment Loan in the amount of \$45,000 for the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation / Larimer Consensus Group For-Sale Development in Larimer. Megan Winters seconded. Lena Andrews, Jerome Jackson and Derrick Tillman abstained in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy. Motion carried.

G. Update regarding the combining of the Rental Housing Development Improvement Program and the Rental Gap Program Guidelines

Staff Report

Ms. Smith Perry stated that the Rental Gap Program (RGP) guidelines will be revised to incorporate the URA Rental Housing Development Improvement Program (RHDIP) for a streamlined affordable multi-family financing product. The new combined guidelines will be presented at the URA Board meeting.

Ms. Deming asked if there is anything that the Advisory Board should be aware of with the change.

Ms. Smith Perry stated there were no significant changes made to original RGP guidelines that the HOF Advisory Board approved but small clarifications needed to be added because RHDIP and RGP had different parameters. There are still some differences to the funding parameters based on funding source.

H. Recommend the Approval of Omicello to facilitate the Community Ambassador Program

Staff Report

Mr. Carter stated approval is being requested to enter a contract with Omicello to administer the Community Ambassador Program service for HSP. When planning the Community Ambassador Program, it was determined that there needed to be a lead agency to be the intermediary to help manage the service. In terms of procurement, three organizations were approached that had the capacity and similar services and would be able to start services within a few weeks. Only Omicello had the capacity and

willingness to take on this project at a very quick turnaround time. Omicello will be managing the Community Ambassador Program utilizing training, administering the applications for the ambassadors and taking on the fiduciary role. The URA will be a support advisor throughout the process. The recommendation being presented is \$150,000 HOF funding and \$50,000 CDBG Coronavirus funding for a total of \$200,000. This full amount includes money for Omicello to administer the program as well as funding for the Community Ambassador Program.

Ms. Walnoha disclosed that she is employed by Omicello and will recuse from the vote. Omicello's role will be to act as the fiduciary and make sure that the reports are prepared, and the data is provided to the City. In addition, they will provide direct support mentoring and training engagement with the ambassadors themselves. The intent is to make sure that Omicello is supporting the ambassadors and growing their infrastructure not only for outreach engagement, but to prepare them to take on more roles.

RECOMMENDATION 15 (2020)

Derrick Tillman made the motion for H. Recommend the Approval of Omicello to facilitate the Community Ambassador Program. Megan Winters seconded. Lena Andrews and Adrienne Walnoha abstained in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy. Motion carried.

I. Presentation Regarding the Current Status of the Housing Stabilization Program

Staff Report

Breanna Benjamin stated that an additional 7 providers have been added to the program for the Housing Stabilization Program which brings the total to 12. Two of those providers specialize in certain populations. The Veterans Leadership Program assist renters who identify as veterans, and the Jewish Family and Community Services help residents who identify as either an immigrant or refugee or speak English as a second language. Ms. Benjamin and Jeremy Carter presented PowerPoint slides describing the HSP program and the changes made to the program due to COVID-19. They also discussed the Community Ambassador program and the new eviction prevention portion HSP. After the presentation, Advisory Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Ms. Deming asked if the ambassadors get paid based on successful applications or completed applications.

Mr. Carter stated the ambassadors will get paid three ways. One will be a small grant upfront so that they can attend the trainings between Omicello and the URA. The second part is they will get a monthly fee that covers coordination of invoices. Then they will get paid per complete application and Omicello will determine that based on a checklist.

Mr. Build-Hudson asked if someone called 211 and has an COVID issue, is the HSP funding available immediately?

Mr. Carter stated that both HOF and COVID funding is currently available. Another component of the HSP is the Eviction Prevention program. There have been conversations with the Housing Court and the Pittsburgh Foundation for the development of a rapid response system to meet the impending eviction moratorium. The referral process is being streamlined and the Housing Court will be able to provide the

information. However, 211 will still have to be contacted for centralized intake information but the client will be referred directly to the YWCA or Action Housing. The goal of the eviction prevention program is for the agencies to deliver eligibility status within three days of receiving a referral with the hope of issuing a payment within 10 days. Funding is being provided by the Pittsburgh Foundation.

J. Update regarding the Chair Nomination Process and the Need for Advisory Board By-Laws

Staff Report

Ms. Smith Perry stated there was a phone call with board members who had volunteered to be on the Nominating Committee to discuss the need for a Chair position earlier in the week. This included Advisory Board members Knowledge Build-Hudson, Jerome Jackson, Mark Masterson, Derrick Tillman & Megan Winters. HR&A Advisors will be contacted to see if they can help with developing bylaws and either contract with them or draft bylaws internally. The goal is to have the bylaws in draft form for the August board meeting or perhaps September at the latest. If Advisory Board members feel that they can take on the role of the Chair, they can self-nominate. Also, there is a need for more specific committees to address items such as the For-Sale Development Program and the 99-year deed restriction, race and how the programs can help to reverse some past and current issues, the Rental Gap Program and the Housing Stabilization Program.

K. Additional Updates

Staff Report

Mr. Carter stated that the Roof a Thon which was originally scheduled for April had to be rescheduled for June and is well underway. The Roof A Thon was partly funded by Wells Fargo who contributed a \$5,000 grant per household for the roof cost. Each household received an average of \$30,000-35,000 in financing for home repairs and their roof. To date, five projects have been completed and nineteen will finish up in the next two weeks. By mid-July, 24 city residents will have brand new roofs.

Ms. Walnoha asked if there was a specific neighborhood that was heavily impacted or did the Roof-A-Thon cover the whole city.

Mr. Carter stated that 8 out of 9 council districts were served. There were more in District 9 which disproportionately has more homeowners that has roofing issues. The households were picked from the existing HAP waiting list for this program who identified roofing as their major need.

Ms. Hage stated that a draft of the Annual Report was sent to the Advisory Board members. If there are any additional feedback or edits for the annual report, please send an email ASAP. There will be a digital final version of the report ready by the URA's Board meeting.

L. Programmatic Expenditures and Impacts

Staff Report

Ms. Hage stated all the consumer programs are touching all the council districts throughout the City of Pittsburgh. In the HSP program, 250 households have been completed and 230 are in the process. With the addition of the seven service providers, it is hoped to improve capacity substantially in the coming months.

M. Announcement – The next HOF Advisory Board meeting will be held via Zoom on August 6, 2020

N. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.