Minutes of the Hybrid Regular Board Meeting of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh.

March 13, 2025 – 2:00 P.M., E.S.T.

Members Present: Chintalapalli, Lavelle, Williamson, Powell, Connelly

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Nemani-Stanger, Link, Geiger, Diersen, Wasler, DiBernardo, Clayton, Schacht and Bohince

Chair Chintalapalli called the Regular Meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

## 1. General

- a. Roll Call
- b. Approval of the February 13, 2025, URA Annual/Regular Board Meeting Minutes

#### 2. Public Comments

- a. Reverand Lisa Richbourg Pilgrim Baptist Church, Hill District Collaborative, presented her concerns about the Greater Hill District Reinvestment Fund and requested for its release.
- b. Dr. Kimberly Ellis, Director of Community Arts and Culture, Buccini Pollin Group presented her concerns regarding the Hill CDC development review process.
- c. Megan Hammond, Executive Director, of the Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh, presented that the URA Board recognizes the fair housing protections within the City of Pittsburgh City Code and requested that they remain unchanged regardless of revisions that are occurring in housing related policies and procedures elsewhere.

#### 3. Announcements

- a. Chair Chintalapalli announced that an Executive Session was held on March 13, 2025, regarding legal and personnel matters.
- b. Registration closes this Friday, March 14, 2025, for the Grow America HD420 Rental Housing Development Finance training scheduled for March 17-21, 2025, registration for the ED201 Real Estate Finance Training, is open until April 23, 2025, and scheduled for April 28-May 2, 2025.
- c. Applications for the Housing Opportunity Fund Demonstration Program open on Friday, March 14, 2025.



#### 4. Upper Hill District – FSDP Grant – 3426 Webster Avenue

a. Authorization to enter into a For-Sale Development Program Grant Agreement with Amani Christian Community Development Corporation, or a related entity, in an amount of up to \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of 3426 Webster Avenue in the Upper Hill District neighborhood, 5<sup>th</sup> Ward.

Ms. Nemani-Stanger requested Board approval of the above item

David DiBernardo, Lending Analyst, Residential Lending Department presented that authorization is requested to enter into a For-Sale Development Program (FSDP) grant agreement with Amani Christian Community Development Corporation (Amani) for the rehabilitation of a single-family home in the Upper Hill District neighborhood.

Amani took possession of this three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bathroom house in the winter of 2022-2023. Since then, they have completed emergency stabilization repairs including full roof replacement, gutting, and mold remediation throughout the building. With this board approval, closing is planned for early April 2025. Construction began in December 2024 and will be completed by May 2025. It is anticipated that a family will be able to purchase and move into the home by early summer 2025. The house will be sold for \$160,000 to a family earning at or below 80% of Pittsburgh Area Median Income (AMI).

URA financing will be available to the future homebuyer through either the Housing Recovery Program-Developer (HRP-D) or the OwnPGH Homeownership Program (OwnPGH).

| Borrower/Developer:                         | Amani Christian Community Development Corporation   |           |  |  |
|---|---|-----------|--|--|
| Project Location:                           | 3426 Webster Avenue   |           |  |  |
| Neighborhood:                               | Upper Hill District   |           |  |  |
| Council District:                           | 6   |           |  |  |
| Preliminary Authority Financing for Review: | \$100,000 FSDP Grant – Sourced with Affordable Housing Bond proceeds  |           |  |  |
| Collateral:                                 | Declaration of Restrictive Covenants requiring the single unit remain affordable at 80% of AMI for 25 years |           |  |  |
| Proposed Program Sources:                   | \$100,000 Affordable Housing Bond   |           |  |  |
| MWBE:                                       | Narrative Approved  |           |  |  |
| Commitment Expiration Date:                 | December 31, 2025   |           |  |  |
| Total Units:                                | One three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bathroom house  |           |  |  |
| Affordable Units:                           | One unit affordable at or below 80% of AMI  |           |  |  |
| Sources of Funds                            |   |           |  |  |
| Community Growth Fund Loan                  |   | \$144,000 |  |  |
| PHFA PHARE                                  |   | \$122,191 |  |  |
| URA FSDP Grant                              |   | \$100,000 |  |  |
| Transactions Fee                            |   | \$16,000  |  |  |
| Total Project Financing                     |   | \$382,191 |  |  |
| Uses of Funds                               |   |           |  |  |
| Construction Costs                          |   | \$250,000 |  |  |
| Acquisition Costs                           |   | \$46,216  |  |  |

| Developer Fee                          | \$49,000  |
|--|-----------|
| Financing Charges and Transaction Fees | \$36,975  |
| Total Project Costs                    | \$382,191 |

Amani Christian Community Development Corporation is a Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation, with a mailing address of 713 Clarissa Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Principal Name: Reverend James L. Walls, Executive Director

Upon a motion to approve by Mr. Lavelle seconded by Mr. Williamson and unanimously carried, the following resolution was adopted:

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 15 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That a grant with Amani Christian Community Development Corporation, or a related entity, for the rehabilitation of 3426 Webster Avenue in the Upper Hill District neighborhood,5<sup>th</sup> Ward, in an amount up to \$100,000 is hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer, and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority is authorized to execute a grant agreement therefor, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

#### 5. Allentown and Knoxville – FSDP Grant – Hilltop Alliance Rehabilitation for Resale

a. Authorization to enter into a For-Sale Development Program Grant Agreement with Hilltop Alliance, or a related entity, in an amount of up to \$255,735 for the rehabilitation of 11 E. Amanda Avenue, 954 Industry Street, and 922 Manton Way in the Allentown neighborhood, 18<sup>th</sup> Ward, and 424 Suncrest Street in the Knoxville neighborhood, 30<sup>th</sup> Ward.

Ms. Nemani-Stanger requested Board approval of the above item

Jared Clayton, Housing Lending Analyst, Residential Lending Investments, presented that this request is for authorization to enter into a For-Sale Development Program Grant Agreement with Hilltop Alliance, or a related entity, in an amount of up to \$255,735 for the rehabilitation of 11 E. Amanda Avenue, 954 Industry Street, and 922 Manton Way in the Allentown neighborhood, 18th Ward, and 424 Suncrest Street in the Knoxville neighborhood, 30<sup>th</sup> Ward.

The proposed rehabilitation project aims to revitalize four vacant properties in the Hilltop community, transforming them into safe and affordable housing options for qualifying applicants at or below 80% of the AMI in perpetuity. This project will deliver one two-bedroom unit, and three three-bedroom units and is part of the larger Rehab for Resale Program that has gained community respect for its commitment to transforming communities through affordable housing rehabilitation. Hilltop Alliance is comprised of 11 different coordinating, community-based organizations. Community feedback from Allentown Community Development Corporation (ACDC) and the Knoxville Community Council (KCC) are guiding every step of this project.

This FSDP grant will finance the costs related to the acquisition and renovation of the homes. Construction is planned to begin in April 2025 and be completed in October 2025.

To ensure these for-sale houses are affordable to households earning less than 80% of AMI, \$160,000 (up to \$40,000 each) in funding is allocated for financing through the URA's HRP-D and/or OwnPGH programs.

| Borrower/Developer:              | Hilltop Alliance   |                                   |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Project Location:                | 11 E. Amanda Avenue, 424 Suncrest Street, 954 Industry Street, and 922                           |                                   |  |  |  |
|                                  | Manton Way   |                                   |  |  |  |
| Neighborhood:                    | Allentown and Knoxville  |                                   |  |  |  |
| <b>Council District:</b>         | 3  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Preliminary                      | \$255,735 For-Sale Development Program grant sourced with Housing                                |                                   |  |  |  |
| Authority Financing              | Opportunity Fund   |                                   |  |  |  |
| for Review:                      | ,  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Collateral:                      | Declaration of Restrictive Covenants requiring 4 units at or below 80% of AMI                    |                                   |  |  |  |
|                                  | for 99 years.  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Proposed Program                 | \$69,661 HOF FY2022  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Sources:                         | \$189,074 HOF FY2023   |                                   |  |  |  |
| MWBE:                            | Approved   |                                   |  |  |  |
| Commitment                       | July 31, 2025  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Expiration Date:                 | One true heading one and heathers are  | have the sales are and hather are |  |  |  |
| Total Units:                     | One two-bedroom, one-bathroom house, two three-bedroom, one-bathroom                             |                                   |  |  |  |
|                                  | houses, and one three-bedroom, two-bathroom house.  Four units affordable at or below 80% of AMI |                                   |  |  |  |
| Affordable Units:                | Four units affordable at or below 80% of AMI   |                                   |  |  |  |
| Sources of Funds                 |  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Federal Home Loan Bank AHP Grant |  | \$600,000                         |  |  |  |
| WesBanco Bank Construction Loan  |  | \$300,000                         |  |  |  |
| PNC Bank Line of Cre             | dit  | \$300,000                         |  |  |  |
| URA FSDP Grant                   |  | \$255,735                         |  |  |  |
| Transactions Fee                 |  | \$26,400                          |  |  |  |
| Total Project Financing          |  | \$1,482,135                       |  |  |  |
| Uses of Funds                    |  |                                   |  |  |  |
| Hard Costs                       |  | \$1,104,635                       |  |  |  |
| Transaction and Admin Fees       |  | \$255,515                         |  |  |  |
| Construction Financing Fees      |  | \$104,735                         |  |  |  |
| Acquisition Costs                |  | \$17,300                          |  |  |  |
| <b>Total Project Costs</b>       |  | \$1,482,135                       |  |  |  |

Hilltop Alliance is a Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation, with a mailing address of 209 Bausman Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15210. Principal Name: Bill Shimko, Executive Director

Upon a motion to approve by Mr. Lavelle seconded by Mr. Williamson and unanimously carried, the following resolution was adopted:

## **RESOLUTION NO. 16 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That a grant with Hilltop Alliance, or a related entity, for the rehabilitation of 11 E. Amanda Avenue, 954 Industry Street, and 922 Manton Way in the Allentown Neighborhood, 18<sup>th</sup> Ward of the, and 424 Suncrest Street in the Knoxville neighborhood, 30<sup>th</sup> Ward of the, in an amount up to \$255,735, is hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer,

Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute a grant agreement therefor, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

## 6. Housing Opportunity Fund Demonstration Program – Approval of Guidelines

a. Authorization to approve Housing Opportunity Fund Demonstration Program guidelines.

Ms. Nemani-Stanger requested Board approval of the above item

The Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) Demonstration Program (Demo Dollars) is intended to be a flexible program that provides financial assistance to, as described by the HOF guidelines, "Innovative Housing Pilot Concepts or Programs" and "Urgent/Emergency Housing Needs." Funding administered through this program will be used to maximize housing stability and increase the affordable housing supply in the City of Pittsburgh by funding imaginative, new housing solutions that cannot be funded by existing URA programs and that respond to housing emergencies quickly, ensuring that those in need receive timely support.

The URA will open application rounds for these two purposes at various times throughout the year. The URA will enter into contracts with the selected applicants and reimburse them for costs incurred on a per-project basis. Applicants will need to apply and be awarded a contract for specific geographic areas, which may be neighborhood-based or as large as the whole City of Pittsburgh.

Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies and developers, as well as for-profit developers with a nonprofit partner. Applications from individuals will not be accepted. The funding must be used for housing related services for City of Pittsburgh residents or projects that are located within the City of Pittsburgh that cannot be funded through any other existing URA program. The minimum total project cost and grant award for "Innovative Housing Pilot Concepts" is \$50,000. There is no minimum total project cost and grant award for "Emergency Housing Needs" applications. The maximum grant award for both "Innovative" and "Emergency" projects must not exceed the HOF allocation amount to the Demonstration Program for the year.

The services or housing developments provided through this program must be provided to subrecipients that meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) AMI limits for assisted housing programs with a maximum income limit for renters of 50% of AMI and maximum income limit for homeowners of 80% of AMI.

Upon a motion to approve by Mr. Lavelle seconded by Ms. Connelly and unanimously carried, the following resolutions were adopted:

## **RESOLUTION NO. 17 (2025)**

**RESOLVED:** That the Housing Opportunity Fund Demonstration Program guidelines are hereby approved.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The Members reviewed the items on the Consent Agenda upon motion made by Mr. Lavelle, seconded by Ms. Connelly, and unanimously carried; the following resolutions were adopted.

1. Authorization to enter into subrecipient agreements, valued at varying amounts, with Neighborhood Legal Services Association, RentHelpPGH, Just Mediation, and Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation, paid for using \$1,154,705.10 in 2019-2020 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds, to support costs associated with the Legal Assistance Program.

## **RESOLUTION NO. 18 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That an subrecipient agreement(s) with Neighborhood Legal Services Association, RentHelpPGH, Just Mediation, and Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation, to support costs associated with the Legal Assistance Program, in an amount not to exceed \$1,154,705.10, payable from the 2019-2020 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds, is hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer, and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute agreement(s) therefor, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

2. Authorization to enter into an agreement with Home Radon Pros in the amount of up to \$150,000 per year to provide radon testing and mitigation services for residential properties within the City of Pittsburgh. It is anticipated that approximately 75 houses per year will be serviced for an amount that does not exceed \$2000- per home - for a three-year period. The total amount of the contract to be determined by services rendered. The total contract of up to \$450,000 will be funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

## **RESOLUTION NO. 19 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That an subrecipient agreement(s) with Neighborhood Legal Services Association, RentHelpPGH, Just Mediation, and Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation, to support costs associated with the Legal Assistance Program, in an amount not to exceed \$1,154,705.10, payable from the 2019-2020 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds, is hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer, and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute agreement(s) therefor, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

3. Certificate of Completion and Return of Good Faith Deposit for Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard for Block 125-C, Lot 162, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Ward (975 Washington Boulevard – new construction multifamily transitional housing).

## **RESOLUTION NO. 20 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That issuance of a Certificate of Completion to Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard, for Block 125-C, Lot 162, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Ward, and return of the Good Faith Deposit (975 Washington Boulevard – new construction multifamily transitional housing) are hereby approved and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, are hereby authorized to execute said Certificate of Completion and return of Good Faith Deposit, and the Secretary or

the Assistant Secretary is hereby authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

4. Certificate of Completion for The Pittsburgh Land Bank for Block 10-J, Lots 259 and 260, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward (Neighborhood Resilience Project – parking for 2038 Bedford Avenue).

## **RESOLUTION NO. 21 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That issuance of a Certificate of Completion to Pittsburgh Land Bank, for Block 10-J, Lots 259 and 260, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward, and return of the Good Faith Deposit (Neighborhood Resilience Project – parking for 2038 Bedford Avenue) are hereby approved and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, are hereby authorized to execute said Certificate of Completion and return of Good Faith Deposit, and the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary is hereby authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

5. Transfer proposal, form of contract, and authorization to execute a deed to The Pittsburgh Land Bank for the sale of Block 10-J, Lots 259 and 260, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward for \$500 plus costs per parcel (estimated to total \$16,290).

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 22 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That the transfer of Block 10-J, Lots 259 and 260, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward for \$500 per parcel, plus costs (estimated to total \$16,290) and the assignment of a Disposition Contract and Redevelopment Proposal to the Pittsburgh Land Bank, are hereby approved and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer, and/or Chief Financial Officer, are hereby authorized on behalf of the Authority to execute a deed and related documents in order to effectuate said transfer, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is hereby authorized to attest the same and to affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

6. Proposal, form of contract, final drawings, final evidence of financing, and authorization to execute a deed to Northside Properties Residences III, LLC, for the sale of Block 46-J, Lots 35 and 37, in the 26<sup>th</sup> Ward for \$10,000 plus costs (Chester Avenue side yards).

## **RESOLUTION NO. 23 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That the Redevelopment Proposal submitted by Northside Properties Residences III LLC, for the sale of Block 46-J, Lots 35 and 37, in the 26<sup>th</sup> Ward, and execution of a disposition contract by sale to Northside Properties Residences III LLC, for \$5,000 plus costs are hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or the Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute said disposition contract and related documents to effectuate said sale, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto; and it is;

RESOLVED FURTHER: That the final drawings and evidence of financing submitted by Northside Properties Residences III LLC for the sale of Block 46-J, Lots 35 and 37, in the 26<sup>th</sup> Ward, are hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or the Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute a deed and all documents necessary to effectuate the

sale thereof, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

7. Proposal, form of contract, final drawings, final evidence of financing, and authorization to execute a deed to Island Avenue Holdings, LLC for the sale of Block 21-D, Lot 42-A, in the 27<sup>th</sup> Ward for \$3,600 plus costs (Island Avenue side yard).

## **RESOLUTION NO. 24 (2025)**

RESOLVED: That the Redevelopment Proposal submitted by Island Avenue Holdings, LLC, for the sale of Block 21-D, Lot 42-A, in the 27<sup>th</sup> Ward, and execution of a disposition contract by sale to Island Avenue Holdings, LLC, for \$3,600 plus costs are hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or the Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute said disposition contract and related documents to effectuate said sale, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto; and it is;

RESOLVED FURTHER: That the final drawings and evidence of financing submitted by Island Avenue Holdings, LLC for the sale of Block 21-D, Lot 42-A, in the 27<sup>th</sup> Ward, are hereby approved, and the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Housing Officer and/or the Chief Financial Officer, on behalf of the Authority, is hereby authorized to execute a deed and all documents necessary to effectuate the sale thereof, and the Secretary or Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest the same and affix the seal of the Authority thereto.

## **DISCLOSURE AGENDA**

- 1. Providing notice to the public that Phylicia Ralph to receive OwnPGH Homeownership Program financing in the amount of \$70,000 and a Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program loan in the amount of \$7,500 for an affordable home purchase. (Ms. Ralph is an employee of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works).
- 2. Providing notice to the public that Rudy McBride to receive OwnPGH Homeownership Program financing in the amount of \$70,000 and a Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program loan in the amount of \$7,500 for an affordable home purchase. (Ms. McBride is an employee of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Human Resources and Civil Service).

There being no further actions to come before the Members, the Meeting was adjourned.

Docusigned by:

Thursa Schadut

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Board Secretary



March 11th 2025

Urban Redevelopment Authority 412 Blvd of the Allies Pittsburgh, Pa 15219

Dear Members of the URA Board of Directors,

On behalf of the Hill District Collaborative and concerned residents of the Hill District, we are writing to formally request that the **Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) take immediate action** to release the **Greater Hill District Reinvestment Funds** to support critical community projects. These funds were established with the intent of being community-driven, yet its current implementation has fundamentally failed this purpose. While the Advisory Committee was meant to represent community interests, its ineffective structure and lack of accountability has effectively silenced community voice and participation. Instead, decision-making power has concentrated among organizations that have demonstrated an inability to facilitate economic growth through deferred fund disbursement, with only \$465,000 distributed over four years. The continued delays have significantly harmed residents, businesses, and organizations that rely on these resources to sustain and improve our community.

The community's only window into this process has been through reviewing lengthy, unproductive meeting recordings that document the committee's consistent failure to advance necessary recommendations and procedures. This stands in direct opposition to the fund's original mission and the community's needs. The Greater Hill District community neither requested nor accepts this deeply flawed implementation. After four years of indecisiveness, delay and fumbling, the community has lost trust in both the current committee and the URA's ability to effectively administer these funds for the community's benefit.

This pattern of inaction and ineffective oversight has not only delayed critical community investment but has fundamentally undermined the very purpose of establishing a community-driven reinvestment fund. The time has come for significant structural reform

to restore community voice and to ensure efficient fund administration that truly serves the Greater Hill District's development needs

The Greater Hill District community requires two concurrent actions:

- 1. Immediate disbursement of available funds and;
- 2. A complete restructuring of the Advisory Committee into a truly community-driven process.

#### **Immediate Fund Disbursement**

We petition the URA to implement established programming guidelines and application processes that align with the Greater Hill District Reinvestment Fund's requirements, and to open the application process immediately.

Existing URA programs, such as the Small Business Matching Pilot Program, should be reviewed and adapted with input from a Community Consultant - one who is selected by and representative of our community. In the interim, the Community Consultant would replace both the current ineffective Advisory Committee and the proposed Project Manager, streamlining the administrative process as we work to restructure the Advisory Committee. The suggestion to expend additional fund dollars on a Project Manager to partner with existing URA staff and the Advisory Committee is redundant and wasteful, given the URA's proven track record of successfully administering funding programs with functional advisory committees.

Our community demands progress and impactful deployment of these funds. The funds should not be diverted to compensate for the current Advisory Committee's demonstrated ineffectiveness. We propose implementing a restructured Advisory Committee model, supported by updated Policies and Procedures that will ensure proper governance and community representation moving forward.

#### **Restructuring of Oversight**

The current structure of the advisory committee has proven to be a major roadblock rather than a facilitator of progress. We propose the following changes:

- The advisory committee should be structured with equal representation of all Recognized Community Organizations (RCOs) along with a new Chair of the Board. No one person or organization should have the ability to control or obstruct this process.
- 2. Eliminate the co-chair position on the advisory committee. Instead, each advisory committee member should hold an equal position, ensuring fair participation and effective decision-making.

- 3. Professionals with direct experience managing funds of this nature should be included on the advisory committee. While RCOs should have a voice, we must also include other community stakeholders including financial and development professionals who understand how to administer these funds efficiently and equitably and who have actually been involved in community and or real estate development projects
- 4. **Politicians should not serve in voting positions.** While their support is valuable, their primary focus should remain on their legislative responsibilities rather than managing the execution of these funds.

This is your moment to **right historical wrongs and demonstrate your commitment to the Hill District community.** Do not make this process unnecessarily complicated or difficult to navigate for the very people it was designed to support. No one person or organization can take credit for our collective efforts that date back centuries. We recognize that we are standing on the shoulders of those that have come before us, but this is also our moment to press forward and leave a trail of progress for those who will come after us. Our residents and businesses **cannot afford any more costly delays and the time to act is now** 

We urge the URA Board of Directors to take **swift action** to ensure that these funds **finally** reach the people and projects they were meant to support. We look forward to your prompt response and a resolution that reflects fairness, accountability, and a genuine commitment to the well-being of our community.

In Unity and Determination,

The Hill District Collaborative & Concerned Hill District Community Members

The Hill District Consensus Group wishes to express our deep concern regarding the current state of the Hill District community. Our historic neighborhood faces severe challenges that demand immediate attention and action:

#### **Critical Community Concerns**

We observe with alarm the numerous parcels of vacant land that remain undeveloped throughout our community. Simultaneously, we witness the troubling absence of resources and support for Hill District-based small businesses. This neglect has created a cycle of decline that must be addressed:

- Too many development projects have stalled indefinitely
- Established businesses are closing their doors
- Residential properties are literally falling apart
- Hill District developers and small businesses willing to take risks in our community are left unsupported
- Those who do attempt development are required to navigate unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles

This situation is entirely unacceptable. The Hill District community cannot thrive—let alone survive—under these current conditions. The time for meaningful change is NOW.

#### **LERTA Fund Implementation Failures**

While the Hill District Consensus Group has served on the LERTA advisory committee since its inception, we have failed to witness real progress. We firmly believe it is critical to change the current dynamic and approach fund management differently. The current process is simply not working and is actively failing our community.

We identify several specific failures:

- The current process is not genuinely community-driven
- The advisory committee's composition does not fully reflect our diverse community
- The funds remain tied up while immediate needs go unaddressed

#### **Call to Action**

We urge the Urban Redevelopment Authority to:

- Consider and respect the voice and concerns of the Hill District community
- Make necessary structural changes to uphold the original intent of the LERTA Fund
- Release funds immediately to address critical community needs
- Restructure the advisory process to ensure authentic community leadership

The Hill District Consensus Group fully supports actions that empower our community to shape

this process. We stand with the community members who have raised these concerns and demand that the URA address them without further delay.

Our community deserves better. Our businesses deserve support. Our residents deserve to see tangible progress in their neighborhood.

Respectfully submitted, The Hill District Consensus Group

# Public Comment Registration March 13, 2025 URA Regular Board Meeting

## **Overview of Comment Registration**

| In person: 1 |  |  |  |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Virtual: 2   |  |  |  |
| Written: 1   |  |  |  |
|              |  |  |  |
|              |  |  |  |
|              |  |  |  |
|              |  |  |  |

#### **In-Person Comments**

Name: Rev. Lisa R. Richbourg

Agenda Item/Topic: LERTA Fund and GHDNRF Advisory Board

#### **Virtual Comments**

Name: Megan Hammond

**Agenda Item/Topic:** URA Housing Programs

Name: Dr. Kimberly Ellis

Agenda Item/Topic: Lower Hill LERTA

#### **Written Comments**

Name: Hill District Consensus Group

Agenda Item/Topic: Lower Hill LERTA and GHDNRF

Comment:

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