

**Neighborhood Committee Conference Call
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Monday, June 11, 2018
3:00 p.m.**

PRESENT BY PHONE:

Members: Mayor Luke Bronin (Committee Chair), Suzanne Hopgood, Mayor Marcia LeClerc, Joanne Berger-Sweeney

Guests: Kiley Gosselin, Don Chapman (City of Hartford)

AT CRDA:

Staff: Mike Freimuth, Kim Hart

Absent: Dave Jorgensen

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Ms. Hopgood and the minutes of the May 11, 2018 meeting were approved on voice vote. Mayor Bronin subsequently joined the call.

Ms. Hart and Ms. Gosselin updated the committee on the four neighborhood projects underway:

- a. **Bowles** – Completion of demolition is underway and additional utility work may be included, subject to available funding.
- b. **Swift** – Financing has closed and the construction manager is beginning mobilization.
- c. **Brackett Knoll** – Outside counsel is drafting assistance agreement between CRDA and developer.
- d. **Dillon** – Schematic design work is nearly completed. Newfield Construction of Hartford has been selected as construction manager and the first bid package will be released shortly.

690-714 Albany

Mr. Freimuth reported that Sheldon Oaks has revised their ask related to the renovation of a deteriorating building at the corner of Vine and Albany into 8 apartments, (4 affordable) and 3-4 storefronts. Additional funds – include State Historic Tax Credits - have also been secured and the total project cost (including acquisition) is now estimated to be \$5.2 million, with a \$2.2 million CRDA grant request.

The committee discussed various aspects of the project: sources and uses; whether a CRDA grant vs. an equity interest is appropriate and the value of the project to the neighborhood. Additional due diligence is still needed and a motion was made to refer the funding request to the full Board without a recommendation. That motion was adopted on a voice vote.

Charter Oak Health Center

Mr. Freimuth reported on a new project requesting CRDA funding. The Charter Oak Health Center is looking to expand their facilities on Grand Street into a neighboring building and the cost of renovating the three-story brick structure as a specialty clinic is estimated to be \$1.9 million. The Health Center has secured \$1.45 million from other sources and is asking CRDA to fund the \$450,000 balance.

Some Committee members raised concerns about the project being unrelated to CRDA's housing / economic development mission and the possibility of opening the door for funding requests from other unrelated projects. Other members noted that while the project was outside CRDA's normal course of business, improving the health of local residents was a critical issue and that funding the renovation of the currently-vacant structure was a means of reducing blight in this neighborhood. A question was also raised about the possibility of the facility being used as a methadone clinic.

Ms. Gosselin noted that the City was only made aware of the project last week and that Planning & Zoning would need to take a look at it. Members agreed that additional information was needed and a motion to refer the item to the full Board for discussion was approved on a voice vote.

New Business

Mayor Bronin raised the issue of CRDA possibly contributing funds for the renovation of 24 residential buildings in the Clay Arsenal neighborhood being vacated as part of HUD's termination of reputed slumlord Emmanuel Ku's housing contract. It is estimated that simply bringing these facilities up to code would cost between \$3 million to \$5 million and members noted that this would be a massive financial and logistical undertaking for CRDA. Other members suggested that the Housing Committee should weigh in on the question.

Members agreed that additional information was needed on potential costs and on the question of designing the vacated units as affordable versus market rate housing. Mayor Bronin agreed to continue working with his staff on framing the project and to report back to the Committee at a later date.

The next Neighborhood Committee meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2018.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 3:40 p.m..