

**Regional and Economic Development Committee  
Conference Call  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
October 10, 2024  
3:00 PM**

**Members Present via Microsoft Teams:** Board Chair David Robinson, Mayor Connor Martin, Pam Sucato and Matt Pugliese

**Staff Present via Microsoft Teams:** Mike Freimuth, Tony Lazzaro, Derek Peterson and Kim Hart

**Guests Present via Microsoft Teams:** Logan Singerman (SINA)

Mayor Martin called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and the minutes of the May 9, 2024 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

**I. New Projects**

**Washington Street Development Study**

Mr. Freimuth introduced Mr. Singerman and reminded Committee members of SINA's Washington Street Development presentation at the September Board meeting. CRDA has been asked to contribute toward the cost of a planning study along with Liberty Bank, LAZ and Webster Bank.

Ms. Hart noted that redevelopment of Washington Street has been discussed for many years and recent activity in the area has prompted SINA to undertake a study at this time. The area will see significant investment over the next few years, including the \$280 million expansion of the CT Children's Medical Center and construction of a 900-space garage for patients, hospital staff and visitors. Mr. Singerman noted that the City has identified this area as a "transformative project" under its most recent Conservation and Development Plan. The Bushnell South development is also contributing to momentum in the neighborhood.

Ms. Hart walked the Committee through some photos and renderings related to the CCMC project, the adjoining ped bridge and garage, as well as plans for new housing in the area. In response to a question from Mr. Robinson, Mr. Freimuth indicated that CRDA's assistance with the study would be provided as a grant and the Authority would not seek to recoup the funds.

The following resolution was read and approved on a voice vote:

*The Regional and Economic Development Committee recommends to the CRDA Board that the Executive Director be authorized to grant up to \$25,000 to the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance for the purpose of hiring a consultant to undertake a development planning study for the Washington Street Corridor in Hartford. Such funding shall be subject to 1) all other required funds being secured and 2) such fiduciary terms and conditions as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Executive Director and CRDA counsel.*

## **II. Project Updates**

- a. East Hartford – Mayor Martin provided Committee members with brief updates on a number of East Hartford projects, including the second phase of demolition at Silver Lane Plaza, Concourse Park (former Showcase Cinemas site), Port Eastside (formerly Founders Plaza) and housing construction at the McCartin School site. Mr. Freimuth also noted that funding for Konover’s Commerce Center project along the Connecticut River was approved at the October 4<sup>th</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Committee meeting. He confirmed that the resolution will be put before the Board at its monthly meeting next week.
- b. Pulaski Circle – Ms. Sucato reported that DOT will be undertaking a comprehensive traffic and pedestrian safety improvement project at Pulaski Circle. She noted that the project is in an early stage and improvements are not likely to be started until 2029. DOT will be reaching out to interested parties for input. Ms. Sucato asked if Committee members knew of individuals wishing to weigh in on the current traffic and pedestrian situation at the Circle, they should pass those names on to her.

Mr. Robinson posed a question as to whether the lengthy time frame for the Pulaski Circle improvements will hold up development at Bushnell South. Mr. Freimuth noted that it will be problematic for the 17 Wells Street project, which sits on Pulaski Circle behind 525 Main Street. It may also impact the 15 Lewis Street project, which includes the former Vitos’s Restaurant just along Bushnell Park from Pulaski Circle.

- c. Bushnell South – Mr. Freimuth gave a brief update on the Bushnell South project. He noted that funding for the 65 Elm/100 Capitol projects was also approved at the October 4<sup>th</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Committee meeting and that the resolution would be put before the full Board next week. Mr. Freimuth indicated that staff had made substantial progress on an agreement with MDC that would allow the individual Bushnell South development sites to forgo construction of elaborate water retention systems in exchange for a contribution that would allow MDC to separate and upgrade its stormwater system in the area.

Mr. Freimuth reported that the Walker parking plan contract approved at the last Board meeting was being drafted. He noted that CRDA was expecting a revised design and new construction cost estimates for Parcel 4 from The Michaels Organization sometime next week.

Mr. Freimuth also noted that the media has reported that CREC was looking at Parcel 4 as a possible location for its Academy of the Arts high school. He confirmed that CRDA was considering the impact the school would have on the overall project. In response to a question from Mr. Robinson, he indicated in addition to CRDA Board approval, the CREC Board would need to sign off on the move. Funding for construction of the school will also require State legislative approval, as well as State Bond Commission authorization.

The next meeting of the Regional & Economic Development Committee is scheduled for November 7, 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

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