

**City of Syracuse Industrial Development Agency**

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Tel (315) 473-3275

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Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

**Due to the declaration of a public health emergency and the social distancing requirements imposed at the Federal, State and local level, this meeting was held in accordance with Executive Order 202.1 by video/telephone conference that was made available to the public.**

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**Board Members Present:** Kathleen Murphy, Steven Thompson, Kenneth Kinsey, Rickey T. Brown and Dirk Sonneborn, all via tele/videoconference (in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 202.1).

**Staff Present:** Judith DeLaney, Susan Katzoff, Esq., John Vavonese, Lori McRobbie, all via tele/videoconference (in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 202.1).

**Others Present:** Christopher Bianchi, David Pida, Scott Dumas, Charles Wallace, Gail Cawley, Sarah Stevens, Christine Stevens, Ryan Benz, Rick Moriarty (all via tele/videoconference (in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 202.1)).

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**I. Call Meeting to Order**

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Ms. Murphy acknowledged that in addition to herself, Board members Steven Thompson, Kenneth Kinsey, Rickey T. Brown and Dirk Sonneborn were present.

**III. Proof of Notice**

Ms. Murphy acknowledged that notice of the meeting had been duly and properly provided.

#### **IV. Public Hearing**

##### **JMA Tech Properties LLC & Ranalli/Taylor St. LLC<sup>1</sup>**

Ms. Murphy opened the Hearing at 8:03 a.m. and asked Ms. DeLaney to read the Notice of Public Hearing on the project. A copy of the notice is attached and included in the minutes.

Ms. DeLaney read the notice that was published in the newspaper into the record. No written comments were received. Ms. Murphy asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the project. No one spoke in favor of the project.

Ms. Murphy then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition to the project. No one spoke in opposition to the project.

Ms. Murphy closed the Public Hearing at 8:07 a.m.

##### **400 West Division Street, LLC<sup>1</sup>**

Ms. Murphy opened the Hearing at 8:07 a.m. and asked Ms. Katzoff to read the Notice of Public Hearing on the project. A copy of the notice is attached and included in the minutes.

Ms. Katzoff read the notice that was published in the newspaper into the record. No written comments were received. Ms. Murphy asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the project. No one spoke in favor of the project.

Ms. Murphy then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition to the project. No one spoke in opposition to the project.

Ms. Murphy closed the Public Hearing at 8:10 a.m.

##### **313 South Salina Street, LLC<sup>1</sup>**

Ms. Murphy opened the Hearing at 8:10 a.m. and asked Ms. DeLaney to read the Notice of Public Hearing on the project. A copy of the notice is attached and included in the minutes.

Ms. DeLaney read the notice that was published in the newspaper into the record. No written comments were received. Ms. Murphy asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the project.

Ryan Benz, construction manager of the project spoke in favor of the project on behalf of the owner, Mr. Hoque. Mr. Hoque approached Mr. Benz who is a neighbor on the block for his company's assistance with the project. Mr. Benz said that the project is not seeking PILOT benefits. They are seeking mortgage recording tax and sales tax benefits. Without these benefits the project is not financially viable. He stated it is a very tight financial project which is reliant on state historic and federal historic tax credits. The increase in construction costs and materials that we have seen in the last 12 months also makes it a tight financial project. The project is currently out for bid with accomplished general contractors in the area. They hope to have construction started within the next 90 days assuming approval of the requested benefits.

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<sup>1</sup> The hearing was open to the public in accordance with Executive Order 202.1.

Ms. Murphy then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition to the project. No one spoke in opposition to the project.

Ms. Murphy closed the Public Hearing at 8:16 a.m.

## **V. Minutes**

Ms. Murphy asked for a motion approving the minutes from the April 27, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 27, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **VI. Committee Report**

Ms. Murphy reported the Finance Committee held a meeting on May 13, 2021 and made the following recommendations to the Board of Directors with respect to: (1) 400 West Division Street, LLC –approval of the application requesting benefits; (2) 313 South Salina Street, LLC - approval of the application requesting benefits; and (3) Lipe Art Park - approval of expense of an appraisal in an amount not to exceed \$4,000 in conjunction with a proposed sale of the park to the City of Syracuse; and approval of a contract for landscape maintenance for the park for the 2021 season.

## **VII. New Business**

### **JMA Tech Properties LLC & Ranalli/Taylor St. LLC**

Ms. Katzoff reported that a public hearing was just held with regards to JMA Tech Properties LLC project. It was reviewed for SEQRA and the project is classified as a Type II Action and no additional review is required. This is an infrastructure project that is leveraging additional improvements that have been or are being made in the area. The infrastructure and additional improvements total over \$1,100,000. The infrastructure is \$740,000 of the total cost. City of Syracuse is also participating by providing most of the materials necessary to undertake the infrastructure improvements and to provide oversight to the project. JMA will be leading the project and paying all of the other associated costs. The Agency is being asked to participate and provide up to \$230,000 towards this project. This will leverage other investments previously undertaken which include a multi-million dollar project. In addition to benefiting projects previously undertaken, this project will help leverage future investments in the area as well. The resolution seeks your approval of this project and the dedication of the assistance.

There being no discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve a resolution authorizing the Agency to undertake an infrastructure project, provide assistance in amount not to exceed \$230,000 and enter into an agreement with the Company regarding same. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION, EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AGREEMENT WITH JMA TECH PROPERTIES, LLC AND RANALLI/TAYLOR ST., LLC IN CONNECTION WITH A CERTAIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND APPROVING CERTAIN ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.**

## 400 West Division Street, LLC

Ms. Katzoff noting a Public Hearing had just concluded requested the members consider resolutions approving the project. It is a sister project to Rapid Response, a project previously undertaken by the board. It is a \$19,000,000 project that is going to create 75 FTEs.

She advised the first resolution for consideration was a SEQRA resolution. Ms. Katzoff stated the Board identified itself as Lead Agency for purposes of undertaking an uncoordinated review and determined that this was an Unlisted Action. A Short Environmental Assessment Form was submitted and reviewed and it was determined that the project will not have a negative impact on the environment and a negative declaration is attached to the agenda.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the SEQRA resolution. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION CLASSIFYING A CERTAIN PROJECT AS AN UNLISTED ACTION PURSUANT TO THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT, DECLARING THE AGENCY LEAD AGENCY FOR PURPOSES OF AN UNCOORDINATED REVIEW THEREUNDER AND DETERMINING THAT THE ACTION WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Ms. Katzoff then asked the Board to consider the inducement resolution for the project authorizing the undertaking of the project, the granting of certain financial assistance and the execution and delivery of an Agency Agreement. It authorizes the appointment of the Company as agent of the Agency for purposes of undertaking the project and receiving sales and use tax exemptions in an amount not to exceed \$1,360,000 and approves a mortgage tax exemption in the approximate amount of \$82,500.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the inducement resolution. Mr. Brown made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE UNDERTAKING, ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF A PROJECT; APPOINTING THE COMPANY AS AGENT OF THE AGENCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AGENCY AND THE COMPANY.**

Ms. Katzoff then requested the Board consider a PILOT resolution for the project providing a standard 10-Year PILOT in accordance with the Agency's UTEP. There is no deviation from the standard policy. The Company will continue to pay 100% of real property taxes on the property as it exists right now. The PILOT abatement outlined in the resolution applies only to the improvements that are being made on the project. The City does not lose out on any taxes currently being paid on the property as a result of the project.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the PILOT resolution. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PAYMENT**

**IN LIEU OF TAX SCHEDULE AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY THE AGENCY IN CONNECTION WITH A PILOT AGREEMENT.**

Ms. Katzoff then requested consideration of a final resolution for the project authorizing the execution and delivery of all necessary lease transactional documents which confer the approved financial assistance benefits to the project.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the final resolution. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY THE AGENCY IN CONNECTION WITH A COMMERCIAL PROJECT UNDERTAKEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMPANY.**

**313 S. Salina St. LLC**

Ms. Katzoff noting a Public Hearing had just concluded requested the members consider resolutions approving the project.

She advised the first resolution for consideration was a SEQRA resolution. Ms. Katzoff stated the Board appointed itself as Lead Agency for purposes of undertaking an uncoordinated review and determined that this was an Unlisted Action. A Short Environmental Assessment Form was submitted and reviewed and it was determined that the project will not have a negative impact on the environment and therefore there is a negative declaration being issued in the agenda.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the SEQRA resolution. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION CLASSIFYING A CERTAIN PROJECT AS AN UNLISTED ACTION PURSUANT TO THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT, DECLARING THE AGENCY LEAD AGENCY FOR PURPOSES OF AN UNCOORDINATED REVIEW THEREUNDER AND DETERMINING THAT THE ACTION WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Ms. Katzoff then asked the Board to consider the inducement resolution for the project authorizing the undertaking of the project, the granting of certain financial assistance and the execution and delivery of an Agency Agreement. The total project cost is \$2,800,000. The project is located in the City's central business district and is eligible for the historic register and it will be applying for historic tax credits. Upper floors have been vacant for a number of years. While the project is not a job creator project it is intended to eliminate the vacant portions of that building and doing façade and other improvements of the first floor and the exterior to bring it in line with the remainder of the block which is in a highly distressed area. The resolution authorizes the appointment of the Company as agent of the Agency for purposes of undertaking the project and receiving sales and use tax exemptions in an amount not to exceed of \$110,461 and approves a mortgage tax exemption in the approximate amount of \$14,800. There is no PILOT associated with this project.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the inducement resolution. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE UNDERTAKING, ACQUISITION, RECONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF A PROJECT; APPOINTING THE COMPANY AS AGENT OF THE AGENCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE ACQUISITION, RECONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AGENCY AND THE COMPANY.**

Ms. Katzoff then requested consideration of a final resolution for the project authorizing the execution and delivery of all necessary lease transactional documents which confer the approved financial assistance benefits to the project.

There being no discussion Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the final resolution. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY THE AGENCY IN CONNECTION WITH A COMMERCIAL PROJECT UNDERTAKEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMPANY.**

### **101 North Salina St. LLC**

Ms. DeLaney reported that the Agency received an application from 101 North Salina St. LLC requesting financial assistance from the Company for a project to be located at 101 North Salina Street, (the former Post Standard Building, to be rebranded as “The Post”. The building is approximately 172,000 square feet. The owners intend to fully reconstruct and redevelop 80,000 sq. ft. of the building that has been vacant for a number of years. The remainder of the building is currently occupied by Advance Media. At completion ChaseDesign a design and consulting firm will move into the building and VIP Structures will relocate from their current headquarters to the building. The Company is looking for another commercial tenant to occupy the remaining 11,000 sq.ft. Current jobs to be located to the building total 197 with another 41 new jobs forecasted. The project is estimated to cost \$19,115,532. Benefits requested include exemptions from mortgage tax valued at approximately \$112,500, sales tax valued at \$435,488, and a 15-year PILOT agreement value to be determined.

Charlie Wallace, president of VIP Development Associates and Christine Stevens were present at the meeting. Mr. Wallace said that in 2017 Dave Nutting and he purchased the property from Advance Media and leased back approximately half of the building to Advance Media to continue printing the paper version of the Post Standard. They are requesting benefits in the form of exemptions from mortgage recording tax, sales tax and real property tax. Building has been vacant since 2013 when Advance Media moved the digital version of the Post Standard to Warren Street. It is an important landmark property for the City. The building poses significant financial challenges. The building is 172,000 sq.ft. plus a full basement. The building does not meet the current New York State energy code requirements. It needs a new roof, new glazing on the façade to bring it up to code. Mechanical systems, including electrical, need to be totally replaced. In addition, cost of construction materials due to the pandemic is another financial challenge.

Two tenants, VIP Structures, which is relocating from One Webster Landing and Chase Design.

Mr. Wallace said VIP is located currently is located at One Websters Landing and occupying five floors of the building. VIP is an integrated design build development company with 4 operating companies: a construction company, architectural firm; engineering firm and commercial real estate firm. One of the big reasons for the move to the Post Standard is to get all four operating companies on one floor – approximately 23,000 sq.ft. on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the southern portion of the building. VIP's current building makes it somewhat inefficient as far as operations because they are on five different floors. Also are concerned about the uncertainty of the work on Interstate 81 and how that will affect VIP's current location.

Mr. Wallace said Chase Design is currently located in Skaneateles but its lease(s) for its current space expired in November 2021 and the company is acting under a month to month tenancy. The company's current space occupies two different buildings which makes their operations inefficient and they are looking to consolidate into one location and have the ability to expand their operations. To do so, they need additional space. Additionally, by moving to the City the company believes it can better attract young personnel as they grow being in an urban setting with the amenities available in Syracuse.

Ms. Katzoff reminded the Board that it is only asked to authorize a public hearing on the project.

There being no discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve a resolution for a public hearing. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Sonneborn seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT THE ACQUISITION, RECONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF A COMMERCIAL FACILITY AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMPANY CONSTITUTES A PROJECT; DESCRIBING THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION THEREWITH; AND AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING.**

### **1970 W. Fayette LLC**

Ms. DeLaney reported that the Agency is being asked to authorize a public hearing regarding an application from 1970 W. Fayette LLC for a project to be located at 1970 West Fayette Street, the site of the former Strathmore Paint Building in the City's west side neighborhood which has been long vacant. The Company intends to gut and reconstruct the main 33,000 sq.ft. building into commercial mixed-use with a first floor food co-op and warehouse, a restaurant, and hair salon and second and third floor commercial space including a brain education center. The second structure (metal shed) will be relocated and serve as an outdoor dining space. There are four smaller vacant parcels which will be re-subdivided with the larger parcel to provide 51 parking spaces for the project. Additionally, they will be investing in streetscape and sidewalks. The project investment is estimated to cost \$6,121,299. Benefits requested include exemptions from mortgage tax valued at approximately \$33,750.00, sales tax valued at \$293,518.80, and a 10-year PILOT agreement value to be determined. Scott Dumas, a principal in the company and Sarah Stevens who represents the company were present at the meeting. Mr. Dumas said that the project is being referred to as GereBlock 27. It is a true community development which will include grocery, educational space, affordable co-working space, retail and restaurants. It is a community minded, environmentally and socioeconomically friendly project based in an

economically distressed zone. Will use green roof technology, historic preservation. Very challenging site, historic piecemeal site, series of buildings put together. Landlocked, concerns of heavy contamination. Utility lines run through the site. Awkward elevation. All these reasons make it a project difficult to finance without PILOT.

Ms. Katzoff asked if they are getting historic tax credits. Mr. Dumas said yes, they are going through that process.

There being no discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve a resolution for a public hearing. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT THE ACQUISITION, RECONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, EQUIPPING AND COMPLETION OF A COMMERCIAL FACILITY AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMPANY CONSTITUTES A PROJECT; DESCRIBING THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION THEREWITH; AND AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING.**

### **Lipe Art Park**

Ms. DeLaney reported that the Agency owns 900 West Fayette Street, Lipe Art Park. Staff has been under discussion regarding the possible sale of the site to the City Parks Department. The first step is to get an appraisal of the park and the Board is being asked to authorize staff to contract with a local appraiser in an amount not to exceed \$4,000. It will be bid out to the lowest bidder.

The Board is also being asked to approve a resolution authorizing a contact for landscape services for the season in an amount not to exceed \$2,900 with Custom Lawnsapes, the landscaper who has taken care of the park for a number of years. The work was bid out to at least 3 vendors but Custom Lawnsapes was the only vendor to respond.

Ms. DeLaney advised that staff is working to find out who owns the art located at Lipe Art Park and will report back to the Board.

There being no discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the request by staff to obtain an appraisal of the property in an amount not to exceed \$4,000. Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE REQUEST BY STAFF TO OBTAIN AN APPRAISAL OF THE PROPERTY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000.**

Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to approve a resolution approving an agreement with Custom Lawnsapes, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$2,900. Mr. Sonneborn made the motion. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH CUSTOM LAWN-SCAPES, INC. IN CONNECTION WITH LANDSCAPING SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED ON CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE AGENCY.**



## **VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kinsey made a motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:51 AM.**