

City of Syracuse Industrial Development Agency
201 East Washington Street, 6th Floor
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 473-3275

Finance Committee Minutes
Thursday, May 13, 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.

Committee Members Present: Kathleen Murphy, Rickey T. Brown, Kenneth Kinsey, Steven Thompson, Dirk Sonneborn

Staff Present: Judith DeLaney, Susan Katzoff, Esq., John Vavonese, Lori McRobbie

I. Call Meeting to Order

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Ms. Murphy acknowledged all Committee members present.

III. Proof of Notice

Ms. Murphy noted that notice of the meeting had been timely and properly provided.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Murphy asked for a motion approving the minutes from the April 22, 2021 Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Brown made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 22, 2021 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING.**

V. New Business

400 West Division Street, LLC

Ms. DeLaney reported that the Agency received an application for financial assistance for a project to be located at 400 West Division Street in the Franklin Square neighborhood. This project was reviewed at the March Board of Directors meeting and a public hearing is scheduled for May 18, 2021. The Company proposes construction of a new 54,000 sq.ft. three-story mixed used commercial/residential building. The vacant parcel of land is owned by an entity related to Rapid Response Monitoring Services and the first floor will be occupied by both 400 West Division Street, LLC and another related entity, Sonitrol Services of New York Inc. The Company forecasts an additional 75 new jobs over the next 5 years. The second and third floors will consist of 28 one and two-bedroom market rate units. The project is estimated to cost \$19,086,000. The Company is requesting benefits from the Agency in the form of exemptions valued at approximately \$82,500 in mortgage tax and \$1,360,000 in sales tax along with a standard 10-year PILOT valued at \$1,277,500.

Ms. Murphy said the public hearing will be held next week. Ms. DeLaney said, per the Assessor, the current assessment on the property is \$506,000 and at completion the estimated assessment will be \$3,725,000.

There no further discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion for a recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve the financial assistance for the Project.

Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. **ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

313 S. Salina St. LLC

Ms. DeLaney reported that the Agency received an application requesting financial assistance for a project to be located 313 South Salina Street. This project was reviewed at the April Board meeting and a public hearing is scheduled for May 18, 2021. This is a smaller project and consists of five-story building which is eligible for historic tax credits. The ground floor contains a small Dollarwise retail store which is operated by the owner of the building. The upper four floors have been vacant and in disuse for a number of years because the owner could not afford to rehabilitate the historic property. The proposed project will renovate the exterior façade and update the first-floor retail space. The four upper floors will be converted to nine residential one and two bedroom apartments. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$2,813,712. The Company is requesting benefits in the form of exemptions valued at approximately \$14,726 (mortgage tax) and \$110,461 (sales tax). A PILOT is not requested.

Abatement cost to the Agency and the City is \$125,000. The value of the new investment is estimated to be \$2,000,000.

Ms. Murphy said Ryan Benz who owns Oh My Darling is a partner in the renovation. Ms. DeLaney clarified that he is the general contractor.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion for a recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve the financial assistance for the Project.

Mr. Brown made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

Lipe Art Park

Ms. DeLaney said the Agency has owned a strip of land located at 900 West Fayette Street which is across from the Rockwest Building since 1998 when it took ownership from OCIDA for the price of \$1.00. In or about 2010 the Agency entered into a lease agreement with Centerstate CEO and under its auspices "40 Below" and the "Stewards of Lipe Art Park". Its purpose was to create an exhibition space for artists and a neighborhood park for residents. The "Stewards" are no longer as actively involved as they once were.

The Agency has vacant parcel insurance on the parcel and underwrites the cost of landscape maintenance on an annual basis.

Ms. DeLaney reported that there is a group of new artists that are interested in supporting the park under a similar historical arrangement. The City Parks Department is interested buying the land for a nominal fee from the Agency where it then would officially become City parkland. Staff is recommending the Agency consider the sale of the parcel to the Parks Department; however by statute, the Agency must first secure an independent appraisal of the parcel. The Finance Committee is being asked to make a recommendation to the Board to fund an appraisal in an amount not to exceed \$4,000. The Agency must secure three bids for the work and is required to take the lowest bid.

Mr. Sonneborn asked if the Agency owns the artwork that is currently in the park. Ms. DeLaney said she does not know but she will find out. Ms. Murphy said the Agency should ask the Stewards and Below 40 for any existing paperwork regarding existing art and artists. Mr. Sonneborn also said the neighborhood over the years has had some issues with the fact that they have had any engagement to what the park is used for. He wants to make sure what is done is in the best interest of the community. Ms. DeLaney said she will bring this to Julie LaFave's attention. Ms. DeLaney said this is in the best interest of the community as it will be designated park land.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Murphy asked for a motion for a recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve the expense of an appraisal in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.

Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO APPROVE THE EXPENSE OF AN APPRAISAL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000.**

Staff further requested the Board approve a contract for seasonal landscaping at the property. Staff sought at least three bids but only received one response from the company that has been servicing the parcel for several years. Ms. Murphy asked for a motion for a recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve Custom Lawn-Scapes contract for landscape maintenance for the park for the 2021 season in an amount not to exceed \$2,900.

Mr. Thompson made the motion. Mr. Sonneborn seconded the motion. **ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO APPROVE A CONTRACT WITH CUSTOM LAWN-SCAPES FOR LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE IN LIPE ART PARK FOR THE 2021 SEASON IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$2,900.**

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss Ms. Murphy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kinsey made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:31 AM.**