

**MEETING OF THE FORT LAUDERDALE
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
CITY HALL**

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2009 – 5:23 P.M.

Chairman Seiler called the meeting to order at approximately 5:23 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present.

Present: Chairman John P. "Jack" Seiler
Member Bruce G. Roberts
Vice Chair Charlotte E. Rodstrom
Member Bobby B. DuBose
Member Romney Rogers

Absent: None.

Also Present: George Gretsas, City Manager
John Herbst, City Auditor
Jonda K. Joseph, City Clerk
Harry A. Stewart, City Attorney
Alfred Battle, Director, Community Redevelopment Agency

Minutes of the December 16, 2008 - Regular Meeting

Motion made by Vice Chair Rodstrom and seconded by Member Rogers to approve the minutes of the CRA meeting held on December 16, 2008. Board unanimously approved.

Authorization To File CRA Annual Report

Al Battle, Community Redevelopment Director, said the Annual Report is being submitted to the Commission for their review, and if there are no changes, it will be filed in accordance with Florida Statute Chapter 163.356(3) for Community Redevelopment Agencies.

Chairman Seiler asked what was the total amount of loans that were forgiven.

Mr. Battle said there is a program known as the Mid-Town Strategic Investment Program that they fashion as law, and he proceeded to explain the structure of the repayment of the loans. He added that in essence it was a grant that functions as loans in the event the owner sells the property or defaults on the loan.

Motion made by Member Rogers and seconded by Member DuBose to authorize the proper City/CRA officials to file the annual report of the Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency by March 31st. Board unanimously approved.

Eula Johnson House Renovation Project

The City Auditor said it was his understanding that the proposal that came before the Board was that the NAACP would be responsible for all maintenance at the site. Mr. Battle felt that the NAACP would not be able to accomplish all the maintenance. Therefore, it was up to the Board to decide on policy regarding maintenance for the site. The City Auditor suggests that the property be transferred to the NAACP so it would be their responsibility exclusively, or that language be included in the lease that such organization build a reserve or replacement fund for such responsibilities.

Member Rogers felt if the site was going to be used as a Welcome Center/Historical Museum, he was concerned that the use agreement did not address staffing issues.

Mr. Battle said that the NAACP felt that their partnerships (Mid-Town Business Association, Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, and the Negro Chamber of Commerce) would assist with the staffing which would be on a volunteer basis. He added that the day-to-day costs would be borne by the NAACP.

Marcia Ellison, President of the Fort Lauderdale Branch of the NAACP, said that the NAACP and their partnerships would supply staff for the site.

Chairman Seiler said it is great how the community pulled together on this.

Motion made by Member Rogers and seconded by Member DuBose to authorize the execution of an agreement, and to accept an operation and maintenance plan, between the Fort Lauderdale Branch of the NAACP and the Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency. Board unanimously approved.

Motion made by Member DuBose and seconded by Vice Chair Rodstrom to authorize the proper City/CRA Officials to spend up to \$60,000 to hire an architectural firm to develop construction drawings and prepare a construction bid package for the implementation of a building improvement plan. Board unanimously approved.

Funding Request – LIN, LLC

Mr. Battle said this is a rehabilitation of a property, which was the old shoeshine store, that was considered historic to the area. The City was approached to assist with funding in connection with the project, and staff was recommending that an amount not to exceed \$70,000 be loaned for the project.

Motion made by Member Rogers and seconded by Member Roberts to authorize the proper City/CRA Officials to negotiate an agreement with LIN, LLC for development assistance for an amount not to exceed \$70,000 for building renovations to a vacant building at 405 NW 7th Avenue. Board unanimously approved.

Authorization To Enter Into An Agreement With Nelson Zambrano

Mr. Battle said that \$20,000 was a standard amount, but this was coming before the Board because the Façade Program was for commercial structures, and this was for a residential project.

Chairman Seiler asked if this would be setting a precedent. Mr. Battle said if the Board approves it, they would make sure that properties in the future would provide a type of rehabilitative quality to the neighborhood. This site is in a strategic location to the community.

The City Manager said there is a risk in that someone might not see it that way, and just look at the fact that it is a residential development. This would be crossing a new threshold.

Mr. Battle said that these types of incentives were not paid up front. The structures are of a mixed-use type and are located along the Sistrunk Corridor. He further said that one of the conditions of repayment in the agreement was that a portion of the grant would be repaid if the property was sold within two years. This application stretched the condition to a five-year period of time, and if the property was sold there would be a 12% interest penalty. He added that the routine commercial façade projects are not brought before this Board.

Motion made by Vice Chair Rodstrom and seconded by Member Roberts to authorize the proper CRA officials to enter into an agreement with Nelson Zambrano to provide a residential façade grant in an amount not to exceed \$20,000 for a multi-unit residential property at 821 NW 1st Avenue in the Progresso Village neighborhood, and that any further residential applications are to be brought before this Board. Board unanimously approved.

NPF CRA Expansion Update

Mr. Battle provided some historical information regarding the CRA expansion. An update is being provided to this Board regarding the project for review and discussion. The County granted an expanded CRA, but did not grant the monies to go along with such expansion. If this is approved, only the City's portion of the TIF calculation could be used.

Chairman Seiler asked what impact this would have on the existing CRA.

Mr. Battle said they would be adding 344 acres to an existing 1400 acres, and the tax increment revenue would be leveling off and not expanding. It would also depend on when they set the base year.

Member Rogers suggested that they wait until an opinion is provided by the Attorney General.

The City Attorney said that normally he does not request an opinion of the Attorney General unless he is directed to do so because the City has to first take a position and forward an opinion.

Chairman Seiler said if they could set this far enough back time wise, than it might make sense. Otherwise, they would be diluting the northwest which is the area that desperately needs this. He would like to go to the County for full financing. If that could not be done, he would like the date set back far enough to provide a large amount of money for them to work with. He feels the last option is doing what they want the City to do now.

Vice Chair Rodstrom and Member DuBose agreed that they should first go to the County for financing.

The City Attorney said that there are bond issues that are revenue in place in the current CRA. Therefore, any monies that could be transferred to the other area would be after the debt service under the bond issues was paid, which could only be done on an annual basis.

The City Auditor said they did a review based on the Property Appraiser's audit that discovered there were a number of properties in both of the CRAs that were not being properly coded as CRA properties. Taxes were being collected and the properties listed in the database, but monies were not being turned over to the CRAs. His office determined that there was an additional \$7 Million due to the CRAs, and of that \$7 Million, \$2.5 Million was owed by the City to the CRAs.

The City Attorney said the likelihood of success in collecting the monies from the County would be minimal since they knew of the change in 2006, and an adjustment was made to the rolls. The fact that the City had not paid their share was not a good argument to be making in front of a Judge when seeking monies from the County.

The City Auditor said this was discovered during an audit, and they determined that there would be an application for the funds. He proceeded to explain the procedure followed between his office and the Property Appraiser, explaining why this had not come before this Board sooner.

Mr. Battle advised that this would go before the CRA Advisory Board later this month.

The Board gave their consensus to go to Broward County first regarding the monies owed.

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

John Seiler
Chairman

ATTEST:

Jonda K. Joseph
City Clerk