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GCEDC Housing Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 1, 2023
Location: 99 MedTech Drive, Innovation Zone
8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members: C. Yunker, M. Gray, P. Battaglia, P. Zeliff
Staff: M. Masse, J. Krencik, C. Suozzi, S. Hyde, P. Kennett, J. Krencik, L. Farrell
Guests: K. Manne (GCEDC Board Member), Erik Fix (City of Batavia), Michael Schmitt (Countryside Apartments)
Absent:

1. Call to Order / Enter Public Session

P. Battaglia called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. in the Innovation Zone.

1a. Executive Session:

P. Zeliff made a motion to enter executive session at 9:38 a.m. under the Public Officers Law, Article 7, Open Meetings Law Section 105 for the following reasons, seconded by M. Gray and approved by all members present:

1. The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

1b. Re-Enter Public Session – C. Yunker made a motion to enter back into public session at 10:00 a.m., seconded by M. Gray and approved by all members present.

Erik Fix joined the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

2. Chairman's Report & Activities

2a. Agenda Additions / Other Business

2b. Minutes: July 21, 2022

P. Zeliff made a motion to recommend approval of the July 21, 2022 minutes; the motion was seconded by C. Yunker. Roll call resulted as follows:

C. Yunker - Yes
M. Gray - Yes
P. Battaglia - Yes

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P. Zelif – Yes

The item was approved as presented.

3. Discussions / Official Recommendations to the Board:

Staff requested that the Committee begin with the discussion of agenda item 3b.

3b. Batavia Home Fund Policy – The Town and City of Batavia and the GCEDC approved the Batavia Home Fund Agreement in November of 2022. The agreement is that the GCEDC can utilize Host Benefit Agreements on housing projects to put money into the fund. The GCEDC would be the custodian of the funds, and any project would complete an application to request the money. There would be a three-person committee (GCEDC, Town and City) that would review the applications and make approvals/disapprovals. The allowable uses of the funds are as follows:

- i. Extraordinary development costs related to hazardous material abatement, remediation, flood hazard areas, etc.
- ii. Demolition / rehabilitation of vacant residential structures that cause community and neighborhood blight.
- iii. Provide incentives to the conversion of rental properties to single family homes.
- iv. Infrastructure modernization and improvements including all costs related to planning, design and constructing roadways, multi-modal, water, sewer, gas, electric, telecommunication enhancements, storm water management facilities and related green infrastructure including landscaping and streetscape improvements related to redevelopment projects.
- v. Expansion of sewer capacity at Wastewater Treatment Plant for Studies, Engineering, Construction and Expansion.
- vi. Matching funds to secure other grant resources to further capitalize redevelopment projects in the BOA area.
- vii. Land assemblage, property acquisition and due diligence for Agency Projects consistent with Section 2 of this Agreement.
- viii. Marketing expenses for existing programs such as 421-F, 485-R and Core Housing Owner Incentive Exemption (CHOICE).
- ix. Grants to support CHOICE program.

The City and Town of Batavia, along with the GCEDC, have drafted a policy that governs the application process, eligible applicants and eligible uses.

Erik Fix, City of Batavia Assistant Manager, stated that the housing in the City of Batavia is an issue. Approximately 65%-70% of homes are over 100 years old, dating back to 1910 or earlier. The Batavia Home Fund aims to provide opportunities to landlords and homeowners to make upgrades to homes and neighborhoods that need repair and revitalization. The City of Batavia also applied for a Community Development Block Grant with assistance from LaBella for \$500,000.

Fund Commitment: None.

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Committee Action Request: Recommend to the full Board to approve the Batavia Home Fund Policy.

The Committee recommended the following changes to the policy:

- 1) The policy should include the definition of market rate as it relates to the *Eligible Activities* criterion.
- 2) The *Policy Exception for City Use* may not be used until funds from Host Agreements have flown through to the fund, as opposed to using initial seed money.

P. Zelif made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Batavia Home Fund Policy with the above-mentioned changes; the motion was seconded by C. Yunker. Roll call resulted as follows:

C. Yunker - Yes
M. Gray - Yes
P. Battaglia - Yes
P. Zelif - Yes

The item was approved as presented.

Erik Fix left at 10:21 a.m.

The meeting briefly paused to allow time for Michael Schmitt (Countryside Apartments) to get to the meeting. He encountered some trouble on the roadways while traveling to MedTech Centre.

Michael Schmitt joined the meeting at 10:37 a.m. and the meeting resumed.

3a. Potential Housing Project – Countryside Apartments in Pembroke – Michael Schmitt stated that the development of a housing project became very attractive to him after learning about the incentives that the GCEDC has to offer as well as the need for apartments in Pembroke. He purchased and closed on land in Pembroke and aims to have apartments available for rent next Spring. He stated that the project includes six buildings on 8.5 acres, with 24 units (8 single bedroom units and 16 two-bedroom units) in each building. Each building will be built in phases. There will be 144 units when complete. The apartments will be market rate and subsidies will not be accepted to begin renting these apartments. However, the caveat being that if tenants fall on hard times, they will not be required to move out. They will work with tenants and agencies to ensure that they can continue renting there. Michael estimates that the single bedroom apartment rate will be \$1,100 and the two-bedroom apartment rate will be \$1,400. The GCEDC plans to receive an application from the developer for the Board’s review and consideration at the September 2023 meeting.

Michael Schmitt left the meeting at 10:53 a.m.

4. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, P. Zelif made a motion to adjourn at 10:55 a.m., seconded by C. Yunker and passed unanimously.

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