

MINUTES OF THE STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION
December 15, 2014

The Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation met in regular session Monday, December 15, 2014, 8:30 a.m. in the Stark County Regional Planning Commission Conference Room.

Board Members

Alex Zumbar

Janet Weir Creighton

Bill Smith

Lem Green

Tom Bernabei

RPC Staff

Bob Nau

Sarah Peters

Dave Thorley

Jill Gerber

Beth Pearson

Lynn Carlone

Emma Posillico

Brenda Sarsany

Others

Jim Wallace, Treasurer's Office

Jaime Allbritain, Treasurer's Office

Maureen Austin, Community Building Partnership

Joe Mazzola, City of Alliance

Amelia Kocher, City of Alliance

Nancy Molnar, Beacon Journal

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER BY SCLRC CHAIRMAN - Alex Zumbar**
- 2) **ROLL CALL**

Board Members Present:

Alex Zumbar, Stark County Treasurer/Chairman

Tom Bernabei, Stark County Commissioner

Janet Creighton, Stark County Commissioner

Lem Green, Municipal Representative

Bill Smith, Township Representative

- 3) **MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2014 MEETING**

Bernabei moved, Green seconded, and the motion carried to approve the minutes of November 17, 2014.

- 4) **TREASURER REPORT - Jim Wallace**

Wallace reviewed the bank reconciliation statement for the month of November ending with a checking account balance of \$150,469.53. Regarding the Star Plus funds, there was a balance of \$1,000,846.60 the end of November with \$164.34 earned on interest for the month. Creighton moved, Bernabei seconded, and the motion carried to accept the Treasurer's report.

5) **FISCAL REPORT - Beth Pearson**

Pearson distributed a financial projection sheet that separated NIP/non-NIP related expenses, as requested by Bernabei at the recent work session. Included for review was the proposed 2015 budget which will be presented in a public hearing at the next Land Bank meeting for adoption.

6) **DEMOLITION PROGRAM/SIDE LOT PROGRAM REPORT****Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) Update - City of Canton:**

217 - Total Number of Properties Identified on an Active List for Acquisition

➤ 148 - Number of Properties the Prosecutor's Office is pursuing for Board of Revision Foreclosure

10 10-Day Demand letter(s) sent

13 PJR ordered; waiting to be received

1 PJR ordered and received; waiting for complaint to be filed

0 Complaint filed; waiting for hearing date

4 Regular foreclosure docket

10 Hearings held 10/30/14 Redemption Date 12/14/14

15 Hearings held 11/13/14 Redemption Date 1/2/15 (includes 1 direct purchase)

33 Hearings held 12/4/14 Est. Redemption Dates 1/2/15 & 1/20/15

13 Hearings scheduled for 12/18/14 Est. Redemption Date 1/15/15

21 Hearings scheduled for 1/15/15 Est. Redemption Date 2/12/15

25 Hearings scheduled for 1/29/15 Est. Redemption Date 2/26/15

3 Waiting to be reviewed/holding for payment

➤ 9 - Number of anticipated properties to be acquired through direct purchase or deed in lieu of foreclosure

➤ 34 - Properties on the "Waiting to be Active" list

➤ 9 - Auditor acquisition(s); deeds to be recorded

➤ 17 - Total number of acquired properties to date

Side Lot Program Update:**Communities**

Cities – 606

Canton: 505; Massillon: 52; Alliance: 49

Other Communities – 92

Bethlehem Twp -4, Brewster – 2, Canton Twp – 16, East Canton – 4, East Sparta – 3, Hartville – 3, Jackson Twp – 2, Lake Twp – 1, Lexington Twp – 10, Minerva – 1, Nimishillen – 2, Osnaburg Twp – 5, Paris Twp – 3, Perry Twp – 4, Pike Twp – 1, Plain Twp – 21, Sugarcreek Twp – 3, Tuscarawas Twp – 1, Washington Twp – 3, and Waynesburg – 3.

Total Applications Submitted: 698

- Total Number of Applications Under Preliminary Review: 6
- Total Number of Applications Denied: 248
- Number of Canceled Applications/Fee Refunded: 16
- Total Number Pending Approval by Community: 105
- Total Number of Approved Applications: 323

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- Total Number of Approved Applications Pending Deposit Receipt / Request for Foreclosure / Completed Foreclosure Proceeding: 210
 - Total Number Being Prepared for Transfer: 77
 - Total Number Transferred to Date: 36

7) **PUBLIC SPEAKS**

Joe Mazzola, Director of Planning and Development for the City of Alliance, read a letter sent from Amelia Kocher to Bob Nau that requested financial assistance from the Land Bank to assist in the demolition process of the property located at 50 N. Linden (parcel 104961). This property has been made available to the city for transfer at no cost (other than transfer fees) by the Stark County Auditor office from a list of properties that have been forfeited to the State of Ohio. Currently the structure is in the pre-condemnation phase and will require immediate demolition upon transfer of property, which is expected in January 2015. Through the city's demolition program, the neighboring commercial structure located at 39 N. Arch (parcel 106020) is contracted to be demolished in early 2015. If funds are successfully secured from the Land Bank for the demolition process for 50 N. Linden, including asbestos survey and possible abatement, the demolition will commence as soon as funding allows. Over the past few years, the city has dedicated resources towards the development of a strategic plan to redevelop and attract new

businesses and rejuvenate downtown. An objective of the city is to utilize the aforementioned parcels in accordance with the strategic plan to restore downtown Alliance.

The City of Alliance requests a one-time financial obligation of \$60,000. These funds will be used in conjunction with other city funds to complete the demolition of 50 Linden. The demolition of both this property and 39 N. Arch, along with the acquisition of other parcels within this area, will be instrumental in creating opportunities for redevelopment. Mazzola presented some of the current demolition and rehabilitation that has occurred in the surrounding area. Green asked if the building on 39 N. Arch is slated for demolition, and if the Land Bank would act favorably on this request, would the demolition on 50 N. Linden be concurrent with that. Mazzola stated, yes that would be the goal and is the most cost effective way to deal with these properties. It has been their policy that anything that is not coming back needs to be removed; these properties will never be restored and they are in the way of development. They are prepared to turn these properties into quality parking lots for the businesses that are expanding. When the local business owners see the public sector stepping up, it encourages them to finance what needs to happen for their businesses. This demolition is being done in the core area with the 20/20 Vision and Arts in Stark.

Creighton stated it is in accordance with the Land Bank's mission. Zumbar asked Mazzola if the structure at 39 N. Arch was coming down as well. Mazzola stated parcel 106020 (39 N. Arch) is already contracted to be demolished, and all the money is in place. Green referenced the written request where it says "subject to asbestos inspection" and asked if they had some informal impression that there would be a problem with asbestos. Kocher stated they have an inspection survey that was done for the building next to it and there was quite a bit of asbestos in that building. They requested \$60,000 because that is roughly half of what it is going to cost to bring down the property on 50 Linden. That was just their estimate based upon the building that is next to it. They demolished three properties in the 400 block with MOF funding, and asbestos was also found there and had to be abated before the structures could be taken down. So it is an estimate based upon what was found in the area. Green asked if they are making this request based upon a suspicion that they will have asbestos abatement costs. Kocher stated yes, based upon the time in which it was built with the surrounding structures, that is their estimate. Green asked if they are prepared to complete it at their own expense if they find it is asbestos laden. Mazzola stated they have a source of funds, but that is not what they prefer to use, but if they have to, they can complete this project. Green asked so the deal won't fall apart. Mazzola stated, no, not at all. He also pointed out that parcel 106479 across the street is a pile of rubble right now. It is a private demolition, but they are prepared to go in and give him a hand to clean it up. Kocher stated the city is also pursuing ownership of that property that he is speaking of. Zumbar stated this matter will be discussed further under New Business.

8) **ADOPT SCLRC 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Bernabei moved, Green seconded, and the motion carried to adopt the 2015 meeting schedule as presented. Green stated he would be out of town most of January. Creighton stated she also would not be at the January meeting. Green believed that Maureen Austin was still his alternate, but he didn't know whether that appointment had to be redone. Zumbar stated he would pass out the representative sheets again so that everyone could have that updated if needed.

9) **NEW BUSINESS**

Nau referenced the request made by Alliance and pointed out that \$80,000 was allocated in the budget for demolition, so if the request of \$60,000 is granted, that would use most of their demo program for the year. There are many commercial buildings that could be demolished in the County, so the Board should be cognizant of setting a precedent. It is within the Land Bank's mission to do demolition of properties, and this should be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Bernabei stated there is probably a need to reexamine the budget based upon this request and in anticipation of additional requests in the future. He believed that it was consistent with the purpose that they have and they do have funding in the budget, so he supported this request.

Creighton asked Mazzola if they need the exact \$60,000 or up to \$60,000. Kocher stated without the survey they are unaware what the total cost will be. They asked for \$60,000 because that was similar to what the building next to it will cost, just in half. Without doing the survey they are unsure what the total cost will be for the demolition and asbestos abatement. Zumbar asked how quickly they intend to move forward on this project. Kocher stated as soon as they get approval for the funding, they will go out for the survey. If they are able to do this demolition with the 39 N. Arch demolition, it would be in the best interest for cost purposes and they could possibly get a lower price because the demolition contractor will already be there and he's doing abatement for the next door building as well. Zumbar asked if this would be in conjunction with the other demolition. Kocher stated that is their goal right now.

Smith asked if there was bidding that would be taking place. Kocher stated it will go out for public bid, and the next door structure has a contract already awarded. Smith asked how they could assume he would win the bid to make it more economically feasible. Kocher stated this contractor handled their entire MOF project. He is a local contractor and was routinely the lowest and best bidder. In order to get the best cost estimate they had to do some assumptions, and that was one of their assumptions. Green stated he was ready to vote yes right now except for the concerns on how they would respond if others come and make requests. Zumbar stated it must be handled on a case by case basis. Kocher stated they are hoping to apply for some grant funding from the Ohio EPA to do the parking lots. They're going to do them as pervious pavers. This is non match funding, but in order to achieve that funding, the EPA will look at projects that are ready to go. Without the buildings being demolished, Alliance will probably not be funded because the amount they would be applying for is up to \$150,000, which means most of the costs would be for demolition and there would be no money left to actually put in the paving.

Bernabei asked Nau if he could develop some program guidelines, as the Land Bank currently doesn't have any in place right now. These guidelines should approach demolition on a county-wide basis, and outline how requests would be prioritized. Nau stated they could put some guidelines together. Bernabei stated this is the first presentation the Land Bank has received of this nature, but it does sound like it's important to the economic development of downtown Alliance. Nau recommended that it would not exceed \$60,000 and the key is Alliance is looking for a 50% match on this. The framework is a 50/50 match, not to exceed \$60,000, which gets us moving in the direction of setting some parameters with these requests. Bernabei moved, Creighton seconded, and the motion carried to approve this request from the City of Alliance subject to conditions that RPC will work out a contract as discussed, which is not to exceed \$60,000 based upon actual estimates and with a 50/50 match requirement from the City of Alliance. Zumbar added that if their expenses exceed \$60,000, it will be the responsibility of the City of Alliance to cover those additional costs.

10) **OLD BUSINESS**

11) **NEXT MEETING - Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.**

12) **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Gerber, RPC Office Manager